



Supreme Joint War College
Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki

Event:

**From Kalavrita to Navarino:
The military narrative of the Revolution**

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Thank you note

We would like to express our thanks to the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki, the Rector Dr Nikolaos Papaioannou, and the Deputy Dean Professor Panagiotis Glavinis for offering us the exceptionally honorary and simultaneously moving opportunity to present the military operations of the Greek War for Independence in an event held by the University for faculty, staff and students of both the Aristotelian University and the Supreme Joint War School.

Furthermore, we would like to wholeheartedly thank, the distinguished and particularly acclaimed writer, Maria Lampadaridou Pothou, for following our work and honoring us with her extremely moving and important words:

“...an exciting journey in our History, in our virtues and weaknesses as people, in an ultimate heroism and self-sacrifice, of men and women equally, that evokes emotions...you honored and brought back from oblivion forgotten or ignored names...

...this wonderful work should definitely go further and become a guide for every Greek or friend of Greece...

...without the use of emotionally charged or lyrical expressions, but just the strict and substantial engraving of events, you accomplished a great work that creates infinite emotions and deep Hellenism in our souls. You wandered in the landscapes of our History, which are esoteric landscapes, you brought them to life and gave existence to them, in our forgetful days...”

Maria Lampadaridou Pothou’s works include “Byzantium the Fall(The City has Fallen)”, “The Wooden Wall”, “The Angel of Ashes” and numerous books, poems and publications as also presented in her webpage:

<https://marialampadaridoupothou.gr/en/>

Summary

The military operations of the Greek Revolution for Independence lasted for nine years, from February 1821 to February 1830. This national Revolution is the product of the political will expressed by three patriots who established a secret society, named Filiki Etaireia with one and only goal, to achieve Independence of the Greeks from the Ottoman Empire. For six and a half years they planned and labored for the fulfillment of their cause, always based on the desire and passion of the nation for freedom, as this was in reality the motivating force for all that came after.

The fight, or struggle if you want to translate the Greek term accurately, started in areas likely to achieve military success, like Peloponnesus and Mainland Greece, or in other areas as a diversion like Moldavia and Wallachia (Modern day Romania) Macedonia and Thrace. In other areas like Epirus, Thessaly, Crete, Pelion, the basing of strong Ottoman military forces, the vast and thick network of strongholds and the presence of substantial Turkish or Turkish-Albanian population did not allow the Revolution to obtain solid footing or even stay alive.

Contents

Summary.....	v
Contents.....	vii
Figure List.....	ix
Acronyms and Abbreviations	xi
Introduction	1
General.....	1
Aim of the Revolution	2
Analysis Method	2
Structure.....	3
Purpose	4
Chapter 1: Geopolitical Characteristics of the Era	5
1.1. Geopolitical Environment and the Great Powers.....	5
1.2. American Support for Greek Independence, 1821-1829	6
1.3. Revolutionary Movements	8
Chapter 2: SWOT ANALYSIS	11
2.1. Strengths	11
2.2. Weaknesses	12
2.3. Opportunities	12
2.4. Threats	13
Chapter 3: The Plan of Filiki Etaireia.....	15
Chapter 4: Military Perspective of the Struggle	20
4.1. General.....	20
4.2. Military Operational Planning.....	24
4.3. Greek Revolutionaries Land Forces and Strategy	25
4.4. Revolutionary Greeks, Naval Strategy and Forces.....	27
4.5. Women in the Revolution	30
4.6. The Ottoman Forces.....	34
Chapter 5: Tactics and Weapons of the Struggle.....	42
5.1. Characteristics and Tactics of Guerilla Warfare.....	42
5.2. Struggle at Sea.....	45
5.3. Greek Regular Forces	49
Chapter 6: Characteristic Phases & Events	54
6.1. The period of success 1821-1823	54
6.2. Period of Decline 1824-1827	54
6.3. The Period of Kapodistrias (1828-1832).....	56
6.5. Revolution in Crete	58
6.6. Characteristic Battles and Events.....	61
6.6.1. Battle of Vasilika	61
6.6.2. Siege of Tripolis	62
6.6.2.1. Battle of Lala	63
6.6.2.2. Grana (Trench)	64
6.6.3. Battle in Dervenakia	65
6.6.4. Torching the Ottoman Flagship in Chios.....	66
6.6.5. Naval Battle of Spetsai.....	67
6.6.6. Events in Western Greece	67
6.6.7. Naval Battle of Gerontas	68
6.6.8. Attack against the Egyptian Fleet in Alexandria	72
6.6.9. Battle at Myloi of Lerni	72

6.6.10. Naval Battle of Agali (Itea)	75
6.6.11. Naval Battle of Navarino	76
6.6.12. Battle of Petra	77
Chapter 7: Conclusions	78
Decision for the Greek Revolution	78
The Plan of Filiki Etaireia	78
Participation	79
Comparative Strengths and Weaknesses between Greeks and Ottomans	80
Plan Implementation – Strategy – Conduct of Operations	80
Epilogue	84
Epimeter	88
Opening Remarks Dr Nikoalos Papaioannou Rector Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki	88
Closing Remarks Dr Pangiotis Glavinis Deputy Dean Law School Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki	90
Bibliography	92
ANNEX A: Biographies (CVs)	96
Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kavoulakos HN	96
Colonel Chariton Charousis	98
Captain Ioannis Samothrakis HN	100
Colonel (GRC Arty) Anastasios Bletsas	102
Dr. Aikaterini Balla	104
Thomas R. Maguire	106
ANNEX B: Photo Gallery	108

Figure List

Figure 1: The Battle of Prouthos (Lithography, Benaki Museum).....	3
Figure 2: The London Treaty (U. Halbreiter, T. Guggenberger)	4
Figure 3: Europe after Vienna Convention 1814 - 1815	5
Figure 4: Samuel Howe (Medical Doctor from Harvard) as Evzone wearing traditional uniform (John Elliott).....	7
Figure 5: Revolutionay movements of the early 19th century	8
Figure 6: Map of Countries by the river Danube in 1821	18
Figure 7: Areas where the Revolution spread	19
Figure 8: British Map of "Greece, Archipelago & part of Anadoli" in 1791	20
Figure 9: Strongholds and bases of the Revolutionary Fleet	22
Figure 10: Struggle between a Greek fighter and a Pasha (Eugene Delacroix)	26
Figure 11: Greek fighters (Thanos Vasilikos).....	27
Figure 12: Spetsai naval Battle (Ioannis Koutsis)	28
Figure 13: Exodus of brigand Aris (Konstantine Volanakis)	29
Figure 14: Slave Market (Paul Emil Jacobs).....	30
Figure 15: The Acropolis' Battle (Nikolas Gosse)	32
Figure 16: Woman's participation in the revolution	33
Figure 17: Women of Mani in the Battle of Deros	34
Figure 18: Ottoman Castles' Map	35
Figure 19: Ottoman Army's Attack (Hasan Raza)	36
Figure 20: Ottoman Camp (Adolf Schreyer).....	38
Figure 21: Ottoman sailor (Luis Dupre).....	39
Figure 22: Kleftis (Ludovico Liparini)	42
Figure 23: Athanasios Diakos assembles his warriors (Peter von Hess).....	43
Figure 24: Battle Scene (Theodoros Vryzakis).....	44
Figure 25: Torching the Ottoman Flagship (Ivan Ivazovski)	46
Figure 26: The Steam Powered Corvette KARTERIA.....	47
Figure 27: Steam Ships vs Sail Ships	48
Figure 28: After the destruction of Psara Island (Nikolaos Gizis)	49
Figure 29: The Sacred Band (Peter von Hess)	50
Figure 30: The Revolutionaries' Oath (Theodorus Vrizakis).....	54
Figure 31: Exodus of Messolonghi (Theodoros Vrizakis)	55
Figure 32: Map of Revolution in Macedonia.....	57
Figure 33: Revolution in Crete.....	59
Figure 34: The slaughter in Chania (Hydacobe)	60
Figure 35: Siege of Tripolis	62
Figure 36: Battle of Trenches - Grana.....	64
Figure 37: Torching the Ottoman Flagship (Nikiforos Lytras)	66
Figure 38: Movements of the Ottoman -Egyptian Fleet against the Revolution.....	69
Figure 39: Naval Battle of Gerontas	70
Figure 40: Battle at Myloi of Lerne	73
Figure 41: KARTERIA in the Naval Battle of Agali.....	75
Figure 42: Naval Battle of Navarino (Abroise Garneray)	76
Figure 43: Litography (Benaki Museum).....	85

