

PAPER DETAILS

TITLE: Turkish Great Offensive in French and English Resources

AUTHORS: Mekki ULUDAG

PAGES: 96-107

ORIGINAL PDF URL: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/2539911>



Turkish Great Offensive in French and English Resources

Fransızca ve İngilizce Kaynaklarda Türk Büyük Taarruzu

Arş. Gör. Dr. Mekki ULUDAĞ¹

Abstract

In this paper, French and English sources about the Great Offensive were evaluated. The sources of the study are the British, American and French press of the period, as well as French and English articles, journals and books on the subject. The preparation stage for the Great Offensive and the Great Offensive constitutes the scope of the study. The study's objective is to expose the Allied sources' accounts of the Great Offensive which led to a rout for the Greek army. The comparative analysis method was preferred in the study. Accordingly, primarily news and articles from different sources on the subject were identified, and approaches in different sources related to the same development were revealed. Finally, the news determined was included in the scope of the study after being compared with the real situation by making use of the records of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, the news in the local press and archive documents. The most important possible findings of the study are that the information obtained by using relevant sources contributes to the literature. It can be said that the British press mostly supported the Greeks from the beginning to the end of the Greek occupation. However, it should be noted that there are many unbiased news and comments in the British press. The French press mostly tried to remain impartial, and most news critical of the British was included. The American press has tried to present objective news to a large extent, excluding a small number of news for propaganda purposes.

Keywords: Turkish Great Offensive, Afyonkarahisar, English press, French press

Paper Type: Research

Öz

Bu çalışmada Büyük Taarruz ile ilgili Fransızca ve İngilizce kaynaklar değerlendirilmiştir. Çalışmanın kaynakları dönemin İngiliz, Amerikan ve Fransız basını olup ayrıca konu ile ilgili Fransızca ve İngilizce makale, dergi ve kitaplardır. Büyük Taarruz'a hazırlık aşaması ile Büyük Taarruz bu çalışmanın sınırlarını oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmanın amacı, Yunanistan'ın büyük hezimetini ile sonuçlanmış olan Büyük Taarruz'un İtilaf Devletleri kaynaklarındaki anlatımının ortaya çıkarılmasıdır. Çalışmada mukayeseli analiz yöntemi tercih edilmiştir. Buna göre öncelikli olarak konuyla ilgili farklı kaynaklardaki haber ve yazılar tespit edilmiş, aynı gelişme ile ilgili farklı kaynaklardaki yaklaşımlar ortaya çıkarılmıştır. Son olarak tespit edilen haberler, TBMM Zabıt Cerideleri, yerel basın organlarındaki haberler ve arşiv belgelerinden faydalanılmak suretiyle gerçek durum ile mukayese edildikten sonra çalışma kapsamına alınmıştır. Çalışmanın en önemli muhtemel bulguları, ilgili kaynaklardan yararlanılarak elde edilen bilgilerin literatüre katkı sağlamasıdır. İngiliz basınının çoğunlukla Yunan işgalinin başından sonuna kadar Yunanlıları destekleyen bir tutum içinde olduğu söylenebilir. Bununla birlikte İngiliz basınında çok sayıda tarafsız haber ve yorumların yer aldığını belirtmek gerekir. Fransız basını çoğunlukla tarafsız kalmaya çaba göstermiş, çoğu kez İngilizleri eleştiren haberlere yer verilmiştir. Amerikan basını, az sayıdaki propaganda amaçlı haberler hariç tutulursa, büyük oranda objektif haber sunma çabası içerisinde olmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk Büyük Taarruzu, Afyonkarahisar, İngilizce basın, Fransızca basın

Makale Türü: Araştırma

Introduction

¹ Dicle Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, mekki.uludag@dicle.edu.tr

In the autumn of 1922, the Turks and the Greeks had quite different but directly related dreams. The greatest dream of the Turks was to expel the Greeks from Western Anatolia which was belong to the Turks for many centuries. The Turks were the real owners of Anatolia and they had a legitimate reason to fight for it. (Lewis, 1995, p.89.) Most of Western Anatolia was under Greek occupation and this was the biggest trouble for the Turks at the time. The Turks had been making essential preparations for a long time to start an assault in order to sweep the Greeks out of Anatolia. On the other hand, the Greeks had huge gains during their invasion of Anatolia, they had seized vast, fertile lands in an area from İzmir to Afyonkarahisar, including important Turkish cities of Kütahya and Eskişehir. The Greeks who had been in great dreams with the idea of Megali Idea and the dream of the Great Greek Empire had no intention of contentment with these gains. A few weeks before Turkish Great Offensive, the Greeks shifted a significant number of soldiers from Western Anatolia to Eastern Thrace. The purpose of that shift was clear and clean, the occupation of Thrace and İstanbul. The Greek government barred its press from documenting troop deployments in Thrace or Anatolia. According to rumours Greek forces would shortly try to capture İstanbul. (Le Temps, 28 Juillet 1922, p.1.) In this case, it was likely that the allies consciously delayed peace talks in Venice. This paper discusses the Turkish Great Offensive based on the Allies' resources. For the most part of the paper, the French resources were used while for the rest, the English resources taken into consideration.

