

THE END OF THE GREEK *MILLET* IN ISTANBUL

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THE OCCUPATION OF ISTANBUL by British, French, Italian, and Greek forces following signature of the Armistice of Mondros (30 October 1918) was supposed to be a temporary measure, to last until the Peace Conference meeting in Paris decided on the final disposition of that city as well as of the entire Ottoman Empire. From the start, however, the Christian religious and political leaders in Istanbul and elsewhere in what remained of the Empire, often encouraged by the occupation forces, stirred the Christian minorities to take advantage of the occupation to achieve greater political aims. Greek nationalists hoped that the occupation could be used to regain control of “Constantinople” and annex it to Greece along with Izmir and much of western Anatolia. From the first day of the armistice and occupation, the Greek Patriarch held daily meetings in churches throughout the city arousing his flock with passionate speeches, assuring those gathered that the long-held dream of restoring Hellenism to “Constantinople” would be realized and that “Hagia Sophia” (Aya Sofya) would once again serve as a cathedral. The “Mavri Mira” nationalist society acted as its propaganda agency in Istanbul, with branches at Bursa and Bandırma in western Anatolia and at Kırkkilise (Kırklareli) and Tekirdağ in Thrace. It received the support of the Greek Red Cross and Greek Refugees Society, whose activities were supposed to be limited to helping Greek refugees.¹ Broadside were distributed announcing that Istanbul was being separated from the Ottoman Empire. The Greek units in the Allied occupation force and the Greek embassy distributed arms and spread nationalist propaganda among Greek civilians who were urged to act violently in order to assure Allied occupation of the city on the pretext of the disorder which they, themselves, were creating. Greek flags were hung at Aya Sofya and at Greek homes around Istanbul, and in all the churches prayers were offered that it would not be long before Greek Prime Minister Venizelos would arrive in Greek “Constantinople” to culminate the achievement of the dream of *enosis*.²

The Armenian community of Istanbul, which for centuries had been recognized by the Ottomans as an autonomous *millet*, also was encouraged by the Allied presence to seek fulfillment of its long-held aspirations of returning the lands of the Empire to Christian rule and of restoring the ancient Armenian kingdom in the east. When Patriarch Zaven returned from his wartime exile, the government of Grand Vizier Damat Ferit Pasha attempted to establish good relations by urging both Armenians

1 Istanbul Dahiliye (Ottoman Ministry of the Interior) dossier no. 4072, dated 12 Mıtharrem 1338 / 7 October 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 49-2 no. 53; Mustafa Kemal report, Erzurum, 22 August 1919, in Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Nutuk*, 3 vols. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1989), Vol. 3, doc. 1, pp. 1200-1201; Emniyet-i Umumiye (Istanbul Dahiliye) to governors of Edirne, Aydın, Trabzon and other provincial and district governors dated 6 Receb 1337 / 7 April 1919: BBA DH/ŞFR dosya 98 no. 73.

2 Rauf Bey to Şevket Bey (Mondros), 5 November 1918: Hüsnü Himmetoğlu, *Kurtuluş Savaşında İstanbul ve Yardımları*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Ülkü, 1975), Vol. 1, pp. 59-60.

and Turks to forget past grievances while working to restore the multi-ethnic society which had worked so well during the previous century. Damat Ferit promised autonomy for an Armenian district within the Turkish state, with population exchanges to take place where postwar tensions between the groups might lead to violence. Zaven, however, denied any Armenian complicity in the difficulties which had arisen, demanded that the Turks admit their guilt and repent their past sins, and expected that Allied intervention would enable the Armenians to gain far more than the Turks were offering, *i.e.*, full independence, with the Turks living in the areas that would be turned over to the Armenians either subjected to minority status or expelled altogether.³ An Armenian Mixed Council, including both religious and secular representatives from the Armenian Protestant and Catholic communities as well as the Gregorian establishment, was created to represent the Armenians with both the Allied High Commissioners and the Ottoman government. But rather than attempting to restore good relations with the Muslim and Jewish communities, it spent most of its efforts insisting that the Allied forces secure restoration of Armenian property which had been confiscated during the war, and rescue women and children it claimed to be Armenian who had been given safe shelter in Muslim homes. This stirred tremendous resentment, not only from the families whose properties and family members were forcefully taken away, but also in many cases from the individuals who insisted that they were not Armenian. Many others, although admitting their Armenian origins, preferred to stay with their Muslim husbands and fathers regardless of the circumstances which had brought them together. In addition, the Council gathered stories about wartime atrocities and passed them on to the Allies both in Istanbul and Paris in an attempt to support Armenian claims for independence and to deny the Turks their independence. This further deepened the divisions that already existed between the Armenian community and the Muslims and Jews who remained in the Empire.⁴