Figure 44: Signing of the MOC between the Commandant of HSJWC and the Rector of AUT	108
Figure 45: Exchange of Official Crests	108
Figure 46: Opening remarks by the AUT Rector	109
Figure 47: Presentation by Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kavoulakos	109
Figure 48: Presentation by Captain Ioannis Samothrakis.....	110
Figure 49: Presentation by Colonel Chariton Charousis	110
Figure 50: The HSJWC team	111
Figure 51: Presentation by Colonel Anastasios Bletsas	111
Figure 52: Presentation by Dr Aikaterini Balla	112
Figure 53: Panel Discussion by HSJWC Team	112
Figure 54: Conclusions - Epilogue by Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kanoulakos	113
Figure 55: Closing Remarks by the Deputy Dean of Law School AUT	113
Figure 56: Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kavoulakos grants to Mr Tomas R. Maguire the Official Crest of HSJWC	114

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AF	Armed Forces
AUT	Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki
CG	Center of Gravity
DES	Desirable End State
DP	Decisive Point
HNDGS	Hellenic National Defense General Staff
MOC	Memorandum of Cooperation
HSJWC	Hellenic Supreme Joint War College

Introduction

General

The revolution that liberated our nation and established a Greek State in modern era, is a monumental event that stirs emotions and enthusiasm, yet it is not often the object of strategic or military analysis. Perhaps because we Greeks have the impression that our modern Greece became independent as a result of a patriotic big bang, a manifestation on the field of our eternal virtues, combined with favorable international conditions, a convulsion that is almost miraculous if not more than that. Additionally, we think of our ancestors who lived and performed this miracle, as characters from another reality, with beliefs and ideas and ways of living, that admirable as may be, they are very close to folklore.

Having that fact in mind, we thought that since we are a School dedicated, among other things, to strategy and the study of military operations, it would be a good idea to approach the revolution from this perspective, employing military analysis methods and tools, and then present the results, orthologically and fairly, because, in our opinion, this is the Hellenic way, respect the enemy, know thyself and employ self-criticism.

Yet we reached the conclusion that, despite the cold professional analysis, the Revolution of 1821 without its festive garments and the celebrative mood emerged more imposing, its heroes and everyday people, fighters and protagonists, known and unknown, looming greater and more admirable.

During the course of the Revolution atrocities between combatants and against noncombatants were not rare; horrible actions that today we call war crimes. It happens, sometimes more often, sometimes less, that when we speak of the Greek Revolution and its achievements, an argument comes up, that brings the issue of atrocities to light. Yet at this point I would like to urge anyone who is ready to condemn those people as barbarous and uncivilized, to reflect on the atrocities of civilized societies and nations during the conflicts of the 20th century.

Aim of the Revolution

The Revolution was not an objective per se. The sacred cause was the liberation of the nation, and the Revolution was one of the three possible ways to achieve it, while the other two were:

- Gradual, smooth taking over of the Ottoman structure from within in the Greek areas. This would be achieved by advancing and promoting the Hellenic element in administration, commerce, science and government. A similar process to the one that led to the control of the Eastern Roman Empire, what we now call Byzantium, by the Greeks.
- Obtain autonomy after a Russian intervention when circumstances became suitable. The general idea was that Russia would push for the establishment of a network of autonomous states, with similar status to Moldavia and Wallachia, in Serbia and Bulgaria. When this would have been achieved, Greece would follow.

Naturally, both of the above approaches bore minimum risks for the Hellenic populations, while the memories of the catastrophic consequences of previous uprisings made them tempting. However, Greeks would have to rely on the intentions and policies of the Ottomans and/or the Russians while they would not be able to influence what, when and how.

As the empowerment of the Hellenic nation in basic sectors as economy, education, battle experience on land and sea, brought self-confidence, Filiki Etaireia chose Revolution.

Analysis Method

This work is a tribute to all those who struggled and fought to liberate Greece against an Empire. Through this, we aim to present objectively and with critical mind the military operations of the Revolution from a geopolitical, strategic, operational and tactical perspective, not in their totality and not with respect to their importance, something like that would be impossible in the time given, without doing injustice to operations, battles and heroes.

Events of the Greek Revolution will unfold as a sequence of actions of a mobile war, at all levels, in an area broader than the Greek heartlands that starts

from Moldavia and Wallachia and expands in the East Mediterranean, against the Ottomans and often the Great Powers of that era.

Structure

Chapter 1: Geopolitical characteristics of the era.

Chapter 2: **SWOT ANALYSIS**¹, (**S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats), as viewed by the Revolutionaries.

Chapter 3: The General Plan of Filiki Etaireia.

Chapter 4: The military perspective of the War.

Chapter 5: Tactics and Weapons used during the War for Independence.

Chapter 6: Characteristic phases and events of the Revolution.

Chapter 7: Conclusions.

Figure 1: The Battle of Prouthos (Lithography, Benaki Museum)



¹ A tool of strategic planning used to support the decision making process.

Purpose

By paraphrasing one of the known quotations of Chinese General Sun Tzu² from the book «The Art of War», we would like to note that success in any battlefield or contest area (military, business, political, social, psychological) is a derivative of many factors, one of them being knowledge of the opponent, knowledge of our selves being another one, equally important. This work aims to serve the need to analyze, through history and operational planning, both Ottomans and us Greeks. Greeks often performed miracles, yet, very often acted in a way that put our nation's future in jeopardy, as if facing an Empire was not difficult enough. Thus, with this work we aim to:

- Assist the understanding and project the complexity of situations and parameters that dominated the conflicts between Greeks and the Ottoman Forces.
- Illuminate the importance of the international factor in the course and outcomes of military operations
- Comment on successful and unsuccessful decisions and operations of the Greeks.

Figure 2: The London Treaty (U. Halbreiter, T. Guggenberger)



(Mural at the Hellenic Parliament, Hall Eleftherios Venizelos)

² Chinese General of 5th century bc. He is considered one of the pioneers of the Realistic School and the equivalent of Thucidedes in the Far East.

Chapter 1: Geopolitical Characteristics of the Era

1.1. Geopolitical Environment and the Great Powers.

Geopolitical developments in the beginning of 19th century affected the ground for the revolution in Greece. Already from the previous century the eruption of the French Revolution drove European monarchies to take measures that would prevent the outburst of revolutionary movements. The general upheaval and the catastrophes of Napoleonic Wars as well as the emergence of the movements of liberalism³ and nationalism⁴, directly threatened the established regimes of that time, and led, in September of 1815, to the formation of the Holy Alliance among Austria, Prussia and Russia, as a force contrary to any revolutionary movement that threatened their interests.

Figure 3: Europe after Vienna Convention 1814 - 1815



The Vienna Convention in 1814-15 cemented the redistribution of power in Europe, with Britain emerging strengthened especially with respect to France. Additionally the Germanic nations were restructured while Austria, Prussia and Russia were reinforced geopolitically. At the same time the Ottoman Empire, despite the adventures she had gone through, remained solid in the Balkans, the Middle East, Egypt and Syria.

³ Political philosophy based on the ideas of individual freedom and property.

⁴ Ideology that promotes the interests of the nation, aiming to obtain sovereignty and independence.

Yet, regardless how concrete the international status quo may seem to be, de facto situations can influence it. A characteristic example of a change of stance due to de facto changes and in view of emerging opportunities, is the attitude of Great Britain towards the Greek Revolution. In the beginning of the Revolution Great Britain declared its neutrality, mainly considering the very beneficial trade agreement between Great Britain and the Ottomans. Neutrality meant an inclination towards the Ottomans which translated in allowing Ottoman warships to be given basing in the Ionian Islands (they were under the British rule then) a privilege denied to Greek revolutionaries, offering strategic and operational intelligence to the Sultan and imposing severe punishment to Greeks in the Ionian islands for participating or supporting the operations against the Turks. Any petition or protest of the Revolutionary Greeks to British authorities in the Ionian Islands was brushed away as the British Government was not aware and did not recognize any Greek authority or entity.

