

The Beginning and End of the Occupation of İzmir (2-15 May 1919 and 9-13 September 1922)

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Abstract

In January 1919, a peace conference was held in Paris to determine the principles of peace agreements to be made after the First World War. In this conference, which will go down in history as the Paris Peace Conference, Greece, which announced its ambitions on Turkish lands, claimed that it had historical and cultural rights in this region and that the majority of the people living in the region were Greeks.

Invasion of Izmir, which was carried out by the Greeks on May 15, 1919, is the first important occupation in Anatolia. The invasion was allowed to balance Italy's territorial gains in Anatolia. The main reason why it started with İzmir is the claim that the Greek population is more than the Turks there.

Among the main reasons for the Greek Kingdom to choose Izmir, besides the fact that it would be easy to occupy, there is also the belief that the real owner of the Aegean Region (especially Izmir and the surrounding islands) is Greece and that that region is normally subject to Greece. The foundations of this idea lay in the fact that they ruled this region for centuries. Even the beginning of Greek history was based on Anatolian geography

Keywords: Paris Peace Conference, İzmir, Occupation, Greece, Anatolia.

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İzmir İşgalinin Başlangıcı ve Sonu (2-15 Mayıs 1919 ve 9-13 Eylül 1922)

Öz

1919 yılı Ocak ayında, Birinci Dünya Savaşı sonrası yapılacak barış anlaşmalarının ilkelerini saptamak üzere, Paris'te bir barış konferansı toplandı. Paris Barış Konferansı olarak tarihe geçecek olan bu konferansta, Türk toprakları üzerindeki emellerini açıklayan Yunanistan, bu bölgede tarihî ve kültürel hakları olduğunu ve bölgede yaşayanların çoğunluğunun Rumlardan oluştuğunu iddia etti.

15 Mayıs 1919'da Rumlar tarafından işgal edilen İzmir, Anadolu'da yapılan ilk önemli işgaldir. İşgale, İtalya'nın Anadolu'daki toprak kazancını dengelemek adına izin verilmiştir. Başlangıcın İzmir ile olmasının ana sebebi ise Rum nüfusunun Türklerden fazla olduğu iddiasıdır.

Yunan Krallığı'nın İzmir'i seçmesindeki temel nedenler içerisinde işgalinin kolay olacak olmasının yanı sıra Ege Bölgesi'nin (özellikle İzmir ve çevre adalar) gerçek sahibinin Yunanistan olduğuna ve yine o çevrenin normalde Yunanistan'a bağlı olduğuna inanmaları da bulunmaktadır. Bu fikrin temelleri de aslında yüzyıllarca bu bölgeyi yönetmelerinde yatmaktaydı. Yunan tarihinin başlangıcı bile Anadolu coğrafyasına dayanmaktaydı.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Paris Barış Konferansı, İzmir, İşgal, Yunanistan, Anadolu.

The Beginning and End of the Occupation of İzmir (2-15 May 1919 and 9-13 September 1922)

By the end of the First World War, many states signed armistice treaties. The Ottoman State which was one of those states signed an armistice treaty on the evening of October 30, 1918 in the battleship named Agamemnon anchored at the Mudros Port of the Lemnos Island where the battleships of the United States stayed besides the battleships of the fleets of the Entente Powers, and in the consequence of the Armistice of Mudros, the First World War ended officially for the Ottoman State. According to the principles of the Armistice of Mudros, especially those of Article 7, the Entente Powers were given the right to occupy strategic places whose security they deem to see at risk. We know that many publications were made regarding the subject matter, what kind of incidents took place from the beginning of the

occupation till the end and we have the strategic information of the incidents that started especially with the occupation of İzmir. Within this scope, we also have information regarding what types of incidents took place at the beginning and end of the occupation of İzmir, however it is also necessary to take out the visual evidence of the subject matter from the words among the lines of the books and add dimension to them with the visual materials. Therefore, in this study, the visibility of the incidents that took place day by day has an important place here. Besides the significance of which person or persons took most of the photographs, it is more important that those photographs were taken when the incidents actually took place. The subject matter was predominantly based on visual documents so that sharing the images which were also obtained from the auctions held abroad would take us into the mentioned days in a more vivid way. So, we will have the opportunity to add dimension to the incidents in a more realistic way.

It is known that Greece switched sides and allied with the Entente Powers and started to act with them in 1917 through the end of the War even if it was a later date. The basic reason for this delay was the preference of King Konstantin I (1868-1923) of the neutrality policy despite the attempts of the Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos (1864-1936) for siding with the Entente Powers in the War. At the same time, King Konstantin I believed that the winner of the First World War would be the Central Powers. He was a German sympathizer who received his education in the Berlin War Academy. Also, it needs to be noted that the facts that Sofia, the wife of King Konstantin I, was the sister of Kaiser Wilhelm II and Konstantin I believed that Germany would be the winner of the War were other reasons of the initial neutral attitude of Konstantin I. Additionally, Greece never gave up the idea of establishing "Greater Greece" despite the fact that the partial exhaustion of the country contrary to its gains in the Balkan War of 1912 was a reason for Greece to delay its entry into the First World War. Through the end of the War, the weakening of the Ottoman State was an indispensable opportunity for Greece to realize its claims and expectations on western Anatolia and the Black Sea region. However, Greece's interests were clashing with those of Italy, because Italy invaded the Dodecanese Islands as a security against the Ottoman State while the Turco-Italian War in North Africa was going on. At the same time period, upon Greece's occupation of the islands located further north during the Balkan Wars, the subject matter of who would have control over the region of islands created a problem

between Italy and Greece. Consequently, the activities of Venizelos who was known for his affinity with the French and the efforts of Great Britain and especially France to accept the occupation of the Dodecanese Islands as an intervention into Greece's neutrality and France's effort to bring Greece into the War were the reasons that led to the occupation of western Anatolia by the Greeks.