Under such conditions, it is not surprising that the Christian population in what remained of the Empire assumed that Muslim rule had definitively come to an end and that they were free to express their ancient hatreds for both Muslims and Jews. The arrival of the Allied occupation forces off the Istanbul docks on 13 November 1918 was the signal for a wild celebration by the city's Greek and Armenian populations, much to the unhappiness and disgust of local Turks and Jews, who correctly feared that it would not be long before they were subjected to Christian brutality in the name of democracy.⁵ The Christian population massed on the quays, demonstrated with enthusiasm, while large flags of Britain, France, and Greece were hung from most of the public buildings in the Greek and Armenian quarters. The appearance of the Greek battleship *Averoff*, included in the Allied fleet despite the promises made by Admiral Arthur Calthorpe (Commander of the British Mediterranean Squadron and first Allied High Commissioner) to Hüseyin Rauf Orbay (Minister of the Navy and Head of the Ottoman Delegation) at Mondros, provoked tremendous enthusiasm among the non-Muslims. Daily

3 Salâhi Sönyel, *Turkish Diplomacy 1918–1923: Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish National Movement* (London and Beverly Hills, California: Sage, 1975), pp. 5–6; Archbishop Zaven, *Patriarkakan hushers, vaverakirner u vgayutiunner* (Cairo: n.p., 1947), pp. 308–309, cited in Levon Marashlian, "The Armenian Question from Sèvres to Lausanne," 2 vols. (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1992), Vol. 2, pp. 622–623; *Times* (London), 14 December 1922.

4 Marashlian, "Armenian Question," Vol. 2, pp. 520–530.

5 Alexes Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations, 1918–1974* (Athens: Center for Asia Minor Studies, 1983), pp. 145–146; for Beirut, see *Les Armées françaises au Levant, 1919–1939*, 2 vols. (Château de Vincennes, France: Le Service, 1978), Vol. 1: *L'Occupation française en Syrie et en Cilicie sous le Commandement britannique, Novembre 1918–Novembre 1919*, p. 19; Archives S. H. Marine, Chronologique des opérations no. 531 of 6 December 1918 (Carton SA. 17).

hundreds of Greeks and Armenians visited the Allied ships anchored in the Bosphorus off Beşiktaş. The constant demonstrations forced the sultan to leave the nearby Dolmabahçe Palace for the comparative quiet of the Yıldız Palace up the hill.⁶

On Sunday, 17 November, French Vice Admiral Amet, Greek officers, and an Italian representative appeared at a Greek church service in Pangaltı; this frightened and disturbed the Turks even more, particularly after the admiral stated publicly:

The officers and men under my command are honored for being able to bring to Greeks in Turkey the greetings of their motherland along with an olive branch from the Parthenon. After all these efforts, and after many mistakes such as deposing the king, the Greek government has succeeded in bringing the Greek flag to you. The flag of Greece is not a sign of permanent disorder in history, but rather is a sign of peace and prosperity. We have brought here not the sword but the olive branch.⁷