British and French media had been closely interested in the developments in Anatolia during the Greek invasion. The repercussions of the Greek invasion of İzmir became great. The Allies at the time favoured the panhellenic policy of Greece. They authorised the landing of Greek troops at İzmir and, in the peace treaty of Sèvres, were prepared to give the Greeks large tracts of land in Thrace and Western Anatolia, even though the Greeks did not at that time possess a single foot on the Ottoman mainland. (The Times, May 19, 1919, p.11). The Turks protested and resisted. (The Standard Union, August 31, 1922, p.10.). The Greeks' invasion of İzmir caused a lot of trouble. In order to restore peace in the East, the Entente Powers had made some vital proposals. The government of King Constantine had just reversed the basis of the entire peace programme by deciding not to return Western Anatolia to the Turks and to leave their army there. The general staff of King Constantine had concentrated troops in Thrace, so that he could attempt a coup de main on İstanbul. It was known that all Greek statesmen did not agree with King Constantine's policies of Anatolia. (Le Temps, 01 Août 1922, p.1). In the interest of all concerned, the Allies should meet and talk as soon as possible.

The occupation policy of the Greek King Constantine was discussed among the British, and unlike Prime Minister Lloyd George, many British statesmen and MPs defended Turkish sovereignty in Thrace, İstanbul and Western Anatolia simply because the majority of the Turkish population. There were many in England who wanted an end to the war and to the Greeks' invasion. The British government was accused of mobilizing and strengthening Turkish nationalism. Moreover, the French and the Italians were thought to be sincerer in efforts for peace in the Near East. Accordingly, there were calls to the British Government to act together with the two abovementioned. Notwithstanding, Lloyd George insisted that the Greeks' occupation of Western Anatolia was in accordance with the British interests. Still, Lloyd George had not expressed his opinions of why he was supporting the Greek policy of invasion. On the other hand, it was clear that the big shift in the Greek politics, which was replacement of Venizelos with King Constantine, was the main reason of the change in the French and Italians' policies. Lloyd George spoke of the fruitless efforts made to restore peace in the Near East, and insisted that these two attempts failed through the fault of the Turkish nationalists. He said that the main reason of failure in the peace was that Mustafa Kemal's demand of the prior evacuation of Western Anatolia by the Greeks. Lloyd George was acting as if he wanted peace, but he was actually a definite advocate of the Greek occupation and constantly blaming the Turks for fabricated reasons. It was clear that the English Government under Lloyd George was not keen to establish a peace before a decisive war. (Le Temps, 6 Août 1922, p.1-2). As such, Mustafa Kemal Pasha, who had proved that he was a good leader in both politics and military

field, started preparations for the great attack. (The Los Angeles Times, August 27, 1922, p.48). It would take only two to three months to British to understand that they could no longer *act as the policeman of the world* as the Turks wiped the Greeks completely out of Anatolia. (The Spectator, November 11, 1922, p.686).

1. Efforts to Establish Peace in Asia Minor Right Before the Turkish Great Offensive

The Allies, due to thier different policies related to the Near East, could not come to terms on a peace regarding to Turkish-Greek war. It was only one day before the beginning of the Turkish Great Offensive that the British Government agreed to meet the Allies at Venice for the terms of peace. The French Government replied immediately with the content and they decided to invite both Turkey and Greece to the conference together with the Allies' High Commissioners of İstanbul. The French and the British had different points regarding the Greek evacuation of Anatolia. French insisted that the Greeks should evacuate all the places they had already occupied as a precondition of the peace conference, while the British claimed that the evacuation was not an obligation. The French government reminded to the British that they had already agreed on that condition in March of 1921, but this was ignored by the British. (Ahmad, 1993, p.50). The British Government insisted on the acceptance of the Sevres by the Turks as a precondition of the evacuation of the Greeks. (Le Temps, 25 Août 1922, p.1). It was clear that an agreement on the terms was not so easy among the Allies for the contentment of all powers.

An English General was on his trip to Ankara to meet the new Turkish Government under Mustafa Kemal Pasha and to understand the Turkish stand. General Townshend interviewed by journalists after his return from Ankara to London. He made some important confessions about the British stand toward Turkey. The General said that British hostility toward Turkey stems mainly from the fact that all the trade of Turkey goes to France, Italy and the United States. He said that while the British supported Greece, the Americans established a consulate in Ankara, and the French and the Italians had missions in Adana and Konya. English hostility toward the Turks greatly costs the English merchants. Turkey was a country with rich resources in forests, copper, coal and oil. In case of signing a peace agreement, the British would have important outlets in Turkey. The Greeks had blocked trade routes and it affects British profits. According to General Townshend, Tukey was well governed, taxes were paid regularly, the civil administration was perfect, and food and grains were plentiful and cheap. The Turkish army was in splendid condition. The soldiers were well fed and well dressed and their morale was excellent. Mustafa Kemal was a very valuable man. Turkish officers and general staff were good as any European army, they would prefer to die rather than retreat. The General claimed that the Turkish nationalists were not favourable to the idea of a conference in Venice or in any other Italian port. He said that Kemal Pasha would not leave his army to go so far and without him, a conference would be of no use. Townshend concluded his words by saying that Mustafa Kemal was eager for peace and that he was more for agreement than any kind of war. (Le Temps, 25 Août 1922, p.2.).