According to the treaty signed between Great Britain, France and Italy in April of 1917 in Saint Jean de Maurienne, the region of southwestern Anatolia between the triangle of İzmir, Kayseri and Mersin were left to Italy in addition to Antalya. However, after the Armistice of Mudros, the British were not willing to leave İzmir and the surrounding areas to the Italians. On the other hand, the Greek Prime Minister Elefterios Venizelos was persistently demanding İzmir and the surrounding areas. Indeed, Venizelos openly demanded leaving the western region of Anatolia to Greece in November of 1918. Shortly after the Armistice of Mudros, the first warship of the Entente Powers entered into the İzmir Port on November 4, 1918 with great excesses of the local Greeks. After that date, the fleet of the Entente Powers was freely cruising along the shores of western Anatolia.¹

After the treaties of armistice that ended the War, even before the Paris Peace Conference held on January 18, 1919 started its works, the Italians acted for creating a *de facto* situation in western Anatolia. The Greek Prime Minister Venizelos was indicating his land requests in western Anatolia in the letter that he sent to the Paris Peace Conference on December 30, 1918. Accordingly, Venizelos requested the Anatolian lands remaining on the western side of the line crossing 25 kilometers east of Bandırma and going towards the Mediterranean to be given to Greece. He repeated his demands in the meeting held on February 3, 1919. And Italy, perceiving that its interests in western Anatolia were conflicting with those of Greece, occupied Antalya on March 28, and later landed its troops on Kuşadası in April and started moving towards İzmir. On May 5, the British Prime Minister David Lloyd George was not happy about the Italian actions in Anatolia and indicated that it would be difficult to take Italians out of Anatolia in the event that they occupied western Anatolia, made an agreement with the French Prime Minister George Clemenceau and President of the United States Woodrow

1 Orhan Turan, "İngiliz Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Yunan Ordusu'nun İzmir'e Çıkması ve İşgale İlişkin Tanıklıklar", *Çağdaş Türkiye Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol. 18, Special Issue, 2018, p. 106.

Wilson and thusly it was agreed on May 6, 1919 to allow Greece to land its troops on İzmir to occupy western Anatolia. Between the dates of 7th and 10th of May, the details of the landing to be made in İzmir was discussed in the conference where Italy was not invited, and it was decided to occupy İzmir on May 10. In the morning of May 14, Admiral Richard Webb gave the diplomatic note to Damat Ferit Pasha regarding that the İzmir Bastions would be occupied. Besides, the Mediterranean Commander of the British Fleet Admiral Arthur Gouch Calthorpe gave the diplomatic note with the same content to Ahmet İzzet Bey, who was the Governor of İzmir.²

Although the occupation of the Turkish lands by the Greeks along with the Entente Powers does not correspond to the Wilsonian Principle which states “the style of management shall be accepted according to the thoughts and demands of the people living on a piece of land” the Entente Powers sought excuses to justify the occupation of İzmir for the purpose of keeping their promises that they have given to the Greek Prime Minister Venizelos and to prevent the advancement of Italy in western Anatolia. In this regard, many exaggerated publications and brochures regarding the intensity of the Greek population in the region were printed and distributed for their “*I Megali tis Patridos Idea*” (Megali Idea).³

Consequently, due to the given promises and made agreements, in accordance to the 7th Article of the Armistice of Mudros, the occupation of İzmir and the fortified locations at the İzmir Bay protecting the city started from the noon of May 14, 1919. The Uzun Island in the middle of the Bay and the Mordoğan Bastion on the western shore were occupied by the British because of the airbase they established during the First World War, the Bastions of Foça, Aliağa and Urla were occupied by the French, and the Yeni Kale was captured by the Greeks. Those coastal bastions that control and command the entries and exits to/from the Port were very important and those bastions were equipped with geared 240/35 Krupp Fortress Guns with separate loading bagged charges whose firing range varied between 11 and 15.000 meters based on the used shells. Additionally, for the purpose

2 Hasan Demirhan, “Yunanistan’ın İzmir’i İşgalinde İngiltere’nin Rolü”, *Gaziantep Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Vol. 18, No. 5, October 2019, p. 1532.

3 Yakup Kurt, “Birinci Dünya Savaşı Yıllarında Yunan Tarihçilerin Gözüyle Büyük Yunanistan Hayali ve Fransız Basınının Rolü”, *Güney-Doğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi*, No. 33, 2018, p. 110. This slogan was first used by the Prime Minister of the time Ioannis Kolettis (1774-1847) during his speech at the Greek Parliament in 1844.

of securing their consulates, post offices and banks, platoons, which were composed of twenty soldiers, landed on İzmir in the afternoon around 4:00 p.m. from the warships of the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Greece.