Yet by the end of 1822, despite the grim predictions, the Greek Revolution was still alive and well established. As a result the British Minister of Foreign Affairs was stating that: "it would be difficult to deny elementary rights of a warring party to a de facto Greek government". Furthermore the hesitant and amphoteric stance of the Russian Tsar Alexander, a cause of frustration to many Greeks, gave the opportunity to Great Britain to increase its influence in an area that, from the British perspective, Russia was the dominant actor.

1.2. American Support for Greek Independence, 1821-1829

The political situation in America during the early 1820's was not favorable for supporting European independence movements, given the US had recently concluded a war with the British in 1814. The 'Monroe Doctrine', in December, 1823 objected to European interference in the emerging republics in the Western Hemisphere. Little known is the fact that President Monroe's first draft included an acknowledgement of Greek independence, but Secretary of State John Q. Adams convinced him it was antithetical to his own new doctrine. However, in other circumstances, British Foreign Minister Canning had already recognized Greece's rebellion in 1823 "...mainly for commercial reasons."

Eponymous members of Congress such as Mr Webster and Mr Clay, labelled as 'Grecians' argued for recognition and support. By 1823, a groundswell

of support had begun, primarily in academia but quickly filtering down to the public, soon to be entitled “philhellenes”. Among the catalysts for this fervor were the letters from Petros Mavromichalis, 1821 to Secretary Adams, and in 1826 from Theodoros Kolokotronis to philhellene Edward Everett, professor at Harvard College.

A small number of American Philhellenes participated in the Greek revolutionary forces. Their valorous contributions were recognized by the Greek forces at Messolonghi and at other battles:

- George Jarvis, Lieutenant General, advisor to Prince Mavrocordatos, and adjutant to Lord Byron, was buried in Argos in 1828, with full military honors.
- John Miller, Colonel, 1824-1826, known as “Yankee Daredevil” published a memoir in 1828, conducted fund raising, and adopted a Greek child, Lucas Miltiadis Miller, who became the first Greek-American member of the U.S. Congress, from Wisconsin.
- Samuel Howe, Camp Surgeon, 1824-1830, published a book in 1827 that contributed to fundraising of \$60K (today \$1.6M); later founded and funded 2-civil-military hospitals; brought many Greek refugee children to the U.S.

Figure 4: Samuel Howe (Medical Doctor from Harvard) as Evzone wearing traditional uniform (John Elliott)



One may ask why did American support matter. As Edward Elliott, President of Harvard College, who was America’s most outstanding Philhellene stated after the war:

“...it did not matter that the struggling Greeks were the ancestors of the giants of classical civilization, but that Americans should care about them because of their common interest in liberty and virtue.”

Thousands of Americans agreed with him and ignored commercial interests and ‘official’ government neutrality to send aid to a people yearning to be free.

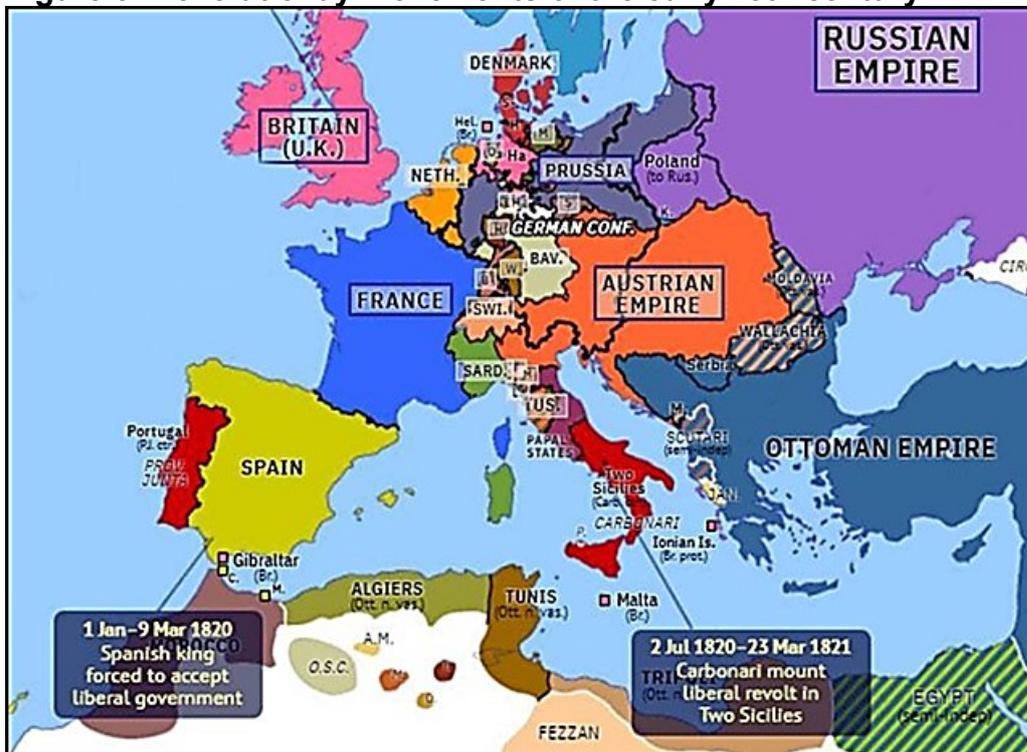
Moreover, the Congress' support for the Greek Revolution began in 1823 and by 1827, President Adams expressed sympathies of the U.S. Government.

Last but not least, the American contribution to the Greek cause consisted of eight (8) merchant ships of humanitarian cargo, a value of \$139K (today: \$3.6M) and a U.S. Navy Aegean Squadron which protected the aforementioned U.S. merchant ships from smugglers.

1.3. Revolutionary Movements

The principles of the French Revolution for freedom and self – determination were not forgotten by the peoples of European South. In 1820 the Spanish revolted against the autocratic King Ferdinand the 7th and at the same year the Carbonari of the Kingdom of two Sicily's took the road of revolution. The boiling situation in both areas resulted to an intervention by the Holy Alliance to suppress the movements, in Italy by an Austrian army in 1821 and in Spain by a French army in 1823. This was also the fate of similar movements in Piedmont and Lombardi. In the beginning of the 19th century the climate was very heavy for liberal and self-determination movements.

Figure 5: Revolutionary movements of the early 19th century



Filiki Etaireia incorporating the advice of well-informed Greeks living abroad, particularly Ioannis Kapodistrias, and well aware of the modus operandi of

European governments at that time, was very careful not to offer excuses for a Holy Alliance intervention in favor of the Sultan. The puzzle that had to be studied by the Revolutionaries, in order to form a viable plan and put it into motion, will be presented here in the form of SWOT analysis in the following chapter.

Chapter 2: SWOT ANALYSIS

Before the Revolution of 1821 and during the Turkish occupation of Hellenic territories, there were 123 failed revolts and liberation movements. Which means that during the almost 400 years of Ottoman rule there was not even one generation that did not take arms to claim freedom.

If we could make a mental journey of a little more than 200 years back and find ourselves in the secret hideout of Filiki Etaireia, at the time that leaders were preparing the plans for the uprising that would lead to Independence (as this was the goal), and use **SWOT** Analysis to map **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats we would probably conclude the following:

2.1. Strengths

a. The areas of, Peloponnesus, Sterea Ellada, Islands of the Argolic and Saronic Gulf and the Cyclades, where the Greek element had a dominant presence in an analogy of 10:1 with respect to the Muslims.

b. The strong, financially and politically, Diaspora in the Christian states of Europe that could support the Revolution and swing the public opinion of these countries towards the self-determination and Independence of the Greeks.

c. The particularities of the land and maritime environment of the Hellenic territories and seas, that could be exploited by a smaller opponent to balance, to an extent, the crushing superiority of the Ottoman Empire in numbers and resources.

d. The battle hardened crack forces of Kleftes and Armatoli that could provide the nucleus for the Revolutionary Army.

e. The armed merchant fleet which gained significant battle experience by fighting pirates, or being pirates themselves, and breaking the embargoes imposed by warring parties during the Napoleonic Wars. It is the first time during the long Turkish occupation that the Greeks have substantial naval power that, even though not even closely equal to the mighty Ottoman Fleet, is self confident, skilled, experienced, battle worthy, capable to challenge Ottomans ships, defend revolted areas from sea borne threats, guarantee distribution of supply, disrupt

Ottoman supplies by the sea and combine forces with land units against Ottoman coastal strongholds and armies.

f. The serious dependence of the Ottoman Fleet on Greek crews. At the time of the Revolution, 70% of gunners and boatswains were Greeks. After the eruption of the Revolution they either deserted or were deposed, considered untrustworthy by the Ottoman leadership.

g. Charismatic leadership on the tactical, operational, strategic or political level with some characteristic prominent figures being Kanaris, Metaxas, Logothetis, Kolokotronis, Miaoulis, Botsaris, Kapodistrias and so on. When allowed to act they were force multipliers on all levels.