On 25 November 1918 an Istanbul Greek newspaper openly urged the occupying forces to free Istanbul's Christians, who said they had no confidence in either the old or the young Turks.⁸ Other Greek newspapers printed rumors that the Greek army would take over Bursa and Konya as well as the Aegean Islands and Istanbul.⁹ On 5 January 1919 prayers were said in the Hagia Triada church at Taksim square for Greeks and Armenians who had been killed by Turks; the service was joined by the commander and men of the Greek warship *Averoff* which was lying in the harbor. The Metropolitan of Çanakkale said the prayer, spoke at length about freeing Greeks from the "misdeeds of the Turks," and added his hope that the Armenians would support these efforts.¹⁰ On 30 March 1919, the arrival in Istanbul of Greek General Leonidas, said by the Greeks to be the first Greek officer to officially set foot in Istanbul since it had been conquered by the Turks in 1453, provoked tremendous demonstrations throughout the city. The officers and sailors who landed were surrounded by crowds shouting their support and bedecking them with flowers and colored ribbons, while Turks and Jews hung in the background, fearing the worst.¹¹ Greek newspapers openly printed statements advocating that all Turks be driven from the city. The newspaper *Teologos* published a picture in which cannonballs fired by Woodrow Wilson took the form of Venizelos and landed on the top of Aya Sofya. This newspaper also declared it would no longer publish Turkish names and articles. There were incidents when Greek children attacked Turkish children; on one occasion drunken Greek soldiers raped Turkish women in the streets, and the Turkish women trying to intervene were killed by the Allied police.¹²

The Greeks of Istanbul intended to take full advantage of the Allied presence to secure vengeance for the centuries of Muslim rule in a country which they always had considered to be their own even though the empires they looked back to for justification were Roman and Hellenic but not Greek. Despite their admiration for Greek Prime Minister Venizelos, however, it was to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul that they turned for leadership since it was the national center around which their

6 Istanbul Dahiliye order no. 4365 dated 1 Rebi 11 1338 / 24 December 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 56-2 no. 30; Galip Kemali Söylemezoğlu, p. 23; M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, *Milli Mücadele Başlarken*, 2 vols. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1959-1965), Vol. 1, p. 61; *Milliyet*, 13 December 1967.

7 Gökbilgin, *Milli Mücadele*, Vol. 1, pp. 4-6.

8 Alexandris, *Greek Minority*, p. 147.

9 Selahattin Tansel, *Mondros'tan Mudanya'ya Kadar*, 4 vols. (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1977-1978; reprinted 1991), Vol. 1, pp. 84-85.

10 Tansel, *Mondros'tan Mudanya'ya Kadar*, Vol. 1, p. 85; Ömer Sami Coşar, *İstiklal Harbi Gazetesi*, No. 2, n.d.

11 Alexandris, *Greek Minority*, p. 151.

12 BBA, BEO 343329: Grand Vezir Tezkereî Sami no. 816, 11 June 1919; Gökbilgin, *Milli Mücadele*, Vol. 1, p. 85.

spiritual, political, and social life converged in Ottoman times.¹³ The old Patriarch Germanos V (Kavakopoulos) refused to cooperate with this nationalist movement and insisted on remaining non-political in the traditional manner. As a result, on 25 October 1918, “a dynamic and predominantly lay faction” of “middle-class Constantinopolitans” forced him to resign, along with the Patriarchal Mixed Council, on the pretext that they had compromised with the Young Turks on matters such as education and marriage and had been responsible for financial scandals which had, indeed, occurred in what was a lax administration of the *millet*. The new Mixed Council was filled with adherents of the “Megali Idea” (the Great Idea of restoring the ancient Hellenic empire) who were strongly supported by the three leading bishops in Anatolia, Chrysostomos Kalafates (Metropolitan of Izmir, 1910–1920), Germanos (Samsun), and Dorotheos Mammelis (Bursa). Dorotheos, who had already gained prominence for his support of Greek nationalist bands in Macedonia during the Balkan Wars and had close relations with the wealthy Greek businessmen in Istanbul, was chosen as new Acting Patriarch (*locum tenens*) to carry out their ideals until a new Patriarch could finally be chosen following the conclusion of peace.¹⁴ He immediately appealed to the Church of England to secure “the complete and final expulsion” of the Turks from the city. In 1921 Dorotheos died of heart failure in London the middle of a mission which secured the support of the Anglican Church for Greek ambitions. He was succeeded in the Patriarchate by Meletios IV Metaxakis, “a Cretan in origin, Venizelist in politics, and liberal and progressive in church affairs,” who continued his activist and nationalist policies.¹⁵