The Turks made a lot of effort for peace. In their memorandum, drawn up for the most part by Lord Curzon and his collaterals, the Entente Powers offered the Turks the total evacuation of Western Anatolia within a period of four months. Since then, the Turks had repeatedly said that they were ready to negotiate. The government of Ankara proposed the meeting of a conference, in İzmit. (Kinross, 1965, p.344). France, for her part, only sought to hasten the opening of negotiations. Although the Greeks did not even respond to the proposals of the Entente, France never pushed the Turks to intransigence. France was never slow to respond to communications from the British government, even when these communications had been delayed for long weeks. It was on August 21st that the French learned, at the Quai d'Orsay, of the latest English note on the Near East. It was on August 23rd that M. Poincaré, on returning to Paris, immediately signed his reply. England had only to reply in a few words just to fix the date of the conference to which it had finally consented. These few English words had not yet

come. Everyone had the impression that the Greek Government did not want the conference, and that the British Government encouraged Greece to refuse the evacuation of Anatolia. What happened was that the blood begins to flow again, and 36 wagons of wounded Greeks had already arrived at İzmir. May they know, those people, to whom they owe their misfortune. The Turkish victory aroused great emotion in Athens. The general staff and the government of King Constantine, who had been forced to tell the Greek population once again that the Turks were exhausted, had probably come to believe it. The Greek Government, used to living on illusory credit, could not imagine that there were people in other countries who could punch louder than they speak. Fethi Bey, Minister of the Interior Affairs in the Ankara government, went modestly to London and was turned away, neither Lloyd George nor Lord Curzon found time to receive him. They did not understand that Mustafa Kemal Pasha and the great National Assembly of Ankara, before sacrificing more lives, wanted to make a last, loyal attempt at reconciliation. (Le Temps, 31Août, 1922, p.1).

Efforts to resolve the Near East problem had proved unsuccessful, largely due to the contradictory policies of Britain and France. They had given indecisive support to the Greek expansionist project. France had taken the route of a separate agreement with the Turks and Ankara following the unrest in Cilicia last year. Encouraged by their success against France, the Turks had since demanded the complete withdrawal of the Greeks from Anatolia and also insist that Edirne and a larger part of Eastern Thrace be included in the area around İstanbul that remains for Turkey in Europe. The Allies had held tentative negotiations with the Turks with a view to a final peace settlement, culminating in the decision to hold a conference in Venice. But the recent postponement of this conference until the autumn had been followed by the present military action of the Turks, who seem convinced of their power to drive the Greek army out of Anatolia and impose their own peace terms. (The New York Herald, August 30, 1922, p.1.). Before the Turks launched their attack on Afyonkarahisar, they had left no stone unturned to ensure their success. Right up to the last moment, before the offensive began, the Turkish troops had been massed at points where the bulk of their forces could be brought to bear. A few days before the beginning of the offensive, several real actions and mock offensives were carried out to break up the Greek front and put the Greek defences on the spot. The Turks made a series of surprise attacks south of the Menderes, which led to the capture of a number of villages. At the same time, groups of raiders crossed the river and carried out some successful operations. Most of these operations were directed against the wings of the Greek army, although according to a communiqué, the greatest efforts of the nationalists were directed against the Greek centre. (The Daily Colonist, August 30, 1922, p.1).

2. Turkish Great Offensive

2.1. Turkish Preparations for the Great Offensive

The situation in Western Anatolia weeks before the Great Offensive was tense and both the Greeks and the Turks had different objectives. The Greeks thought that the Turks could no more remove them from their positions and the Greek King Constantine was never satisfied with his gains. He wanted more, he made a huge shift from Anatolia to Thrace, he transferred fifty thousand Greek soldiers with an aim of occupation of İstanbul. On the contrary, the Turks under Mustafa Kemal who were sure of a huge victory in case of a war against the Greeks had made important preparations for a final drive. (Kayalı, 2008, p.120). There were warning from the French and Italians that a war would cause great destruction and the death of thousands. However, the Greeks and the British never took those warnings into consideration. To be sure of no solution except for the war, Mustafa Kemal Pasha constantly went between the front and Ankara. (Le Temps, Paris, 16 Août 1922, p.1). The Turks tried to cover the positions of Mustafa Kemal Pasha and some notes were given to the press in regard to that aim. Turkish office claimed that Mustafa Kemal Pasha would have been invisible for a few days as a result of a threat of conspiracy, the headquarters of which would have received warnings and which would be due to the alleged agitation which would have been manifested in Ankara against the policy

of the Turkish Grand Assembly. (L'intransigent, Paris, 24 Août 1922, p.1). In his efforts to hide his main operation from the attention of the Greeks, Mustafa Kemal, leader of the Turkish nationalists, had begun an attack on the Greeks in the region of the Menderes River. He was also reported to be menacing the Greeks in the regions of Eskişehir and Afyonkarahisar. Turkish cavalries attacked on different fronts to prevent the concentration of the Greeks in Afyonkarahisar. Mustafa Kemal claimed that they would retake İstanbul and that the Sultan was their real leader. (Chicago Tribune, August 25, 1922, p.8).