2.2. Weaknesses

a. The absence of central government and administration. This results in serious shortfalls in organizing, supporting and conducting operations, as well as in the effectiveness of the decision making process.

b. Non-homogeneity, internal strife, lack of a collective mentality bearing in mind that in this period the various areas of origin within Hellenic territories, i.e. Peloponnesus, Epirus, Psara, Crete, Sfakia and so on had a special meaning to the identity and characteristics of their peoples.

c. Lack of first class warships at sea and lack of artillery, cavalry and regular forces on land, did not favor the participation of the Revolutionaries in pitched battles against the Ottomans with encouraging terms.

d. Lack of state funds meant that all funds and supplies must come from private donations, looting, spoils of war, piracy and in the end loans. Speaking about piracy this was not only a Greek occupation. Rather common in the East Mediterranean for some centuries, two of the most notorious pirates of the end of 15th and beginning of 16th centuries were Hariedin Barbaros and Uruc Reis.

e. A final weakness was the supremacy of the Ottomans in number of combatants and means to wage war.

2.3. Opportunities

a. The public opinion in Europe is embracing more liberal ideologies. Thus, people of European countries are having a sympathetic or at least

understanding view towards the Greek struggle to gain freedom and independence, even if their governments are viewing the situation in a more pragmatic way.

b. The internal strife within the Ottoman Empire between progressive and conservative groups.

c. The financial crisis in the beginning of the 19th century as a result of the Napoleonic wars and the industrial revolution that directly affected the economy in the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman products could not compete with the ones produced by more industrialized economies; the demand for them decreased thus affecting commerce and shipping.

d. Military threats, as the uprising of Ali Pasha in Epirus (1820 – 1822), the anticipation of a looming Russian attack at the north of the Ottoman Empire, the eruption of war with Persia (1821 – 1823), created a significant diversion and kept substantial Ottoman forces far from Southern Greece.

e. The competition among great powers to occupy the void created by the decaying Ottoman Empire.

2.4. Threats

a. The Ottoman Empire had a strong governmental structure with all the inherent advantages (government, budget, armed forces, diplomacy etc.)

b. Europe's monarchies were determined to maintain the existing status quo considering any potential change as a threat to European safety and order.

c. The probability, almost certainty, of an Egyptian engagement against the Revolution that would bring into play their strong and "westernized" Navy and Army and the extremely efficient leadership of Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt. To a lesser but significant extent the strong Pashas of Algiers, Tunis, etc were very likely to reinforce Ottoman forces.

d. Fierce retaliations against Greek populations within the Empire, regardless of their participation in the Revolution or not, as a result of the Ottoman view of collective responsibility.

e. The anticipated exploitation, at some point in time, of the independence movement by the Great Powers, which, when their goals would be

met, would withdraw their support and leave populations to the mercy, and as experience had shown, the cruelty of the Ottomans.

STRENGTHS

- a. Dominance of the Hellenic element in Peloponnesus, Sterea Ellada and Islands
- b. Diaspora and friendly/favoring public opinion abroad
- c. Morphology of land and sea favorable to the Revolutionaries
- d. Existing military nucleus on land and familiarization with Ottoman tactics
- e. Existing merchant navy rigged and skilled for battle.
- f. Deprivation of skilled Greek seamen from the Ottoman Fleet
- g. Leadership.

WEAKNESSES

- a. Lack of Central Government, Administration, Organisation, ineffectiveness of existing schemes
- b. Heterogeneous structure, internal strife, non collective mentality.
- c. Lack of main war ships, artillery, infantry and cavalry
- d. Lack of financial assets
- e. Crushing superiority of Ottoman Forces in size and fire power, particularly in pitched Battle.

SWOT

OPPORTUNITIES

- a. Changing public opinion abroad
- b. Internal strife within the Ottoman Empire between conservative and progressive forces.
- c. Economic crisis of the beginning of 19th century
- d. Uprising of Ali Pasha, Ottoman – Persian War, looming Russian Intervention from the North.
- e. Contest among the Great Powers for the control of East Mediterranean.

THREATS

- a. State Structure of the Ottoman Empire (government, administration, finance, budget, armed forces, diplomacy)
- b. Monarhcic regimes favored the existing status quo.
- c. Reinforcement of the Sultan by strong Pashas mainly Egypt.
- d. Extensive and cruel retaliations against Greek populations throughout the Empire
- e. Exploitation of the Revolution by the Great Powers with perilous results.

Chapter 3: The Plan of Filiki Etaireia

Understanding the perils and difficulties of such an endeavor and in full awareness of all factors, the members of Filiki Etaireia penned and put into motion the following plan, titled “Schedion Genikon”(General Plan):

- Uprising in Moldavia and Wallachia. The head of the Revolt would be the leader of Filiki Etaireia Alexandros Ypsilantis, a prominent figure of Greek roots in the Tsar’s government. This was not an arbitrary selection. The fact that Ypsilantis was in charge would boost the morale of revolutionaries but mainly it would amplify the suspicions of the Ottomans that the revolt in Moldavia and Wallachia was just the prelude of a major Russian operation against Constantinople and the revolutionary force was just an advance party of the invading Russian Army from Moldavia and Wallachia⁵. The Moldavia Wallachia part of the revolutionary plan included:

- Raise a revolutionary army and move towards Greece through the Balkans.
 - Avoid altering the territorial status quo of Moldavia and Wallachia. These territories would be used only as a base for revolutionary forces.
 - Avoid exposing the Tsar to the Holy Alliance, a fact that could create military intervention of the Alliance in support of the Sultan.
 - Avoid including the landless serfs in the revolutionary forces, as such an inclusion would change the character of the revolution from national to social and could lead to military intervention of the Holy Alliance in support of the Sultan.
- Support a revolt of the Serbs.
 - Support a revolt of the Bulgarians.
 - Revolt of Greek crews serving on the Ottoman Fleet in Constantinople and set the Fleet on fire before news of the revolt in Moldavia and Wallachia reach Constantinople.
 - Capture the Sultan who would rush to the naval base of Constantinople to

⁵ Current treaties did not allow the increase of Ottoman Forces in Moldavia and Wallachia without permission from the Russian Empire.

take charge of the operation to save the Fleet.

- Revolution in Sterea Ellada (Mainland Greece) and Peloponnesus.
- Revolution in as many areas as possible, engage and prevent adjacent Ottoman forces to focus on Peloponnesus.
- In Peloponnesus push Ottomans inside castles and strongholds and besiege them to surrender.
- In Sterea Ellada block all roads and passages to Peloponnesus from cities and areas with large Ottoman forces.
- Revolution of all islands and cities with naval power, merchant ships converted for battle or suitable for transport and fire ships. Naval units were imperative for the success of the Revolution and they had the following tasks:
 - Blockade Ottoman strongholds and forces by the sea.
 - Protect revolting islands and territories from the Ottoman Fleet and Ottoman Forces in general.
 - Supply the Revolutionaries by the sea and protect the revolutionary supply lanes.
 - Raid and attack Ottoman Bases and Ships
- Establish unity of Administration to coordinate action on the political, diplomatic and military level.
- Commence diplomatic activities.
- Maintain at the least control of Peloponnesus and the neighboring islands as the heartland of the Independent Greece and achieve de facto recognition from European powers.
- Achieve a similar condition to as many Greek territories as possible.