The Greek Orthodox Church played a major political role during the Armistice years. With the help of a number of nationalist priests who took the lead in different parts of the country, they pushed into retirement the older priests while developing the Patriarchate into an active promoter of Greek national ambitions. Control of the Greeks of Istanbul was important, for they occupied a particularly high place in the politics, culture, and religion of Greeks throughout the world. The 330,906 Greeks in Istanbul (according to the 1910 census), the second largest ethnic group after the Turks, were a greater concentration than in any other world city except Athens. Istanbul’s Greeks were prominent in the economic and social life of the capital. There were important Greek bankers and shippers, industrialists, merchants, and professionals. Far from suppressing the Greek community, the Ottomans had allowed it to fully develop its cultural activities. There were 113 Greek schools and a project existed to establish a secular Greek university in the city. The Greek Literary Society of Constantinople, established in 1861, enjoyed an international reputation. It was an outstanding community indeed which the Greek nationalists now took control of through the Patriarchate. Even under the traditional priests, Greek education had strongly emphasized Hellenic and Orthodox Christian traditions and culture. Now under the new leaders this emphasis was increased to the point of fanatical hatred of all who did not share Greek culture and Greek traditions.¹⁶

13 S. G. Xydis, “Modern Greek Nationalism,” in *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, Peter F. Sugar and Ivo J. Lederer, eds. (Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 1969; reprinted 1971), pp. 207–258.

14 Andrew Ryan, “Memorandum on the Ecumenical Patriarchate,” 26 December 1922, in Foreign Office Archives, Public Record Office, London: 371/4156/516; Alexandris, *Greek Minority*, pp. 142–143; Raymond Janin, *Les Eglises orientales et les rites orientaux*, second edition (Paris: Pro Unione, 1928), p. 133.

15 Andrew Mango, “Remembering the Minorities,” *Middle East Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 4, 1973, p. 124; Alexandris, *Greek Minority*, summarized in Mango, pp. 124–125; Gotthard Jäschke, “Die türkisch-orthodoxe Kirche,” *Der Islam*, Vol. 39, 1964, p. 95, and Vol. 45, 1969, p. 317.

16 Alexandris, *Greek Minority*, p. 139.

It did not take long for the new Patriarchal Council led by Dorotheos to support Greek irredentism through the Central Committee of Unredeemed Greeks, an umbrella organization financed by the Greek Foreign Office, which sought to articulate and promote the aspirations of nationalist Ottoman Greeks. With offices in Istanbul and Athens as well as in London and Paris, it worked to promote and support Greek territorial claims in the Ottoman Empire under the leadership of the wealthy Anglo-Greek head of the Ionian Bank of London, Sir John Stavridi, who was close to the British establishment and a good friend of British Prime Minister Lloyd George, and thus had major influence on British policy toward the Ottomans in the postwar world.¹⁷

At the end of November 1918, the Patriarchal Council organized a Greek-Cretan regiment which took over physical control of the Greek quarter in Fener (Istanbul) and parts of the neighboring Jewish quarter of Balat to the west, expelling the Ottoman police and municipal agents and many Jews and establishing its own municipal government in what it called “liberated Greece” under the control of the Greek Patriarchate. On 21 January 1919, the Patriarch ended the teaching of Ottoman Turkish in all the Greek schools, leaving Greek as the sole language of instruction and communication. On 6 February 1919, the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior received an alarming report about meetings held at the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate to organize the establishment of a separate Greek state in Fener and other parts of the city in which Greeks comprised a majority of the population.¹⁸ When Franchet d’Esperey rode through Istanbul on a white horse on 8 February 1919, he was greeted by massive demonstrations of the Greek and Armenian minorities with twenty-one cannons firing as he went from the Sirkeci quay across the Galata Bridge and up the hill to Beyoğlu (Pera), thus adding to the tension. The next day when he landed on Büyükkada (Prinkipo), he was greeted by a large Persian carpet spread over the main road and by cheering Greek school children waving French and Greek flags.¹⁹ One of the major figures of twentieth-century Turkish literature, the famous poet and writer Süleyman Nazif, himself of Kurdish origin and involved in Kurdish nationalist activities, published a fervent protest against the welcome that the Christian minorities gave to the invader:

The demonstration carried out by a portion of our fellow countrymen on the occasion of yesterday’s arrival in our city of the French general has opened a wound which will bleed eternally in the hearts of every Turk and Muslim. Even with the passage of centuries and even if our melancholy and sadness of today is replaced by joy and happiness, we will leave this pain as a heritage which will cause our children and grandchildren to cry from generation to generation. Not even when the armies of Germany entered Paris in 1871 and passed under the arch of victory of the Great Napoleon did the French experience as much scorn and contempt as we experienced, nor did they experience the torment that we felt yesterday morning from 9 to 11 o’clock. Because at that time every person calling himself French, not only Christians but also French Jews and Algerian Muslims, cried with the same lamentations in the face of the national disaster. We, however, witnessed yesterday the most painful possible scorn thrown on our very national existence with a medley of cries of satisfaction by a portion of the people who were indebted to our magnanimity.²⁰

In response to the Ottoman government’s subsequent appeal for conciliation, on 9 March 1919 the

17 Alexandris, *Greek Minority*, pp. 144–145; Dimitri Kitsikis, *Propagande et pressions en politique internationale: la Grèce et ses revendications à la Conférence de la paix (1919–1920)*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963), p. 398.

18 Kalemi-i Mahsus (Istanbul Dahiliye) report dated 5 Cemazi I 1337 / 6 February 1919: BBA, DH/KMS dosya 49–1 no. 78.

19 BBA DH/KMS dosya 49–1 no. 99, 29 Cemazi I 1337 / 2 March 1919; Alexandris, *Greek Minority*, p. 147.

20 *Hadisat* (Istanbul), 9 February 1919.

Acting Patriarch declared that all relations between the Orthodox Patriarchate and the Ottoman government were ended, and that Greek subjects were completely excused from all responsibilities to the Ottoman state, thus for all practical purposes ending the Greek community as an Ottoman *millet*.²¹ On 16 March 1919 the Patriarchal Council passed a "Resolution for Union with Greece" that was read in all Istanbul churches:

The Greeks of Constantinople and the neighborhood assembled today in their churches . . . and proclaimed their unshakable wish to obtain complete national reestablishment. They regard Union with the mother country Greece as the only firm basis for natural development in the future . . . and entrust the Ecumenical Patriarchate, their supreme national authority, with the task of transmitting the present resolution to the representatives of England, France, the United States, Italy and Greece at the Peace Conference.²²

Velid Ebüzziya, son of the founder of modern journalism in the Ottoman Empire and publisher of his father's newspaper *Tasvir-i Efkâr*, responded that the demonstrations showed the intentions of the Greeks to try to break up the Empire in order to achieve their own national aims, and that the Turks would have to be vigilant to resist any such attempt:

Details of the demonstrations carried out by the Greek community in their churches the day before yesterday are being published in the newspapers. We doubt that any thinking people are astonished by the details that they read. As for ourselves, we are not at all surprised by demonstrations in this manner of the non-Muslim races in our country. We have seen such things and heard such things for the past four months, so we can only conclude that the demonstrations the day before yesterday were a natural consequence. This aspect which causes such excitement, to be true such anxiety, must be a cause for the awakening in response to these demonstrations of the Muslim and Turkish races who are the basic masters of this country.²³

On several occasions, the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior received documented information from agents regarding the distribution by the Greek army and Greek High Commission to local Greek citizens of hundreds of rifles and bombs, many of which were stored in private homes and churches, and even in bakeries and theaters in the Greek sections of the city.²⁴ Greek military officers were appointed as teachers in the Greek schools under the authority of the Patriarchate.²⁵ Greek schools violated Ottoman law by teaching students how to shoot rifles and using textbooks not approved by the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior that contained material scorning Islam and the Prophet and spreading hatred not only of Turks but also of Jews and other non-Greek Christians.²⁶ Greek bands roamed through the