While preparing for the great attack, the Turks followed the method that had been the classical model for attacking a stabilised entrenched position. The Turks marched by night and they hide their troops during the day, ten infantry divisions were concentrated on the Afyonkarahisar front. (The New York Herald, September 17, 1922, p.5). A most important part of the Turkish preparations was the cut-off of transportation and communication in an effort to prevent any leakage of information related to their positions. Communication with Anatolia was interrupted. (The Guardian, August 29, 1922, p.6). Before the Turks launched their attack against Afyonkarahisar they had neglected nothing to make sure of the success of their plan. All ports on the Black Sea had been closed to navigation and railway, telegraphic and postal communications with İstanbul had been suspended. These measures gave the first indications that an offensive was being planned. (Shaw & Shaw, 1977, p.362). The Turks, taking special care to choke any information which might possibly reach the ears of the enemy, had even cancelled all permits to İstanbul. Up to the last moment before the offensive started the Turkish troops had been massed at points where the bulk of their forces could be brought into action. A number of local actions and false offensives had been carried out a few days before the real offensive started, the idea being to shatter the Greek front and harass the Greek defence. The Turks made a number of surprise attacks south of the Menderes River, resulting in the capture of a series of villages. At the same time groups of raiders crossed the river and carried out a few successful operations. Most of these operations were directed against the wings of the Greek Army, although the supreme effort of the Turks was being directed against the Greek centre. The whole of the Anatolian frontier and all ports had been closed to communication, both foreign and Turkish, according to the report of Admiral Mark L. Bristol, American High Commissioner at İstanbul, to the State Department. The embargo was expected to last for five days. No ships were permitted to enter or leave the harbours. These measures were started on August 27, with the beginning of the Turkish offensive along the entire Anatolian front. The American destroyer commander at Samsun had received assurances that Americans were not in danger. The Turks were apparently strong in artillery. (The New York Times, August 30, 1922, p.4).

A new phase of the protracted war between Turkey and Greece had begun. The war had resisted the efforts of all interested powers to end it, mainly because they could not really agree among themselves on a satisfactory solution. The Turks were much stronger than they were a year ago, while the Greeks had suffered many painful disappointments. It was well known that the leader of the nationalists had received abundant war material from various sources. Ankara had been negotiating not only with the Bolshevik government but also with other governments which had joined with us in inviting the Greeks to İzmir. Kemal Pasha had no lack of well-wishers in France, in Rome and even in England, and time had proved to be on his side and not on that of his opponents. The Turk can wait better than any of his rivals, and Mustafa Kemal had learned to profit from the differences between the powers, which were no less obstinate today than they were in the past. If left to themselves, the Turks and the Greeks could play stalemate for long enough. Britain was in a very difficult position. It sincerely desired peace in the Near East, a peace that was honourable for all parties. It was aware of the great damage done to British prestige throughout the Muslim world by the idea that British policy was anti-Muslim because they oppose the Turks' claims to the reconquest of Thrace and İzmir. (The Daily Telegraph, August 31, 1922, p.8). The Turks succeeded in concealing nine divisions southeast of Afyon in a mountainous wooded region where they were hidden from the scouting planes so

well that three days before the offensive the Greeks were still unaware of the existence of this large force. (The Evening Star, September 11, 1922, p.3).

2.2. The Great Battle of Afyonkarahisar

After the preparations, which were kept on a large scale and completely hidden, the Great Turkish offensive started on August 26, 1922. In the very first hours of the offensive, the Greeks had shocked and dispersed and they started to retreat. (Zürcher, 2017, p.156). Athens, however, denied the Turkish success and lied to its people claiming that the Turkish attack was repulsed. They claimed that the Turks retreated with great losses in disorder and that the Greek army was in excellent condition. However, Athens added that they called all the Armenians in Thrace and the Greeks in Western Anatolia to classes which was a clear hint of the Greek defeat. (Liverpool Post and Mercury, August 28, 1922, p.7). After the first Turkish successes, the news of the Great Offensive arrived everywhere and the attention was caught by many parts of the world. The newspapers started to give front news every day to their readers. In an article in The New York Herald, it was possible to learn some details about the Offensive. Based on the article, war was again raging in Anatolia. The Turkish nationalists, who last week began their operations in the Menderes Valley southeast of İzmir, were successfully carrying out a strong offensive which had already driven the Greeks out of Afyonkarahisar. It was obvious that the Allies should never have allowed the war between the Greeks and the Turks to begin. In 1919 it would have been easy to agree on peace terms acceptable to the Turks. Instead, the Greeks were allowed to land an army in İzmir and begin a campaign that, after initial success, proved to be a catastrophic failure. The Turkish success at Afyonkarahisar cuts off a large part of the Greek army from communication with İzmir. Ten Turkish divisions of 120,000 to 200,000 men were said to have taken part in the operations. Faced with a major encircling attack by the Turkish forces, the Greek forces were forced to evacuate Afyonkarahisar and retreat to the west. (The New York Herald, August 30, 1922, p.1). More and more news related to Turkish operations was placed in newspapers.

In another article of the important newspaper Le Petit Parisien at the time, details were given about Kocaeli operations of the Turkish army. According to the latest reports from the front, the Turkish flying columns had taken over activity in the Kocaeli sector. They had advanced towards Bilecik and had occupied enemy positions, inflicting losses on them. The Greeks had retreated, leaving behind a large number of weapons and ammunition. (Le Petit Parisien, Paris, 29 Août 1922, p.3). A few days after the beginning of the offensive, the newspapers started to give more correct information to their readers. A report from İstanbul says that the Turkish Nationalists were engaging all their well-equipped troops in a relentless offensive against the Greeks in Western Anatolia. The article claims that the aim of the offensive was to force a decision before the coming Venice conference with representatives of the Allies. (The Daily Colonist, August 30, 1922, p.1). More news comes from Paris-centered newspapers. In an article on Le Petit Parisien, information about all the fronts is given which says that they confirmed from Ankara that the general movement had begun on all fronts. The Greeks evacuated the city of Afyonkarahisar after a desperate defeat. A Greek division that was in this city was almost completely destroyed. (La Liberté, 31 Août 1922, p.1). The Turks occupied Sinanpaşa and continue to advance in the direction of Çiftlik Eskişehir sector. After leaving a very large number of dead and injured, the Greeks withdrew in front of the city of Eskişehir. The Turkish cavalry chasing them continues. In İzmit sector, the cities of Yarhisar and Vezirköprü were liberated from occupation by the Turks. Thus, the Greek front was cut into three different sectors. (Le Petit Parisien, 31 Août 1922, p.1).