The Turks were expecting no landing, and they thought even if there would be a landing, it would be made by the United States or the Entente Powers. And the Greeks believed that the occupation that they had expected would take place. However, at 10:00 in the evening on May 14, James Morgan, the İzmir Consulate of the British High Commissioner sent the letter to Governor İzzet Bey concerning that İzmir would be occupied by the Greek troops next morning at 7:00 and ordered him to take measures preventing any disorder, and the same letter was also sent by Lieutenant Colonel Ian Smith who was appointed by the British Government to Ali Nadir Pasha, who was the Commander of the 17th Army Corps. The Greek occupying troops which came from Salonika and Athens, previously prepared, stationed and organized on the Lesbos Island entered into the İzmir Bay under the protection of the British and French warships about 7:00 in the morning by moving at an early hour from the Lesbos Island on May 15. The Greek occupying troops landed on İzmir, around 8:00 in the morning on May 15 (May 2 according to the Orthodox calendar) from the warships under the command of Colonel Nikolaos Zafriou. They formed two groups. One group moved the soldiers in front of the Grand Hotel Splendid Palace (former Kraemer Palace Hotel) where the “Club Hellenique” was located, and the other group landed on the Punta Dock of Aydın Railroad Company under the control of the British. They came with the fleet composed of a total of 18 ships including military and civilian ships and initially the 1st Efsun Regiment and 7.500 soldiers landed on the shore which was prepared by lining up barges in front of the Splendid Palace Hotel. Colonel Nikolaos Zafriou first visited Admiral Somerset Arthur Gough Calthorpe who was serving as the British High Commissioner in İzmir. The British Admiral made warnings regarding that especially the local Greeks should not take part in demonstrations creating disturbances and the soldiers should prevent such demonstrations. Within this timeframe, it was decided for the Ottoman soldiers to remain in their barracks against any resistance.



Photo 1: In the morning of May 15, 1919, the landing of the Efsun Regiment in front of Grand Hotel Splendid Palace (former Kraemer Palace) (contemporary Cumhuriyet Square) and the arrival of Hrisostomos Kalafatis (1867-1922), the Greek Metropolitan, for blessing⁴ (Anonymous)



Photo 2: In the morning of May 15, 1919, the positioning of the Greek soldiers on the dock in an undisciplined manner and the crowned picture of Venizelos on the left of the Efsun Regiment (Anonymous)

4 The images included in the text are from the Çınar Atay Archive.



Photo 3: About 10:20 in the morning of May 15, 1919, Turks walking on the dock to protest the march of the occupying Greek Army that would start from the Pasaport location to Sarı Kışla (In front of Hotel Patrie and Hotel Athena / in front of today's Pasaport Hotel). (Anonymous)

The Greeks were not allowed to come together, for the purpose of preventing the Greek population's excesses and demonstrations for the march of the Efsun Regiment of the occupying Army that took the order for marching that would start from the Pasaport location towards Konak Sarı Kışla about 10:20 in the morning of May 15, 1919. However, the Turkish groups, which gathered at the Jewish Cemetery (*Maşatlık*) one night earlier, previously went to Nadir Pasha and requested weapons and ammunition, and despite the fact that Nadir Pasha stated that he received no orders from the War Ministry, he would not give them any weapons and he would send anyone with a weapon to the Martial Court, some groups raided the military gun warehouses and obtained weapons. Therefore, certain armed Turkish groups were created in the city. The image above most likely is an image of a group of Turks in a group walking for protest who came from the Kösük (Kısıık) Street (later, Akdeniz Avenue) and entered into the First Kordon⁵ to protest the lending of the Greek occupying forces. Among them and most likely (?) in the front, there was Hasan Tahsin, namely Osman Nevres (31 years old) with his real name.

5 The First Kordon was named as Atatürk Avenue after the establishment of the Republic. For consistency throughout the text, it is expressed as Kordon.

At 10:30, the Efsun Regiment positioned for marching. The soldiers prepared themselves for marching in front of Grand Hotel Splendid Palace across the First Kordon accompanied by the band, their banner bearer and the enthusiastic Greeks watching them from their windows and balconies. After the soldiers walked about 40 or 50 meters, gunshots were heard one after another. A big disorder and panic took place. The crowd filling the area started to run towards the interior sections of Kordon and south, however the byroads were blocked by the soldiers and the cortege.

Those who were escaping by returning to the byroads were being killed by the Greek soldiers and everywhere was full of blood. Many people were throwing themselves into the sea due to panic. It was seen that some of the Greek flags hoisted from the balconies and windows were quickly lowered down. In the meantime, people were speaking about the death of two Greek soldiers. The first bullet was fired around 10:45. The rumors were numerous. It was said that the person who fired the gun was a Greek provocateur, the Turkish officers or a few persons among the public, because it was said that three or four more shots were fired after the first shot. According to the report of Governor İzzet Bey in this regard, the one who fired the first bullet was a Greek soldier. Şevki Bey, the chief editor of the *Ahenk* wrote that he had witnessed that watchmaker Aziz Efendi fired the first bullet. Another rumor was that the person who fired the first bullet was the person named İbrahim of Germencik who was sitting in a café at the time or a youngster named Arab Rasim who got out of prison recently.