21 Alexandris, *Greek Minority*, pp. 145, 152–153; Sina Akşin, *İstanbul Hükümetleri ve Milli Mücadele*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Cem, 1976; reprinted 1992), Vol. 1, 163; *Akşam*, 30 January 1919; British General Staff Intelligence Report, 23 October 1919, in Foreign Office Archives, Public Record Office, London: 371/4160/E149600; Calthorpe to Curzon, in Foreign Office Archives: 371/4165/55059, 371/4165/55144; Gotthard Jäschke, *Kurtuluş Savaşı ile İngiliz Belgeleri*, Cemal Köprülü, tr. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1971), p. 51.

22 *Tasvir-i Efkâr*, No. 2684, 18 March 1919.

23 *Tasvir-i Efkâr*, No. 2684, 18 March 1919.

24 İstanbul Dahiliye report of 1 Receb 1337 / 2 April 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 49–2 no. 9; İstanbul Dahiliye statements of 2 Ramazan 1337 / 1 June 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 53–1 no. 23, and 5 Ramazan 1337 / 4 June 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 49–2 no. 25; İstanbul Dahiliye dossier no. 4095, dated 21 Muharrem 1338 / 16 October 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 49–2 no. 55; İstanbul Dahiliye dossier 4072, dated 12 Muharrem 1338 / 7 October 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 49–2 no. 53; Ali Güler, *İşgal Yıllarında Yunan Gizli Teşkilatları* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 1988).

25 İstanbul Dahiliye report of 7 Şevval 1337 / 6 July 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 49–2 no. 35.

26 İstanbul Dahiliye dossier no. 4141 dated 4 Safer 1338 / 29 October 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 49–2 no. 58.

streets, cursing and swearing at Jews, often openly attacking them, leading to frequent complaints to the authorities by the Grand Rabbinate; for instance, this letter of 13 July 1337 [1921]:

Your Excellency:

On the 7th of this month, Thursday night, a group of several Greek youths came into the square near the Municipal Building at Beyoğlu (Pera) carrying a wooden image supposed to represent Jews while uttering all sorts of insults and swearing, causing extreme agitation to the religious and national feelings of Jews. The same sort of incidents took place earlier the same day at Balat and Hasköy, showing that the Greeks have prepared a plan to attack the Jews. Such actions against a group or its members are contrary to public traditions and morals and can only bring terrible results and disturb the good relations that have existed since olden times among the Ottoman ethnic elements. We ask that strong action be taken to prevent such unfortunate acts from taking place in the future.²⁷

Arms and ammunition were stored in Greek schools and churches.²⁸ Hundreds of Greek civilians went out to the Greek ships in Istanbul harbor or to the camps of Greek soldiers on the outskirts of the city where they were not only given rifles, bullets, and bombs, but also trained how to use them. At times, Greek sailors and soldiers on the ships in the harbor practiced the use of their weapons by firing on houses and other buildings along the shore,²⁹ prompting the Ottoman government to make numerous complaints to the High Commissioners and in particular to demand that the Greek ships move away from the Dolmabahçe Palace and other villas along the shore, whose inhabitants had been disturbed, not only by the firing but also by the constant noise coming from the carousing of the Greek sailors.³⁰

Greek youths were brought to the Greek Patriarchate and Consulate where they were recruited into the Greek army, though many refused forced enlistment and fled for protection to the offices of the Ottoman police.³¹ Landless Greeks from Thrace and Greece were brought to Istanbul and settled in Greek homes in order to increase the Greek population in the city and thus justify their claims to control it.³² On 23 October 1919, the Patriarchate officially ordered all Greeks to refrain from participating in the national elections then being held to choose new deputies to the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies.³³ Ottoman Greeks began flying the Greek national flag on Greek schools, churches, and business establishments, not only in Fener, where the population was entirely Greek, but also in places where the Greeks were in a decided minority, *e.g.*, along the Bosphorus in Beşiktaş, Arnavutköy, and Bebek. The Turkish inhabitants were outraged that the people with whom they had been so friendly for so long suddenly had shown what now appeared to be their real feelings for the first time.³⁴ On 10