It was possible to learn more details about the Turkish offensive from western newspapers. As another article mentions, the nationalist staff had prepared the attack in the greatest secrecy. On the 25th of August, at 10 o'clock in the evening, ten nationalist divisions were concentrated east of Afyonkarahisar, without the Greek forces in this city being informed. On the 26th, at 3 am, Turkish artillery ventured a violent fire against the Greek positions, over a

forehead of several kilometres, ranging from north to south. The bursts of its batteries succeeded with regularity. The Greek artillery was not long to respond, but it was promptly reduced to silence by the precise shot of the Turks. The bombing continued for two hours with the same intensity. Around 5 am, as the day started to appear, the Turkish forces marched to the assault. They encountered strong resistance in several places, but all the messages confirm that at 9 am, the main line of defence of the Greeks was broken. From then on, the Turkish forces no longer stopped pressing and to harass the Hellenic forces, so, on the evening of the 26th and less than twenty-four hours after the first attack, the Greeks evacuated Afyonkarahisar. As for the Ottoman press, it rejoiced in general with the victory of the Turkish nationalists. According to the Ottoman press, the initiative taken by the Ankara government was the only way for the Turkish nation to get out of an overly humiliating situation. An Exchange Telegraph message from İstanbul cites the following sentence of the newspaper İleri: *since the vain discussions of European diplomats fail to settle the question, the Turkish baionnette takes care of it*. In an official communique, Ankara says that the advance of the Turkish columns continues in all sectors. Menderes sector: Greek positions around Güzelpinar were occupied by Turkish flying columns. The losses of the Greeks were considerable. The Turks made many prisoners and took loot in large quantities. Afyonkarahisar sector: The Greeks retreat to the attacks of Turkish columns. The Turks occupied the strategic positions northwest of Elvanlar. Eskişehir sector: A battle was fought in front of the city of Eskişehir between the Turkish cavalries and the Greek troops. The battle had developed in favour of the Turks. İzmit sector: Turkish advance continued; the Greeks run away in the direction of İnegöl, leaving large amounts of weapons, ammunition and equipment. The losses of the Greeks were very high. They left a very large amount of equipment and weapons at Afyonkarahisar. The news of Turkish successes learned at Ankara with enthusiasm. (Le Petit Parisien, 31 Août 1922, p.3).

A few days after the Turkish Great Offensive started, detailed information about the offensive in the world's largest newspapers began to take place. Two of them were The New York Times and The New York Tribune. The newspapers focus on the newly emerged Greco-Turkish war and give important details about all the fronts. Based on a report from Athens, indicates finally that the Greeks officially admitted the defeat and evacuation of Afyonkarahisar. The report dated August 28, says *Owing to a very violent enemy offensive the evacuation of Afyonkarahisar was ordered yesterday, and our troops occupied a line westward of Afyon*. The news comes from İzmir, which claimed that the Turks had concentrated, probably at night, all around the sector, after heavy gunfire and that the Turks had numerous French guns and automobiles which they lacked in previous attacks. The article continues with the claim that strategically, the loss of Afyonkarahisar was of the gravest moment to the Greeks, for it was the most important railway junction in the field of operations. (New York Tribune, August 30, 1922, p.5). In Afyon, the railway line from İzmir into the interior joins the Berlin-Bagdad line. (Stamboul, 30 Août 1922, p.1). The loss of Afyonkarahisar means a serious blow to the Greek fortunes in Anatolia. Afyonkarahisar was a vital key position and constitutes one of the most important supply bases of the Greek army. The Greeks had been in possession of the city for more than a year, during which time they had accumulated vast stores of supplies and had powerfully entrenched themselves. The occupation of the city by the Turks would cut off the Greeks from İzmir, Bursa and Eskişehir. The terrain of the operations was one of extreme difficulty, abounding in steep, naked hills, large sandy areas and undeveloped wastes and affording no roads and little water or forage. Most of Mustafa Kemal's troops were indigenous to the country and, therefore, had the advantage of knowing its topographical features thoroughly. The Greeks only recently transferred more than 50.000 of their troops from Anatolia to the Thracian frontier in order to make their demonstration against İstanbul thus greatly impairing the strength of their Anatolian army. It seems evident that the Turks had cleverly taken advantage of this situation and launched their offensive at a crucial juncture and when it was least expected. Dispatches from Athens and İzmir indicate that the Greek Government had called to the colours all the men of the 1903 class residing in the occupied

area, and was rushing reinforcements from Bursa and İzmir to the battlefield. The Greek forces in Anatolia numbered about 200.000 and half of them were on the firing line, the remainder being engaged in administrative and garrison work. Opposed to them were nearly 100.000 Turks, said to be well officered and disciplined. (The New York Times, August 30, 1922, p.4).