Filiki Etaireia knew that they needed time to gain and establish control in Peloponnesus. Even though the biggest part of the Ottoman forces in Peloponnesus was sent to Epirus to fight Ali Pasha, the remaining forces still outmatched the rebels, while major strongholds and suitable areas for disembarkation of reinforcements were under the control of the Ottomans. If the Sultan would decide to send his armies by the sea en masse to Peloponnesus, without keeping his vast strategic reserve in Constantinople, the rebels would not have many chances to resist. The plan of Filiki Etaireia was known to the Sultan, probably by treason or military intelligence, before it was set in motion. However,

Filiki Etaireia manages to organize a strategic deception scheme convincing the Sultan and his officials that:

- Greeks did not, and could not, revolt by themselves. They are an instrument of the Russians, who at the right moment will come to Moldavia and Wallachia to reinforce the Greeks and from there attack Constantinople. Thus, the main target is Constantinople and the main effort unfolds in Moldavia and Wallachia.
- Information on an imminent Revolution in Peloponnesus is rumor spread by Ali Pasha of Epirus in order that the formidable Hoursit Pasha with his strong forces would leave Epirus and return to Peloponnesus.
- Despite the outbreak of the Revolution in Peloponnesus, the main target of the Revolutionaries and their Russian instigators was Constantinople, so this is where the main military effort should be anticipated.

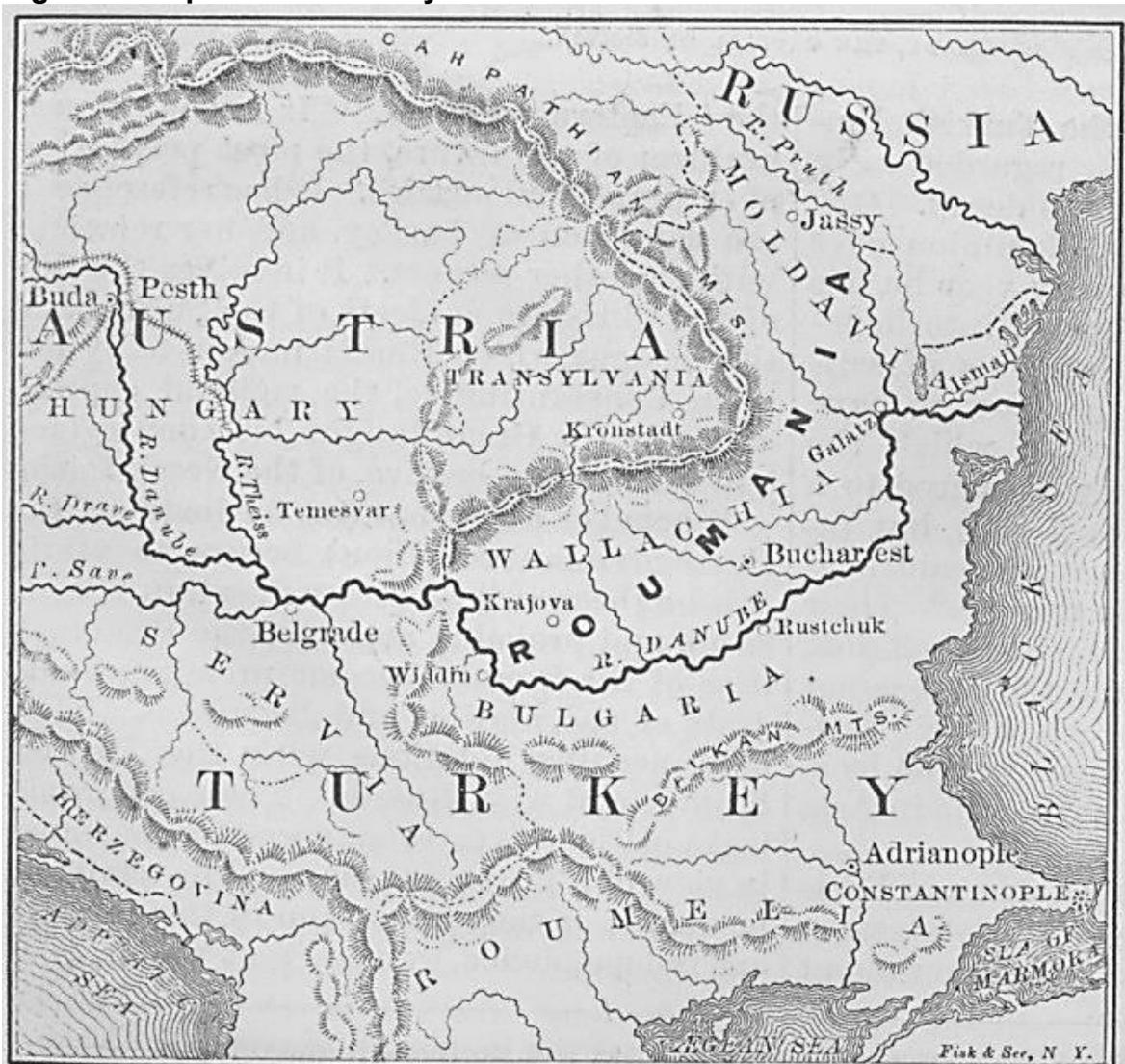
All high ranking members of Filiki Etaireia knew that Russian support for the Revolution did not exist and that there would not be a Russian intervention in favor of the revolting Greeks. However, they were always implying that Filiki Etaireia is backed by the Russian Empire, an assumption that was encouraging hesitant Greeks to become members of Filiki Etaireia. In the early phase of the Revolution, Russian incitement and looming intervention, probably fed to Ottoman authorities by agents or traitors, was the main reason that the Sultan, his consultants and some of his Western Allies, were convinced that Constantinople was the primary target and this was where the bulk of his forces must stay.

This conclusion made the Sultan task the reinforcement of Peloponnesus mainly with armies already stationed in Greek territories and keep the bulk of his army in Constantinople. A similar, but not analogous, example of strategic deception in more modern times is the operation of the Allies to convince Hitler that the landing in Normandy was a diversion but the main effort would be in Pas de Calais. This made Hitler keep his strongest armored and mechanized divisions as a reserve and not employ them against the landing Allies in Normandy, which in turn offered the Allies the valuable time they needed to establish a defensible beachhead.

The military operations in Moldavia and Wallachia started in February 1821 and deserve a vast and separate analysis. While the defeat in Dragatsani in July

1821 was a major blow, the revolutionaries kept fighting until the end of September 1821 offering valuable time to the main effort in Peloponnesus. Among the local Greek revolutionaries were also Greeks from Macedonia, Epirus, Thrace, Peloponnesus, Sterea Ellada, the Ionian Islands, Mani, Sfakia, sailors from the Aegean and the Ionian etc. The battles took place in a highly complex environment that combined rivers, valleys, mountains and coastal areas while the local Christian population was composed of many other ethnicities in addition to the Greeks.

Figure 6: Map of Countries by the river Danube in 1821



Following the General Plan, almost a month after the commence of operations in Moldavia and Wallachia and until April 1822, the Revolution erupted gradually in other areas of Peloponnesus, Mainland Greece (Sterea Ellada), the Islands of Aegean, Macedonia, Thrace, Epirus, Crete etc. The very dense Table

Chapter 4: Military Perspective of the Struggle

4.1. General

As the uprising in Moldavia and Wallachia forced the Sultan to keep the bulk of his forces near Constantinople, the revolt in Macedonia under the leadership of Emmanuel Pappas and Kasomoulis, kept the strong forces of Thessaloniki and the their able Pasha in Macedonia. Chalkidiki and particularly Kassandra was a stronghold of the Revolution. Ships from the island of Psara and the city of Ainos in Thrace were supplying the revolutionaries by sea and defended them from the Ottoman ships of Thessaloniki and the attacks of the Ottoman army for as much as they could.

Figure 8: British Map of “Greece, Archipelago & part of Anadoli” in 1791



Souliotes, the warrior Greeks of Epirus, in close contact with Filiki Etaireia and the Revolutionaries in Peloponnesus, kept equal distances in the war of Ali Pasha against the Sultan, giving hopes for alliance to both but committing to none, aiming to maintain the conflict open and oblige the forces of the Sultan and their able Pasha, Hoursit, to stay far from Peloponnesus. In parallel they avoided to

declare revolution, not to give Ali the opportunity to make a treaty with the Sultan in return for his alliance against the revolutionaries.