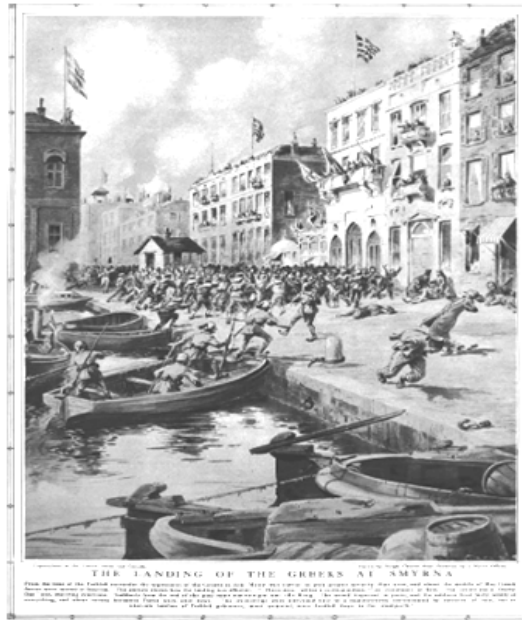


İmage 1: Around 10:45 – 11:00 on May 15, 1919. Wood carving press “Greeks landing on İzmir” according to the pattern of Ralph Cleaverr based on a letter sent by a British naval officer and sketches. (Source: The Graphic , 21 Jun 1919, No: 2586.

The Military Hotel was mentioned as the place where the first bullet was fired, however this is wrong, because the Military Hotel was at the entrance of Kemeraltı, in the inner part at the right corner. Therefore, there is no likeliness for the bullet to be fired from this location. And the name of the Military Hotel became May 2 Hotel the same day commemorating the occupation. Although the likely location of the firing may be the Military Gathering Place – actually the firing did not take place there – the building is actually on the shore next to the Sarı Kışla. Therefore, the spatial expressions in those types of writings regarding the “first bullet” are fallacious and their spatial descriptions are wrongfully expressed. And the expressions like “he kneeled down and took aim” do not seem possible for the moment when the incident took place. Then, it is understood that people who wrote essays or similar pieces upon the mentioned possibilities in this matter are in error. Many authors missed the fact that Konak is a square and ignored the fact that it was previously emptied and placed under the control of the British

and the French. In fact, even places which have no spatial relationship with the place where the first bullet was fired were mentioned such as “a single shot was suddenly heard as soon as the first soldiers in front of the march of the Efsun Regiment”. In this regard, although while counting the names of the Muslims killed in Kordon in the report that was sent by Captain Ziya Bey who was the Sector Inspector to the General Command of Gendarmerie dated June 5, 1919, he focused on the name of Tahsin Recep Bey who was the chief editor of the *Hukuk-ı Beşer* and was martyred in Kordon by being dismembered, there is no certainty about this matter.⁶ And some authors claim that Hasan Tahsin, who was claimed to have fired the first bullet, was killed in his sister’s house without relying on any evidence. However, the claim that we have been making here is that the first bullet was fired at a point in front of 30 or 40 meters before (south) Grand Hotel Huck (İzmir Central Post Office currently) where the Ottoman Postal Office was located in the First Kordon between the Passport Office and the Grand Hotel Splendid Palace. The barricade set by the marines of the Entente Powers verifies this claim.



Photo 3: After 11:00 in the morning of May 15, 1919, the barricade set by the marines of the Entente Powers in front of the Postal Office to protect the withdrawing Efsun Regiment and prevent a new conflict.
(Anonymous)

6 Mithat Kadri Vural, “Hasan Tahsin ve “İlk Kurşun” Üzerine Bir Literatür Analizi”, *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, Vol. 34, No. 1, 2019, p. 110.



Photo 4: After 11:00 in the morning of May 15, 1919, opening fire in the First Kordon (Dock) and placing and removal of the bodies of the Turks into the horsecars killed by the massacre committed by the Greek soldiers as a reply (in front of Hotel Grande Bretagne / in front of building numbered 108 of contemporary First Kordon). (Anonymous)

The number of persons who were killed or injured during the occupation of İzmir is not accurately known. It is expressed that 2 Greek soldiers were killed, 6 were injured, 20 civilians died and 60 were injured, and about 300 or 400 Turks were either killed or injured. According to the official Turkish documents, it was expressed that within the first 48 hours of the occupation, the number of Turks who were killed was over 2 thousand in İzmir and its suburbs (including the Urla Peninsula and the villages).



Photo 5: Upon calming down of the incidents in the morning, the march of the Efsun Regiment around noon towards Konak and Sarı Kışla in front of Hotel Alexandria (contemporary Kordon Hotel) (Anonymous)



Photo 6: The march of the Greek Occupation Army after the Efsun Regiment towards Sarı Kışla from the Dock. The photo was taken in front of “Hotel de Ville” and two different days were written as the date on the photograph as 2/15 and the month is the 5th month which is May. The day of May 15 in the Gregorian calendar corresponds to May 2 because during the Greek occupation, the Orthodox Calendar was being used in Greece.

(Source: Padova Frères)

Venizelos was blaming the Italians for the incidents on one side, and was claiming that the Greek military authorities provided him partial or wrong initial information on the other. Consequently, an investigation commission was established which was composed of the delegates of France, Italy and United States led by the British representatives. On August 23, the first meeting was made at the Royal School (*Mektebi Sultani*). It was determined that a spreading fire was opened by the Greek soldiers after the firing of the first bullet. However, the failure to find any bullet mark on the walls of the Sarı Kışla and the surrounding buildings revealed the likeliness that nobody actually opened fire. Thusly, they attempted to cover the incidents by claiming that no spreading fire was opened in Konak. The information in the report which was prepared in Bronzetti, the Italian Destroyer anchored at a closer distance to the Passport Office in the morning of May 15, in the Port and later sent to the Italian Command of Naval Forces was not taken into consideration which stated that first shot was fired and later three or four shots were fired at 10:45 when the Greek soldiers who started to land at 10:00 in the morning started to move from the First Kordon towards Konak.⁷

7 Mevlüt Çelebi, “Bir İtalyan Gazetecinin Kaleminden İzmir’in İşgali”, *Çağdaş Türkiye Tarihi*

Therefore, the fact that the occupation did not take place uneventfully and without any resistance as it was expected forced Greece to send additional troops to İzmir urgently and additional troops were sent to İzmir to land on the city from the Punta Dock.