A report from Athenes confirms the Greek's evacuation of Afyon (Le Matin, 30 Août 1922, p.1) and the superiority of Turkish forces. The report indicates that the main Turkish attack was hoped on Eskişehir front. (The Evening Star, August 29, 1922, p.2). Different figures about the capacity of the Turkish army were included in the newspapers. One of them says that 200,000 men, amply equipped with heavy artillery, participated in this attack. (Le Populaire, 30 Août 1922, p.3). According to another prediction, Mustafa Kemal Pasha had concentrated 70.000 troops for the offensive against the Greeks. (The New York Times, August 31, 1922, p.17). The Turks launched an attack on August 26th, on the eastern front, a most violent offensive. The fight continued without interruption during the night and during the day of August 27th. The Turkish forces, which were evaluated as ten divisions, were provided with many artilleries of all calibres and abundant ammunition. (Le Petit Parisien, 30 Août 1922, p.1). The Turkish offensive against Afyonkarahisar caused considerable losses to the Greeks. More than five thousand Greek soldiers were killed in that battle. (La Stampa, 6 Settembre 1922, p.1). The evacuation of the city was carried out without disorder. Turkish artillery was directed according to the methods taught by French instructors. The battle continues on many fronts. (Le Journal, 31 Août 1922, p.3). The fight in Afyon destroyed the city. (Le Temps, 2 Septembre, 1922, p.2). The bombing of the Greek and Turkish artillery burned the city of Afyonkarahisar which was only a heap of rubble. (Le Matin, 01 Septembre 1922, p.3).

2.3. The Battle of Dumlupınar

After the Greek evacuation of Afyon, the fight continued in the region of Dumlupınar, where the Greek troops fell back fighting under very strong enemy pressure and in accordance with the decisions taken by the command before the start of the enemy offensive. (Le Temps, 2 Septembre, 1922, p.2). Based on a report from İzmir, heavy fighting was continuing in the vicinity of Dumlupınar, where attacks were made upon the Greeks by large nationalist forces well equipped with heavy artillery and aircraft. It was stated that in the Dumlupınar sector the Greeks were falling back, fighting under very strong pressure. (The Evening Star, September 1, 1922, p.10). After the annihilation of the Greek army by the Turks, the Greek newspapers having published information announcing that Turkish planes had been assembled by Français aviator officers and that French officers commanded the Turkish divisions operating in the offensive. France Minister in Athens, blamed the Greek Government about censorship on the press so that they could not publish correct information and that they mistakenly blame France for their failure. The Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs had an official information denial of French intervention. (Le Journal, 01 Septembre 1922, p.3). Turkish victories seemed to worry London. The development of the Turkish offensive in Western Anatolia had produced a profound impression and a certain concern in London. (Le Petit Parisien, 01 Septembre 1922, p.3).

The battle which engaged in the west of the city of Afyonkarahisar, at Dumlupınar lasted three days and ended with a definite Turkish victory over the Greeks. (L'Ouest-Éclair, 3 Septembre 1922, p.1). The fact was that the Greek troops preferred to retreat with as few casualties as possible rather than resist the fierce Turkish offensive in Afyonkarahisar and Dumlupınar. (Gazzetta di Venezia, 3 Settembre 1922, p.1). In accordance with a report from Ankara, the town of Eskişehir would had been occupied by the Turkish cavalry, after a fierce battle. (Le Temps, 1 Septembre 1922, p.2).

The liberation of Afyonkarahisar from the Greek occupation had repercussions in the Islamic world. A telegram was sent to the Central Khilafat Committee of Indian Muslims by the Roma representative of the Ankara Government, Celaleddin Arif Bey, stating that

Afyonkarahisar was liberated from the Greek occupation. The committee congratulated the government of Ankara and decided to designate a day of prayer to be attended by Muslims all over India, to pray for a complete and final victory of His Excellency Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha and Mojahedin of Islam. (The Bombay Chronicle, September 01, 1922, p.7). In the meantime, the British government announced that it would not intervene with the Turks or the Greeks. (Le Populaire, 1 Septembre 1922, p.3). One of the most important objections of the Greek occupation was for many generations that to expel the Turks from Europe and confine Turkish rule to Asia. It came nearest fulfillment after the First World War, however, it was clear that Greece was just not compatible for such a mission. (The Star Press, September 01, 1922, p.14).

More than a year, following the Battle of Sakarya, which caused the death of thousands from both of the sides, the Greco-Turkish front of Western Anatolia had stabilized on a main current line from north to south in front of the two main support points in the Hellenic army which were Eskişehir and Afyonkarahisar. On the Greek side, the Greek army was concentrated in the Afyonkarahisar sector. From a strategic point of view, the occupation of Eskişehir by Hellenic troops simply constituted an offensive threat to the centre of Western Anatolia. The area between Afyonkarahisar and Eskişehir, behind these two relatively big centers, there was a high plateau, almost deserted and deprived of any communication route. The advantage of Eskişehir position for the Greek army was to allow them by Mudanya-Bursa-Eskişehir an easier supply of the whole front. Indeed, the İzmir-Salihli-Uşak-Afyonkarahisar route was much more difficult and above all it was longer. Contrary to expected, the Turks attacked from the south along the Afyonkarahisar-Uşak-Salihli-İzmir railway. At the same time, the Turks started another offensive in the northern sector to keep the Greek divisions of Eskişehir in suspense. It was expected by no one a big attack with the participation of the entire Turkish army along a 400 -kilometres front. The Hellenic army had several organized defence lines. First, the Eskişehir-Afyonkarahisar front; Secondly, the Dumlupınar-Eskişehir front, and now it only had the Uşak-Bursa line left. The last line that the Greeks could hold would be the Milna line or Line of the Sèvres Treaty. In only one week, the Turkish national forces had undergone the front of Afyonkarahisar and Dumlupınar, that was to say the first two lines of resistance of the Hellenic army were crushed. The Turks thus carried out an advance which reached some points 150 kilometres. It was confirmed by the Turkish official circles that Mustafa Kemal Pasha himself leads all the Turkish operations. General İsmet Pasha leads the front offensively. In the northern sector, it was General Refet Pasha who took the Bursa sector. (Le Petit Parisien, 03 Septembre 1922, p.1). A violent battle was continuing in Dumlupınar, 40 kilometres northwest of Afyonkarahisar, near Uşak. (L'intransigeant, 4 Septembre 1922, p.1).