In the end Souliotes and the revolutionaries of Olympus, Chalkidike and Thrace, had to abandon their land. After securing their families, they went south, joined the ranks of the Revolutionaries either under their captains or individually and continued the struggle.

The outbreak of so many fronts forced the Sultan to use mainly forces of Thessaly, Sterea Ellada and Peloponnesus to suppress the revolution, without this fact meaning that these forces were not strong or formidable. In this point we would like to remind that the Sultan knew the plan of the Revolution, yet he strongly believed that there was no chance the Greeks rose by themselves, so the main threat, the Russian Army joined by the revolutionary forces, would soon threaten his capital.

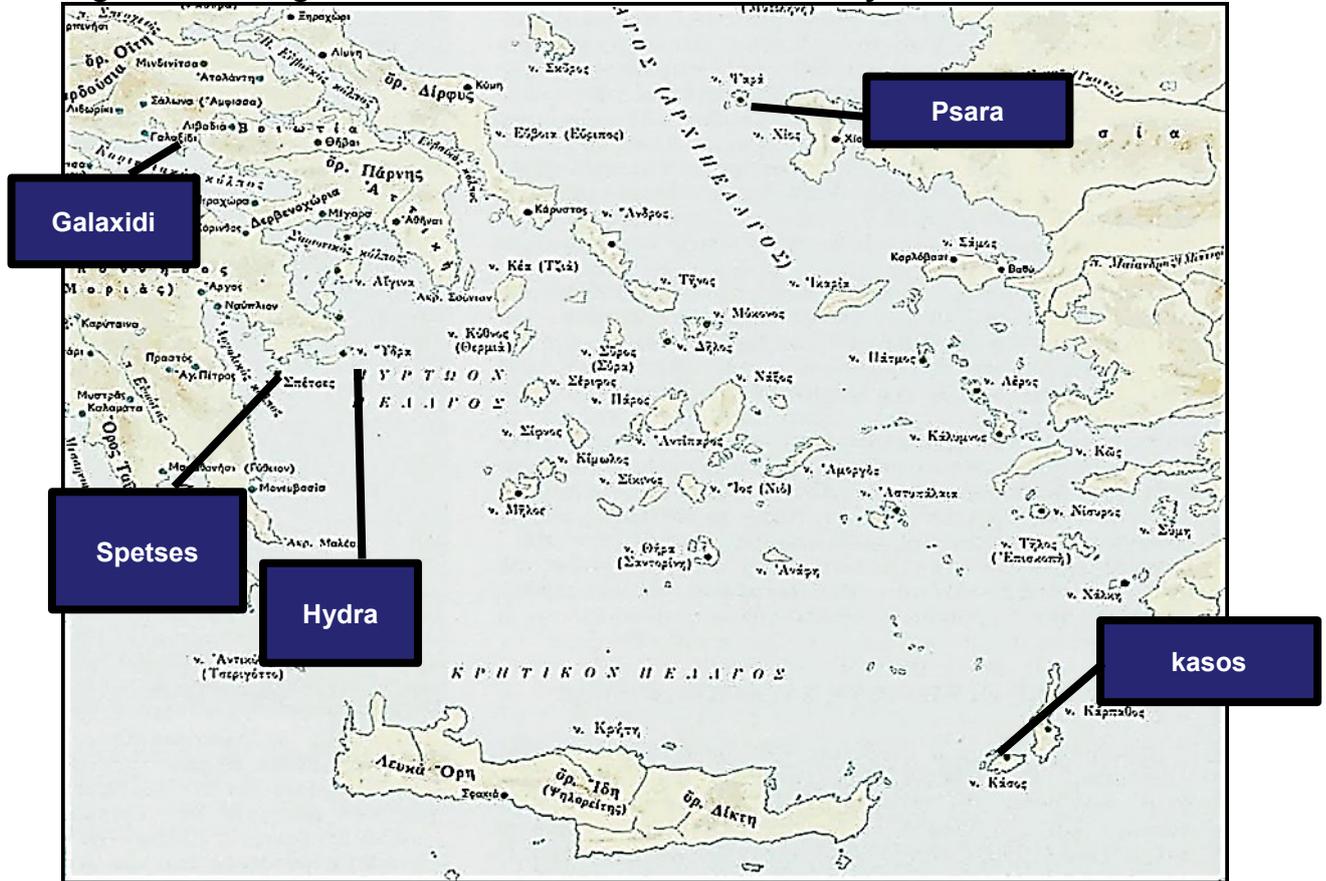
An Ottoman Army moving south to Peloponnesus should maintain control of Sterea Ellada. The keys for the control of Sterea Ellada were Messolonghi in the West and Athens at the East. Furthermore to move south through east Sterea Ellada an army must control the island of Evvoia. Evvoia was necessary to protect the flank of a southward moving army and provide logistics and reinforcements by the sea. In western Sterea Ellada the control of Naupactus and Antirio allowed the transportation of an army to Peloponnesus by the sea to Rio. The Revolutionaries came very close to gain control of Evvoia, however, a combination of factors with the main one being internal strife and envy, kept them from achieving this very important goal.

The key for the control of Peloponnesus was Tripolis due to its size and position in the center of the peninsula. Tripoli and the surrounding area were big enough to sustain a large army with cavalry, artillery and infantry and from Tripoli the Ottomans could move anywhere in Peloponnesus faster than the Revolutionaries could react.

Filiki Etaireia and all the Revolutionaries knew that without ships the struggle was doomed to failure. Operations at sea were multi-dimensional and in a very broad area, among which was to maintain the supply of revolutionaries and revolted areas by the sea, to disrupt the supply and reinforcement of besieged Ottoman forces and strongholds, to protect revolted areas from sea borne attacks,

attack the Ottoman Fleet when conditions were favorable and raid Ottoman bases and army concentration sites. Then, as now, the best way to transport supplies and move armies and reinforcements over long distances was by the sea.

Figure 9: Strongholds and bases of the Revolutionary Fleet



The arranged date to commence the Revolution in southern Greece was the 25th of March 1821. However each area declared its Revolution also taking into account existing conditions as the movement and vigilance of Ottoman units and authorities which became very tight after the events in Moldavia and Wallachia and even tighter after the first exchange of fire in Pyrgos of Kalavrita on the 21st of March 1821. Kalamata declared the Revolution on the 23rd of March 1821 and by the 28th of March the Revolution was spread throughout Peloponnesus. The Ottomans kept mainly control of Tripolis, the area of Lala in Elis, Patra, Rio, Methoni, Koroni, Nafplio and Akrokorinthos. As in Sterea Ellada the Ottomans controlled Athens, Evvoia, Naupactus and Antirio, they had the freedom to move reinforcements and supplies from Sterea Ellada to Peloponnesus and vice versa, support the besieged strongholds and cities and break the sieges.

One of the most significant forms of fighting during the Struggle for Independence was sieges. The Greeks, short of means and know how, to besiege a city or stronghold had to block the supplies, weaken the defenses and either try to take the city by surprise or convince the defenders to surrender. A characteristic example of such a siege was the siege of Tripolis.

On the other hand, when besieged they would have to face the crushing superiority in numbers and means of an organized force. Key examples were the sieges of Neokastro, Acropolis of Athens and the three sieges of Messolonghi. Particularly the last one took epic dimensions related to the complexity of operations -including sapper warfare, their ferocity, their duration and the fact that the defenders were not overrun militarily but by famine, thus they chose exodus as the only solution. Defenders who were not in position to fight their way, stayed at their house with guns and gunpowder determined to fight to death. Among the defenders, both inside the city and with the groups who tried to break through, were many women dressed with male clothes and armed. Reflecting on this we would like to quote German veteran of WWII who fought at the Eastern Front and came across units of the Red Army who had women in their ranks. "When we saw women soldiers fighting us, we understood that we are not fighting against an army but against the whole of the people".