Photo 7: Landing of the Cretan Gendarmerie Battalion on the Alsancak-Punta Dock on May 19, 1919. Three days after the occupation, the 6th Island Regiment and a Gendarmerie battalion composed of 500 soldiers were also brought to İzmir. The next day, the 8th Cretan Regiment stationed in Athens moved to İzmir. In this case, there were five infantry regiments and 500 Gendarmeries in İzmir and the city and the surrounding areas would be able to be occupied with three infantry regiments. Additionally, the 5th Island Battalion, the 3rd Cavalry Regiment, İzmir Guardian Battalion along with the 1st Infantry Division's Supply Battalion landed on İzmir from this dock previously along with many equipment. (Source: Padova Frères)

The High Council which got into a disadvantageous position against the incidents that developed due to the occupation of İzmir and started to question its decision, took the warnings into consideration and sent General Milne to the region to find a solution for the problem and to determine the boundaries of the Greek region in August of 1919. The British attacks against the Turkish troops were stopped with General Milne's arrival. In his announced orders, General Milne requested not performing any military operation until the Turco-Greek borders are clearly determined. In his telegram messages, Milne was continuously defending that the Greek troops

located in the Menderes Valley needed to be replaced by the troops of the Entente Powers. The Milne Line was crossing from south of Ayvalık, Soma, Salihli and Selçuk. However, the Greeks did not recognize the Milne Line and after some time, they started their attack from the Soma and Salihli fronts on January 18, 1920. The Greek attack started from the Milne Line and this artificial boundary was eliminated by this attack.⁸



Photo 8: August 8, 1919, General Milne's review of the Greek troops on the dock of İzmir. (Source: Padova Frères)

In the time period that passed from after the Paris Conference of January 1919 and the Armistice of Sevres of August 1920, the Entente Powers organized three separate conferences. Following the London Conference of February 1920, the draft of the Armistice of Sevres appeared in April and after the San Remo Conference, the Greeks were allowed to move further in Anatolia in the Limpne Conference of June 1920.

⁸ *Askeri Tarih Belgeleri Dergisi*, Year 50, No. 112, Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı, Genelkurmay Basımevi, Ankara, June 2001, p. 131.



Photo 9: The picture was taken before June 1920 when the right to proceed further into Anatolia was recognized to them while the British General Hamboury and the Greek General Comininos were reviewing the Greek Cavalry Regiment together on February 21, 1920. (Source: Padova Frères)

The British did not withdraw their support for the Greeks who failed to recognize the Milne Line for the duration of the whole occupation. When Venizelos lost in the November 1920 elections, King Konstantin I came to the Greek throne again with a great public support. Afterwards, France started to follow an anti-Greek policy. The Greek King Konstantin I, appointed his friend General Anastasios Papulas as the commander of the Greek Asia Minor Army to replace Leonidas Paraskevopoulos. Afterwards, he assigned his brother Prince Andreas, who visited İzmir previously, as the Commander of the 2nd Army Corps. Prince Andreas of Greece stayed as a guest at the mansion of the British Trader Whittall Family when he came to İzmir in 1921.



Photo 10-11: The Greek community in İzmir was demonstrating at every opportunity to reveal its own identity. In 1921, the arrival of Prince Andreas who would come to İzmir again as the Commander of the 2nd Army Corps and his brother Christofer for the celebration ceremony of the 2nd Constitutional Period became an excuse for the local Greeks to demonstrate and an enthusiastic greeting ceremony was prepared by the local Greek community. At that year, Andreas was 26, and Christofer was 20 years old. (Source: Edit. C.S.D.)

Prince Andreas, little brother of the Greek King Konstantin I and a good cavalry, who came to İzmir in 1921 attended the Sakarya Pitched Battle between the dates of August 23 and September 13, 1921 as the Commander of the 2nd Army Corps under the command of General Papoulas, the Commander of the Greek Army of Asia Minor. Everything was made to make sure that Prince Andreas' 2nd Army Corps would be the first to enter Ankara. Prince Andreas moved his troops into other directions in Sakarya by not listening to the orders of General Papoulas, the Commander of the Greek Army of Asia Minor and the divided Army was defeated and withdrew due to the actions of Prince Andreas.

Prince Andreas who had the title of Prince of Greece and Denmark married to Princess Alice who was born in 1903 in the Windsor Palace as the granddaughter of Christian IX, the Danish King and the older granddaughter of Queen Victoria. Andreas, who was a staunch Helen and an ardent enemy of the Turks, was the father of Phillippe, the husband of Elizabeth, the British Queen. He was fighting against the Turks in Anatolia during the birth of his son on the Corfu Island. Remembrance of Andreas in some of his biographies as “hut burner” originates from his orders to burn down many Turkish villages around Eskişehir during the war and his similar actions continued until September of 1922 in the process of the withdrawal of the Greek Army to İzmir. We know that similar actions took place previously in the Salonika fire on August 18, 1917.