After the Turkish victories over the Greeks, the Turkish leader Mustafa Kemal Pasha made a proclamation in which he says that they had started their offensive on August 26th on the Afyonkarahisar-Altındağ-Dumlupınar line. Kemal Pasha salutes his army, and assures the Turkish people about their victory. (Le Matin, 12 Septembre 1922, p.3). The Turkish National Assembly at Ankara had appointed a delegation of 25 MPs to go to the front for the purpose of conveying the greetings of the Assembly to the Turkish army during the Turkish offensive. (The Guardian, August 29, 1922, p.6).

3. The Annihilation of the Greek Army and the End of the Greeks' Asia Dream

The Turkish offensive developed victoriously since its onset. On the south front, Turkish troops were at the gates of Uşak; to the north sector, Bursa seems threatened by the Turks. The Turkish nationalist offensive developed with surprising speed. Since the taking of Afyonkarahisar, Turkish forces had advanced 110 kilometres west of Afyon. Turkish troops had advanced in the Afyonkarahisar sector, in parallel with the line of the Uşak-Afyonkarahisar railway line. The Greeks Retired and folded down, undergoing losses in this sector. On the other hand, in the Bursa sector, the Turkish advance continues. (Le Petit Parisien, 02 Septembre, 1922, p.3).

The great battle that had started on August 26th in the Afyonkarahisar sector continued for five days without interruption and ended with the complete defeat of the large army of the Greeks. (Le Matin, 04 Septembre 1922, p.3). The Turks grow towards Bursa sector. The Turkish advance continues according to two axes of offensive, one in the northern direction, towards Bursa and the Sea of Marmara, the other in the west towards Uşak, which was no longer than 200 kilometres from İzmir. In less than three days, the Turks had advanced, on this second axis, of 150 kilometres, since the taking of Afyonkarahisar. They were therefore a hundred kilometres from the borders of the Greek occupation in Asia, drawn by the Treaty of Sèvres, which was also known as Milna Line. (L'intransigeant, 4 Septembre 1922, p.1). In the middle of the Turkish Great Offensive, the Turks captured the Greek commander-in-chief Tricoupis, two corps commanders, four hundred Greek officers and fifteen thousand soldiers. More than fifty thousand Greek soldiers were killed, wounded, made prisoners or missing. (The New Larned History, 1923, p.3933).

The Turkish strategy won while it was a big annihilation to the Greek army. The Greek reserves that had accumulated south of Kütahya since last year were still in the same place. At Afyonkarahisar, after a fierce artillery bombardment, the Turks attacked the second division of the Greek army. The reinforcements, consisting of the fourth division, which came from the north, were startled by the Turkish artillery and fled without contacting the Turks. Other divisions belonging to the second Greek corps arrived too late to save the situation. In the meantime, the Turkish cavalry pushed into the gap created by the retreat of the divisions of the second corps and cut the link between the two corps. The appearance of the Turkish cavalry in their rear spread panic among the Hellenic troops, while the Greek commanders, who could not communicate with each other and did not know the exact positions of the troops, lost their heads and gave up hope of resisting the enemy. The Greek troops, realising the situation of the commanders, panicked and fled, all trying to reach the Uşak road before the Turkish cavalry. The terrified divisions fled into open country and the second corps, in its wild flight, left all the guns, trucks and radio equipment in Turkish hands, things for which the Greek people had paid heavy taxes over the last three years. The first division corps of Greece, although demoralised after the defeat of the second Greek division at Afyon, tried to fight and some of its elements tried to save the honour of the Greek army by opposing the Turks. The last battle was fought on August 28th at Dumlupınar. There the commander of the defeated second division gathered the remnants of his regiment and parts of the fleeing second division and held off the Turks for three days until they brought up heavy artillery and cut down these last fighting forces of the Greek army. From then on, the panic-stricken Greeks fled constantly from the Turks, who advanced slowly but steadily. The Greeks managed to lose contact with the enemy. Greek troops blew up bridges and railway viaducts and thus delayed the Turks' advance on İzmir, but could not prevent it. (The Evening Star, September 11, 1922, p.3).