Despite the predictions of Europeans that the Greek Revolution would not survive beyond 1821, the Revolutionaries managed to overcome grave dangers and by the end of 1822 the Revolution was well established and strong. The Plan of Filiki Etaireia and the Revolutionaries was proven correct despite the inherent weaknesses and disadvantages of the Greek side. The next perils and dangers would be the outcome of internal strife and envy, and eventually Civil War, combined with the decision of the Sultan to join forces with Egypt against the Revolution. Among the measures the Sultan took to suppress the Revolution was to declare Holy War(Jihad⁶) against the infidel Greeks. Feeding and caring for refugee populations was a constant worry for the Revolutionaries and demanded substantial resources.

⁶ Qur'an the four main categories are: jihad al-fans (of oneself, for the values of moral life), jihad al-saif (of the sword, war), jihad al-lisan (of the language, on theology) and jihad al-yad (of hand, of deeds).

4.2. Military Operational Planning

For the following analysis we will use terms, procedures and tools of operational planning as used in the Armed Forces today. To be easily understood by those not accustomed to the process it would be useful to provide a brief introduction.

The Basic Operational Factors for Operational Planning are:

- **Time** (Duration of operations, Critical dates, coordination of operations and activities with respect to specific time objectives).
- **Area - Terrain** (natural geography and topography in general that affects operations).
- **Forces** (organizational effectiveness and relative fighting power).

These factors are directly linked with critical functions of the Armed Forces. Command Control Communications and Intelligence on the enemy were always fundamental to conduct battle. At that time technology was not favoring these functions and even though they did not have the form we are familiar with today, it does not mean they were not a fundamental part of the planning and execution process, it is just that to perform them one needed more time and effort.

To draft an operational plan one needs to answer fundamental action related questions on **who**, **what**, **where**, **when**, **how** and **why**. The following concepts are also important:

Desirable End State (DES). A determination of the political and/or military conditions at the end of an operation.

Objective. A clearly defined and achievable goal whose achievement is necessary to the completion of the End State.

Center of Gravity (CG). A primary source of power that allows the achievement of objectives. It can be a characteristic, an ability, a location, a personality, or an asset that is fundamental to the will and ability to fight. The correspondent of a corner stone is that, once destroyed a structure collapses.

Decisive Point (DP). Gradual steps that lead to the protection of friendly CGs and the elimination of enemy CGs.

The Strategy to achieve goals and end states can be direct or indirect. A direct strategy would mean engaging the strong points of an opponent while an indirect strategy is suitable when an opponent is stronger. The indirect approach aims to engage natural and moral weakness of the opponent, avoiding the strong points and avoiding attrition of friendly forces. This was the approach the Greeks adopted in most cases.

These concepts help us understand the logic and planning that drive Ottoman operations in two distinct phases, before and after 1825. Before 1825 the desired end state of the Ottomans was to regain the revolting areas and return them to the status quo before the Revolution. To achieve that, they launched combined operations by land and sea and tried to force or convince populations to accept Ottoman rule. Despite the Ottoman operations and the civil war that erupted between the Revolutionaries, by the end of 1824 the Revolution was still alive and furthermore it gained increasing international support. So as the initial end state seemed elusive the Sultan altered his desired end state. Rather than ending up with an independent, politically progressive, Christian Greek, revisionist, potentially dangerous (as it proved to be) state in the Aegean and the Balkans, he preferred to bring the extremely efficient, and to an extent rival, force of Egypt in play, as an ally against the Revolutionaries. In return, if Mohamed Ali of Egypt could crush the revolution in Peloponnesus and the adjacent islands, they were his for settlement. Egyptian fellahs would replace Greeks in Morea (another name used for Peloponnesus at that time).

4.3. Greek Revolutionaries Land Forces and Strategy

From the Greek perspective the **Desired End State** was the liberation and independence of revolted areas in the Greek region. To achieve that the **Objective** was to prevail over Ottoman Forces and establish the Revolution.

The **Centers of Gravity** were:

- The mountainous areas of Peloponnesus and Sterea Ellada that provided bases for the Revolutionaries and the passes that allowed movement of large military forces. Sterea Ellada was the strategic depth and the breakwater of Ottoman attacks to Peloponnesus by land.

- The battle hardened units of Armatoli and Kleftes which provided the core of Revolutionary land forces.
- Experience and proven in battle chieftains with military prowess and strategic insight (Kolokotronis, Androutsos, Karaiskakis etc.)
- The will, passion, flame and determination of Greek populations to fight and support the struggle for freedom and Independence.

Decisive points were:

- To occupy Ottoman cities, strongholds and castles. The main one in Peloponnesus was Tripolis and its premises as the main Ottoman administrative center and military base in Peloponnesus.
- To control land routes of supply and communication.
- To block the supply and communication of Ottoman strongholds and forces by land and prevent them from reinforcing and supporting each other.

Figure 10: Struggle between a Greek fighter and a Pasha (Eugene Delacroix)



In addition to the strategic planning it is important to profile the Greek combatants who had to materialize the plans as well as the tactics they employed and the means they had in their disposal. Greek combatants gained their experience and skills through their frequent clashes with Ottomans over the years of Ottoman occupation. Greek military units either "Kleftes" or "Armatoloi" were irregulars experienced and equipped for guerilla

warfare. Irregulars were not equipped and trained for classic battles and lacked

the necessary discipline to that end. In the beginning of the Revolution their numbers were in the order of 22000 and they did not have artillery or cavalry. They were organized in small units under a chieftain. Decisions were made among chieftains in a form of a counsel. Chieftains did not have a hierarchical relation and broad common operations needed consensus among equals in their planning and execution.

Even though these are forbidding elements for success in the battle field, these rugged irregulars were courageous, bold and skillful during battle in their natural environment and they managed to deliver strong blows to the Ottoman forces. The lack of central command, organizational efficiency and funding affected readiness, responsiveness and ability to campaign far from their bases. Their individualistic mentality was an obstacle to the formation of regular forces.

Figure 11: Greek fighters (Thanos Vasilikos)



Trying to summarize their characteristics we would point out the following:

- Individuality and Localism as a result of life in isolated mountainous areas and the need to support their families.
- Resourcefulness, bravery and boldness as a result of life in adverse

and dangerous environment.

- Ability to adapt to changing conditions and tactical agility.
- Lack of discipline and coordination. Combatants would not follow leaders who were not proven in battle or follow orders in the context of a broader military formation.

4.4. Revolutionary Greeks, Naval Strategy and Forces

The **Desired End State** for the Hellenic fleet was the liberation of Greek islands and coastal areas.

Thus their **Objective** was to prevail over the Ottoman Fleet and conduct combined operations with the Land Forces.

Decisive Points for the Revolutionaries at sea were:

- Control Sea Lanes of communication.
- Supply and protect the supply of revolutionaries by the sea.
- Protect revolting areas by the sea.
- Protect revolting areas from the Ottoman Fleet.
- Disrupt the reinforcement and supply of Ottoman strongholds and armies by the sea.
- Forbid the Ottomans to land or disembark forces

Figure 12: Spetsai naval Battle (Ioannis Koutsis)



Centers of Gravity for the naval operations were:

- Islands and cities with substantial number of able ships and capabilities to build and repair them, mainly Hydra, Spetsai, Psara, Kasos, Galaxidi.
- Formidable leaders as Miaoulis, and fighting Captains as Kanaris, whose acumen and boldness was a force multiplier.
- The will, passion and determination of Greek island and coastal populations to fight and support the struggle for freedom and Independence.

The profile of the representative Hellenic crew and the ship's captain was forged through frequent battles against pirates or breaking through naval blockades, particularly during the Napoleonic Wars. There is a story about young Miaoulis being arrested by the British as a captain of a blockade runner and been brought before Admiral Nelson. When the Admiral asked Miaoulis what would he do with a blockade runner if he was in his place Miaoulis answered that he would hang him from the tallest mast. Either because Nelson appreciated Miaoulis courage or because Miaoulis ships were under a Russian flag, Nelson decided to set Miaoulis free.

Profiling the Greek sailor of the Revolution period we would conclude that he had intense:

- Individuality, ruggedness and localism.
- Resourcefulness and Boldness as a necessary combination to survive superior opponents and continuous lack of resources.
- Bravery and naval acumen. There is one incident that characteristically testifies to that. In 1825 the brigand Aris managed to break the Egyptian blockade of the Gulf of Navarino after making battle with 32 ships of the Joint Ottoman Egyptian Fleet and escaped in the open sea.