We know that an additional number of troops composed of 50.000 soldiers came to Anatolia with the arrival of Prince Andreas who was against Venizelos. However, in the meantime, the Communists who were formed in the Greek Army in the consequence of the Bolshevik Revolution as a third fraction besides the pro-King and pro-Venizelos groups. Within this process, only 2 days after the Turks entered into İzmir on September 9, a coup took place in Greece on September 11, 1922, King Konstantin I fled to Italy and Prince Andreas had to seek refuge in France with his family. The Greek Army which started to withdraw after August 30, 1922 was withdrawing its troops by burning the towns and villages down fast as it started to leave the lands and cities that it occupied. For the purpose of its withdrawal, the Greek Army was using all kinds of naval vehicles including cargo ships.

As the information regarding that the Turkish Army was approaching İzmir, all Greeks primarily the Orthodox clergy got alarmed. The Metropolitans and priests coming from İzmir and surrounding areas went to the Consulates and military representatives of the Entente Powers and asked for help. The Greek people were also uneasy. They were trying to get a guarantee from the British, French and Italian Consulates regarding that no harm would be made to them. However, the majority of the Greek population living in the neighborhoods which were burned by the withdrawing Greek Army from the suburbs of İzmir was migrating towards İzmir. Those who were unable to migrate were attempting to stay where they were by claiming that they had been living with the Turks for many years in a friendly manner. However, the number of those who were migrating towards İzmir reached up to 600.000 persons in a short amount of time. Some of them were trying to find a way to go to the islands from the towns on the shore outside of İzmir. However, many of them were migrating to İzmir by hoping that they would be protected based on the verbal guarantees that the Metropolitans took from the representatives of the Entente Powers. Those people who were in great anxiety started to create a great problem in İzmir where they started to accumulate.

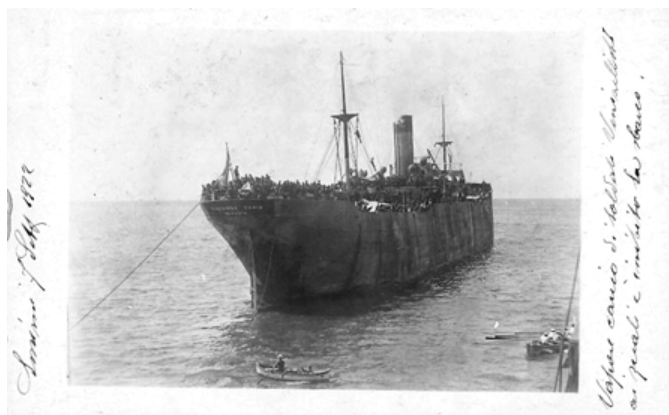


Photo 12: September 7, 1922, the withdrawal of the Greek occupying troops. On this date, news was given regarding that 9 Greek fighter aircrafts in the military base in İzmir Gaziemir had taken off to go to Athens. The military police gave an order to close down all music halls and other entertainment venues. (Anonymous)

Hrisostomos, the Metropolitan of İzmir, who gave up his hope regarding the success of the Greek military forces, switched sides immediately and led the Greek dailies published in İzmir to change their policies completely against the Greek occupation which he previously supported in all aspects. The publications started to defend the idea that the Muslims and Greeks needed to live peacefully in Anatolia from that day forth. Metropolitan Hrisostomos even took the lead for publication of a declaration inviting all people in the city to calm down by convening a group on the dates of 6 and 7 September 1922 composed of the representatives of all religious communities in İzmir, primarily the Mufti of İzmir and the Armenian Metropolitan. The French and Italian Consulates were visited, and assistance was requested however, the concerns of the Greeks did not disappear and they started to take their possessions with them and gather in the courtyards of the churches. The piling up of the people on the shores started on 6 and 7 September despite the attempts of Hrisostomos and in a short amount of time, roughly about 150.000 people only at the dock area piled up with their donkeys, and horse cars carrying their bales and packs. Even if they were begging Greek boatmen to go to the ships waiting off shore, the boatmen offered excessive fees and even if they were able to approach and attempt to climb the ships of the Entente Powers, they were falling into the sea due to

the butt strokes aiming their hands. Although Hrisostomos earlier stated that the Anatolian Greeks and Armenians aged between 15 and 50 needed to join the Greek Army and those who failed to do so would be punished and even excommunicated, in September there were hundreds of Greek and Armenian deserters wandering in İzmir.⁹ The mainland Greece also gave up their hopes regarding this process. On September 6, the ship named Velos came to İzmir to get the troops and on September 7, the ship named Patris came to get the wounded who were being treated in the hospitals. This situation created a greater panic among the Greeks. And the next day, the ship named Naksos left İzmir with the high rank military personnel. In this short amount of time, they took everything that may be moved with them such as all kinds of equipment and documents, and they destroyed everything that they were unable to use and rendered them unusable.



Photo 13: September 7, 1922, the withdrawal of the Greek Army and piling up of the hopeless Greeks of İzmir in front of “Hotel de Ville” on the shore to leave the city. (Anonymous)

9 Bülent Atalay, “İşgal Döneminde İzmir Metropolitani Hrisostomos (1919–1922)”, *Trakya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Vol. 11, No. 1, June 2009, p. 44.