The collapse of the Greek army was mainly due to the following causes: The Greek commander-in-chief Hadjianesti was convinced that he could not defeat the Turks and he decided to move the bulk of the army to Thrace in order to hold this province at all costs. Over the course of the last six months, the Greek soldiers were given to understand that the evacuation of Anatolia would take place and that many of them could return home. Then, when they were asked to fight, they refused because they could not see why they should shed their blood for a lost cause. Greek commanders and staff officers were appointed according to their political views rather than their military skills. The result was that many inexperienced officers were entrusted with positions of responsibility and cowardice on the part of these officers was frequently reported. Such cases had a disastrous effect on the morale of the soldiers. Apart from the two important battles of Afyonkarahisar and Dumlupınar, there was no fighting between Greeks and Turks. The Turkish victory was due to an efficient general staff, a good artillery corps and, above all, the magnificent cavalry corps that terrorised the Greek army with daring raids. (The Evening Star, September 11, 1922, p.3). The defeat of the Greek army seems to have been due rather to the inadequacy of the Greek personnel and the poor organisation of the army

services. The Turkish generals, experienced in modern warfare, were far superior to the Greek commanders in terms of leadership. (The Birmingham News, September 06, 1922, p.20). According to the news from İstanbul, the Great Turkish Offensive was a complete surprise to the Greeks and Greek General Hadjianesti was already embarked aboard a Steam in the Rada of İzmir to return to Athens, when a dispatch made him aware of the event. (Gazzetta di Venezia, 8 Settembre 1922, p.1). The Turks claimed that they had killed thirty thousand and had captured forty thousand Greek soldiers since the beginning of the Turkish Great Offensive. Greek soldiers were in full flight from all parts of Anatolia toward İzmir. (The Glendale Evening News, September 9, 1922, p.14).

Conclusion

The Greeks unjustly attempted to occupy lands that did not belong to them on behalf of the Allies. While the occupation and invasion process, which started with the occupation of İzmir, caused a great awakening in Anatolia, the nationalist feelings of the people increased. The invasion of Anatolia by a small country that had lived under the Turks for hundreds of years was unacceptable. The Turks, who started a great organisational movement under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Pasha, succeeded in establishing a very large army in a short period of time. This new Turkish army has yet to defeat the Greek army in its first battle with the Greeks. But the Turks' goal was to completely drive the Greeks out of Anatolia, and for this, a stronger army was needed. The Turks could establish a large army with the attack capacity as a result of a great preparation phase. Successful Turkish officers with many years of war experience came from İstanbul and joined the army established by the new Turkish government in Ankara. Experienced officers became a great advantage for the Turkish army. The Turks were ready, the Greeks were to be expelled from Asia.

Foreign developments were also in favour of the Turks. The Allies could not agree on the Near East policy. Soviet Russia had close relations with Ankara. After France and Italy withdrew from the regions they occupied in Anatolia, they started to follow a policy in favour of the Turks. Greece was struggling with domestic political problems. A king that even England had a hard time accepting won the Greek elections, and Megali Idea started talking about frightening and unrealistic dreams for everyone, like the great Greek Empire. As a result of the good relations they established, the Turks could easily buy the materials they wanted, such as weapons and ammunition. Moreover, the Turks were convincing their Allies that there should be stability in Anatolia by highlighting the natural richness of Anatolia. Thus, the capital groups blamed the Greeks for the disrupted trade and argued that the Greek soldiers should leave Anatolia as soon as possible. The long-awaited Turkish Great Offensive began. Within a few days, the Greeks were driven out of their most important headquarters, Afyonkarahisar and Eskişehir, with thousands of casualties. Even England, which defended the Greeks, gave up on all its demands. The British wanted to sit at the peace table with the Turks as soon as possible. Mustafa Kemal Pasha, with his army deployed in front of İstanbul, gave the British days of fear. The Great British Kingdom could not risk war with the Turks. Turkish success cost a lot to the Greeks and the British. The Greek King left his country. The British prime minister resigned. Finally, the Turks sat at the table as victors, first for a ceasefire and then for a peace treaty. As a result, all of Western Anatolia, Thrace and İstanbul were liberated from occupation.

References

- Ahmad, F. (1993). *The making of modern Turkey*, London: Routledge.
Chicago Tribune
Gazzetta di Venezia
Kayalı, H. (2008). The struggle for independence, R. Kasaba (Ed) in; *the cambridge history of Turkey, Vol.4, Turkey in the Modern World*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kinross, L. (1965). *Ataturk: a biography of Mustafa Kemal, father of modern Turkey*, New York: William Morrow and Company.

L'intransigent

L'Ouest-Éclair

La Liberté

La Stampa

Le Journal

Le Petit Parisien

Le Populaire

Le Temps

Lewis, B. (1995). *The middle east: 2000 years of history from the rise of christianity to the present day*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

Liverpool Post and Mercury

Shaw, S. J. & Shaw, E. Z. (1977). *History of the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey, 2. reform, revolution, and republic: the rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Stamboul

The Birmingham News

The Bombay Chronicle

The Daily Colonist

The Evening Star

The Glendale Evening News

The Guardian

The Los Angeles Times

The New Larned History

The New York Herald

The New York Times

The Spectator

The Standard Union

The Star Press

The Times

Zürcher, E. J. (2017). *Turkey a modern history*, London: I. B. Tauris.

ETİK ve BİLİMSEL İLKELER SORUMLULUK BEYANI

Bu çalışmanın tüm hazırlanma süreçlerinde etik kurallara ve bilimsel atıf gösterme ilkelerine riayet edildiğini yazar(lar) beyan eder. Aksi bir durumun tespiti halinde Afyon Kocatepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi'nin hiçbir sorumluluğu olmayıp, tüm sorumluluk makale yazarlarına aittir.