27 BBA DH-1-UM dosya 19-17 nos. 1-55. This document is accompanied by an order from the Ministry of Justice and Sects to the Ministry of the Interior, dated 14 July 1921, and from it to the Istanbul Directorate of Police, dated 18 July 1921, ordering that such Greek conduct be punished and prevented in the future.

28 The archives of the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior has hundreds of reports of guns and ammunition found in searches conducted in Greek churches and schools throughout Istanbul. See, for example, Istanbul Dahiliye report of search of Greek church in the Çengelköy suburb of Istanbul, dated 19 Zilkade 1337 / 16 August 1919: BBA DH/1-UM dosya 19-8 no. 1/8.

29 Istanbul Dahiliye dossier no. 4128, dated 1 Safer 1338 / 26 October 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 49-2 no. 56.

30 Istanbul Dahiliye order no. 4365 dated 1 Rebi II 1338 / 24 December 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 56-2 no. 30.

31 Istanbul Dahiliye order no. 4404 dated 25 Rebi II 1338 / 17 January 1920: BBA DH/KMS dosya 49-2 no. 66; Istanbul Dahiliye dossier no. 4485, 12 Receb 1338 / 21 March 1920: BBA DH/KMS dosya 52-5 no. 72.

32 Istanbul Dahiliye report of 7 Şevval 1337 / 6 July 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 49-2 no. 38.

33 Istanbul Dahiliye report of 28 Muharrem 1338 / 23 October 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 56-1 no. 49.

34 Istanbul Dahiliye report of 29 Zilkade 1337 / 26 August 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 49-2 no. 48.

November 1919, Armenian and Greek nationalist organizations held a meeting on Büyükdada to plan joint strategies for driving the Turks out of Istanbul altogether.³⁵ Adding to Turkish unhappiness, the Greeks spread rumors that thousands of Greek families fleeing from Bolsheviks in southern Russia would be settled in Turkish homes in Istanbul and that rich Greeks were buying Muslim houses near Aya Sofya. News arrived from London that a meeting of the Christian Churches Union Society had demanded that the Allies immediately transform Aya Sofya into a church.³⁶ In response, the Ottoman government ordered that whenever Muslims wished to sell houses near Aya Sofya, they would be purchased by the Ministry of Religious Foundations, in order to prevent Greeks from taking over. At one point a Turkish army unit was settled nearby for the same purpose.³⁷

One of the many tragedies in all of this is that, in their enthusiastic assumption that the Allied occupation meant the end of Turkish rule in Istanbul, the Greek leaders and their followers forgot that the large majority of its population was Turkish and that, no matter what arrangements were finally made to end the occupation, Turks would remain with bitter memories of Greek actions and statements during the occupation. For all practical purposes, when the Patriarch officially released all Ottoman Greeks from their civil duties as Ottoman subjects, this was the end of the Greek *millet* that the Ottomans had nurtured and preserved over the centuries. It was a kind of suicide, whose inevitable result was the almost complete destruction of the Greek community of Istanbul, an event brought on largely by the Greeks themselves.

³⁵ Türk İstiklâl Tarihi Enstitüsü Archives no. 10/2694, 10 November 1919, text in ATTB IV, 126; Alexandris, *Greek Minority*, p. 147.

³⁶ Dimitri Kitsikis, *Yunan Propagandası*, Hakkı Devrim, tr. (Istanbul: Kaynak, 1974), p. 240.

³⁷ İstanbul Dahiliye report of 23 Cemazi II 1337 / 26 March 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 49-2 no. 1; İstanbul Dahiliye order of 23 Şaban 1337 / 24 May 1919: BBA DH/KMS dosya 52-1 no. 77.