Photo 14: September 9, 1922, withdrawal of the Greek troops and Armenian Militia Army. In the picture, the group on the left walking with the flag is a portion of the Armenian Volunteers' Army which was established when the Greek Army started to occupy the Aegean region. (Anonymous)

The Armenian “General Turkom”, who initially created the “Armenian Volunteers' Army” composed of the Armenians of İzmir and became its commander, specially trained the Armenian guerillas named “the Black Company” about brutality, violence, arson and massacre to Turks. The Armenian youth of the Protestant Missionaries centered on the Basmane district of İzmir had the material and nonmaterial means of persuasion to join the occupying troops with the support of the United States and Great Britain as it was the case in central Anatolia. In those days, the exhausted Greek soldiers were withdrawing from the lands that they had occupied by all kinds of naval vehicles including cargo ships. Being worried about their future the local Greeks were trying to board the ships. The Greeks coming from the villages of the Aegean region filled the dock. The British, French and American soldiers were trying to provide certain guarantees to the Greek people waiting on the dock.



Photo 15: September 9, 1922, in the afternoon when the picture of Sir Henry Lam, the British Consul, and his wife was taken at the İzmir dock, the situation seems to be pretty calm and under control. No Greek soldiers remained in the area. However, the Turkish troops have not reached the dock yet. (Anonymous)



Photo 16: September 9, 1922 Saturday, the entrance of the Turkish Cavalry into İzmir, the time is about 16:00. The Greek troops which remained in the city left the city from the morning hours until noon, and although the remaining Greek and Armenians militia resisted in some districts, they surrendered at the end. Right before those hours, the Turkish flag was hoisted on Kadife Kale where the Greek radio station was established. (Anonymous)



Photo 17-18: September 10, 1922, the progress of the quartermaster units of the Turkish Army through the dock and towards the Sarı Kışla. (Anonymous)



Photo 19: September 13, 1922 the İzmir fire which started on this date after the midnight grew in the morning hours. The photograph was taken from an Italian ship which anchored offshore due to the growth of the fire while the ship was anchored at the Port on September 13. (Anonymous)

Although the great İzmir fire started on September 13, small fires were set on 11 and 12 September especially in the Armenian district and the Greek districts named Agie Catherina, Hadji Franko and Psomalani¹⁰ neighboring the Armenian district on the north, however they were taken under control in a short amount of time. Hundreds of scenarios were put forward for the great fire. However, according to the real discourse which is also accepted by the Greek authors nowadays is that the fire was set by the Armenians in the Armenian neighborhood in more than one place. Afterwards, the fire grew due to arson in various places of the city. In the consequence of

¹⁰ The mentioned neighborhoods are temporarily located within the boundaries of Kahramanlar and Mimar Sinan neighborhoods (including the Kültürpark).

our research, the origin of the fire was verified as the Suzan Street in the Armenian neighborhood and the Surp Stepanos (St. Etienne) Armenian Cathedral has a façade on this street. Other places of origin for the fire are the Big and Small Murtekie Inns located behind the İzmir Tannery in Basmane which were being used as accommodation for the lower income Armenians and the Chikodia (Tchicuria) Inn used by the Greeks located in the Agia Catherina Greek neighborhood.

Those who were responsible for the fire were undoubtedly indicated clearly as the Armenians and Greeks by the correspondence and reports written by Admiral Charles Henri Dumesnil who was the Commander of the French Eastern Mediterranean Fleet which was one of the most striking and impartial sources regarding the origin and growth of the fire. The statements of insurer Ernest Bon, who was the Director of the Fire Services of İzmir Insurance Companies clearly stated the following in his report dated September 28, 1922: “The well-organized firefighting teams in İzmir were in a disarray due to the fact that many Christians have left the city. The firefighting teams moved as quickly as possible; however, they were faced with multiple fires which started simultaneously in many different points in the city, and this situation indicates an organization that may not be attributed to the Turkish looters. Those fires grew with the already existing flammable materials in sufficient amount and spread in a short amount of time. The arsonists (the Greeks and Armenians) even attacked the Christian firefighters who were performing their duties”. Dumesnil was assigned for evacuating the French in the city on September 9 and prepared the report based on official documents and testimonies.¹¹ The fire destroyed about 44.000 residential units in the area where later on the Kültürpark (Culture Park) would be built.

11 Source sur la Question Arménienne, “L’Amiral Charles Dumesnil et Raymond Poincaré sur les Causes de l’Incendie d’İzmir (Smyrne)” Jeudi 1 Juillet 2021, <http://question-armenienne.blogspot.com>



Photo 20-21: Great Britain approached the Greek requests to occupy İzmir and western Anatolia favorably and supported those requests. The British Consulate of İzmir which performed activities for the benefit of Greece before and for the duration of the occupation was located in a large area with its own post Office, church and prison. The Consulate building in the picture carried all of its files, information and documentation to its ship named Iron Duke anchored at the port and the High Commissar Aristidis Stegiadis (Steryadis) left İzmir by boarding the same ship. The picture shows the condition of the British Consulate which played an active role during the occupation period before and after the fire of September 13, 1922. (Source: Sarantopoulos / Anonymous)

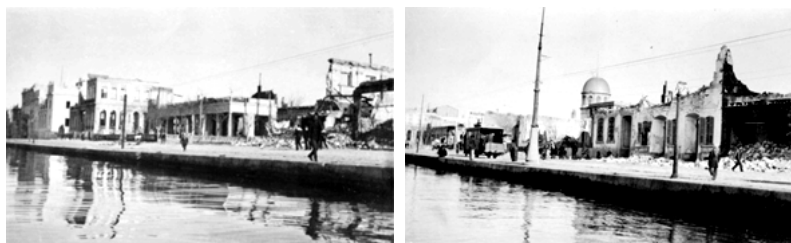


Photo 22-23: First Kordon (Dock) after September 18, 1922 Prince Andreas personally indicated that he burned down Turkish villages during the Sakarya War and he enjoyed it greatly. Indeed, the fire that started in Salonika on August 18, 1917 rendered the neighborhoods unlivable where the Jewish and Turkish population was intense. The fire lasted 32 hours and the portion of the city with the surface area of 1.000.000 square meters (approximately 35% of the city) was completely destroyed and about 20.000 buildings became unusable and 72.000 people became homeless. Consequently, we know that many Jews migrated to west Anatolia and İzmir. This time, a similar incident took place for İzmir in September of 1922. (Anonymous)



Photo 24-25: There is no certain information as to when and how the fire which started on September 13 was extinguished, because even for the duration of the 4-day time period, there were arsons in various locations and it was not possible for the firefighters to extinguish it. Therefore, in many places the fire died down in its natural course. (Anonymous)

Although the İzmir fire was set in various locations, the time of origin is around 02:00 on September 13 Wednesday after midnight and it lasted for four days. The inns built in the style of Bağdadi where at first the poor workers lived and later the Armenian militia was located led to the quick spread of the fire. Here, it is useful to remember that General Nikolaos Plastiras of the Greek Army with the nickname of Black Devil had set up “arsonist platoons” with the order of Prince Andreas. They reached İzmir by burning down the Turkish villages, towns and cities by totally destroying the crops, animals, nature and the Muslim population living on the land, and the last fire greatly destroyed the city.



Photo 26-27: The Grand Hotel Splendid Palace located on the dock where the Greek occupying troops first landed before and after September 12, 1922. (Anonymous)

The Greek Army and the supporting Armenian militia were withdrawing by burning down the Muslim settlements on their route. In accordance to the general instructions received in this regard, creating arsonist teams in some of the Greek and Armenian neighborhoods in İzmir had been previously done by “General Turkom” and “Black Devil Plastiras” (General Nikolaos Plastiras). Those two persons arrived İzmir way before the Turkish soldiers arrived the city and they checked into Grand Hotel Splendid Palace which was run by Naim Mulaliç who would later run the Yalova Hot Springs after the announcement of the Republic. This was also the place where the Greek Army first landed on İzmir. The name of the hotel where Atatürk drank coffee before 1919 was previously Grand Hotel Kraemer Palace. After the announcement of the Republic, this area would be planned as the Cumhuriyet Square and the statue of Atatürk would be placed here in July of 1932.

For the duration of the War of Independence, roughly about 30% of the Greek troops fighting against the Turkish Army were composed of the Anatolian Greeks. With a decision that it made; the Government of the Turkish Grand National Assembly was attempting to partially prevent the enrollment of the Anatolian Greeks in the Greek Army. Within the scope of this decision, it was known that those who enrolled in the Greek Army and fought against the Turkish Army during the war despite the fact that they were Ottoman citizens would not be treated as prisoners of war, but they would be punished by the heaviest punishment with the charge of treason at the Ankara Independence Tribunal. Therefore, hundreds of Greeks who deserted from the Greek Army were wandering on the streets of İzmir. It is stated that before September 9, there were about 300.000 or 350.000 refugees in İzmir and after the fire, 200.000 people became homeless. The deserters who were unable to escape from the Greek Army and created disorder in the city were captured in a short amount of time and those people creating disorder were prevented. They were treated as prisoners of war and according to the British records, they were swapped in due course with 22.071 Turkish prisoners of war composed of 520 officers, 6002 soldiers and some civilians who were held as prisoners in Greece. However, the numbers of the delivery of the prisoners were determined as 329 officers, 6200 soldiers and 9410 civilians.¹² It is believed that the remaining persons lost their lives under the

12 Cemalettin Taşkıran, *Milli Mücadelede Türk ve Yunan Esirler (1919-1923)*, Platin Yayınları 2005, p. 25

heavy imprisonment conditions that existed in Greece. The civilian prisoners of war were those who did not have any military id and they were composed of those who were taken away by the Greeks to obtain preponderance in a swap of Greek prisoners of war in Türkiye.



Photo 28: Greek prisoners of war on the İzmir dock after September 9, 1922. (Anonymous)

Conclusion

Behaviors against the Greeks and Armenians who wanted to leave the city after capturing İzmir, and the activities and approaches of some of the countries regarding the evacuation from the port and the fire in the city revealed conflicting news. It is understood that the news originating from Athens and London included biases and that news claimed that the fire was set by the Turks, however as time progressed, and clear information is obtained about the events from various sources, it is understood that the claims were unsubstantiated and illogical. It is especially revealed that open information regarding the existence and duties of the Greek and Armenian arsonist platoons was not clarified. Despite the spread of the unsubstantiated and biased news that would claim that the first bullet was fired by a Greek on September 15, 1919, revealing undoubted facts in time by the trustworthy sources and emergence of visual materials becomes a clear response for the biased questions.

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