Figure 13: Exodus of brigand Aris (Konstantine Volanakis)



- Lack of discipline and reluctance to obey orders, were the source of continuous trouble to Admiral Miaoulis. Before his encounter with the Egyptian

near Samos Island on July 1824 he wrote: “which hope can we conceive that our fleet can line up for battle, when neither our sailors obey the captains nor the captains follow what they collectively decided and each one follows different courses”.

- Both sailors and land combatants had a sense of ancient Hellenic lineage. Characteristic examples are the one of Admiral Kanaris always keeping the history of Alexander the Great next to him and General Gouras writing on his victory over a Turkish army in Marathon, “This victory was greater than others because we won them where Miltiades won the Persians”.

4.5. Women in the Revolution

In the Greek collective narration the Revolution is a man’s story. History exalts the men, heroes-fighters for their courage and self-sacrifice but is generally mute when it comes to the role of women in the national revolution. Yet, during the Revolution, women stood with bravery, dynamism and perseverance either in the first line of battle or in the home front laboring to support the frontline, to hold the family alive and together, to work the fields and tender the animals, to raise children, while men were fighting. Very often they would be next to them in the frontline taking care of logistic support.

Figure 14: Slave Market (Paul Emil Jacobs)



One basic motive for their participation in the struggle was the fear of enslavement and disgrace as captured women were sure to end up as slaves or concubines in Ottoman harems. The British consul on the island of Chios reported that captured Chiot women starved themselves to death to avoid the defilement of slavery. Fear of retaliation and the dread of life in the hands of the Ottomans, were very often driving women to commit suicide and take their children along with them, as was the case of women in Naousa that fell in the waterfall of Arapitsa with their children.

An equally driving factor for their stance was the devastating blow to motherhood and family, of the Ottoman custom to take male children from Christian families, very often massively, and include them in Ottoman families and the Ottoman structure. The increased contact with the western world, European liberalism and the example of fighting women in the American and French Revolutions had also influenced women's minds and hearts, particularly women from cosmopolitan islands, intellectuals and women from privileged classes, most of them becoming members of Filiki Etaireia in the early steps of this secret society.

Additionally, women's stance was a part of the general stance of the Greek population towards oppression, injustice, wretchedness, violating of basic human rights, enslavement that created the conditions for the uprising. Women of the Revolution eponymous and anonymous were wives and mothers of fighters, or fighters themselves and their active participation in the struggle was a logical and anticipated fact.

Heroism and bravery were fundamental ideals and very often were valued over feelings and emotions. This is the case of Ageliki Tsakali from Psara who "divorced her husband because during the campaign to support the Island of Chios he got scared and jumped overboard from Kanaris fire ship". Women of Achladokampos eagerly offered their husbands and men to Kolokotronis in addition to supplies. "Here are our men to take them to war, and if they are not brave, let them take off their weapons and we will put them on, such men we would not wish to have".

Women of the Revolution fought and shone in many great battles. Laskarina Bouboulina, an Admiral leading her own flotilla of eight ships took part in the siege and blockade of Nafplio. She supported with money and supplies the

fighters in Argos, she took part in the Siege of Tripolis, during the civil war she was on the side of Kolokotronis, she besieged the fortified city of Monemvasia forcing the Ottomans to surrender and she lost a son during the fighting in Argos. She spent all her fortune to support the Revolution and in the end of the fighting she was without money.

Domna Visvizi from Ainos of Thrace, abandoned her lavish life and went to fight along with her husband, on board their ship “Kalomoira”, a brigand equipped with canons and a crew of 140 sailors, at the sea battles of Athos, Samos, Evvoia and Lesvos. With her husband she stopped Dramalis from destroying the surrounded forces of Ypsilantis, Androutsos and Nikitaras in Agia Marina of Lamia. After her husband’s death she took command of the ship and participated in sea battles, the siege of Evvoia and kept supplying the revolutionaries of Sterea Ellada with arms and troops until 1824, when having spent all her fortune she gave her ship to the Greek Administration fully equipped as a fire ship. It was with this ship, the brigand “Kalomoira”, that Pipinos destroyed the Turkish Frigate Hasne Gemisi carrying the coffers of the Ottoman Fleet.

Figure 15: The Acropolis’ Battle (Nikolas Gosse)



Manto Mavrogenous, a Greek from an aristocratic family residing in Trieste, with the beginning of the uprising moved to Mykonos where she funded and commanded units of ships and men. She organized and led a counterattack of Mykonians from the frontline against a landed force of Ottomans in 1822, and supported the Revolution by contributing large amounts of money. She participated in the campaigns of Evvoia, Pelion and Phocis. Being educated in literature and languages she gained fame abroad and was addressing letters to French

and English women, asking them not for support as the Greeks should owe their

freedom only to themselves, but for blocking aid to the Ottomans by their countries. Similar letters were addressed to Europe by other women intellectuals of that time like Evanthia Kairi.

Except eponymous heroines, there are numerous anonymous women who joined the fight. On July 1822, Dramalis Pasha lost at least 500 of his men in the battle of Aginoros where Nikitaras with a small number of men pushed the Ottoman forces back with the aid of women of Aginoros who were hurling rocks against the attacking Turks from the cliffs.

Figure 16: Woman's participation in the revolution



In Demetsana, “Morea’s gun powder factory” women were working to assemble fuses and along with women of neighboring villages were baking breads for the Revolutionary fighters.

Women of Messolongi participated in the struggle in every possible manner, encouraging fighting men, transferring ammunition, supplies and material to the ramparts, tending to the wounded and finally during the exodus fighting dressed with male clothes(see Figure 31). If in danger to be captured they would commit suicide.

The participation of women in the siege of Acropolis by the Ottomans was quite similar. Asimo Goura, wife of General Gouras took charge of the besieged forces after the death of her husband in 1826.

Another remarkable case is the courage of women of Mani against the forces of Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt in the battle of Deros. Ibrahim demanded the surrender of Mani and the men stood against him in the Battle of Verga. With all the men engaged in Verga, Ibrahim launched a second force against the unprotected areas of Mani. In 1826 in the battle of Deros women of Mani stood against him armed with sickles and stones held the forces of Ibrahim and inflicted severe casualties.

Figure 17: Women of Mani in the Battle of Deros



4.6. The Ottoman Forces

To understand the military aspect of operations it is important to present the corresponding factors for the Ottomans.

The **Desired End State** was the suppression of the Revolution and the return of revolted areas under the Sultan rule.

Thus the Objective for the Ottoman Forces was:

- To control revolted areas.

- To prevail over Revolutionary forces.

Centers of Gravity for the Ottomans were:

- The seats of Government in Constantinople and Alexandria..

Figure 18: Ottoman Castles' Map



- Strongholds, castles and fortified positions in big cities, coastal areas, passes and islands like Patra, Rio, Antirio, Naupactus, Corinth, Athens.

- Suitable locations for the concentration of army, ships, ammunition and supplies like Constantinople, Adrianople, Monastiri, Thessaloniki,

Smyrna, Alexandria, Larisa, Tripolis, Patra.

- Able leaders like Ibrahim Pasha, Dramali Pasha, Kioutahi Pasha, Yusuf Pasha and Hoursit Pasha.
- The vast Ottoman armies.
- The vast resources for mobilization and levy.
- Support from European and Western Powers.

Decisive Points were:

- To protect Ottoman populations, strongholds and seats of government and power from the Revolutionaries.
- To prevail over revolutionary forces.
- To cut the supply of Revolutionaries.
- To protect the Ottoman communication and supply routes.
- To break the will of Greek populations to continue the Revolution.

- To amass sufficient armies for long campaigns.

The Ottomans based their hold on an extensive network of castles and strongholds extending throughout the occupied areas. Castles and forts could offer protection to Ottoman armies and populations and controlled important routes and passages.

The Ottoman Army had had superior power compared to the Greek irregular units and a vast amount of reserves and resources. The following numbers cover the total territory of the Ottoman Empire.

At the time of the Revolution the Ottoman army included:

- Infantry units of 220.000 suitable for holding lines ambush and launch short counterattacks.
- Cavalry units of 180.000 mounted horsemen. The cavalry was formed by land owners who had the means to sustain horses and arms and by irregular horsemen from the Balkans, Kurdistan or Asia. They were the Ottoman crack troops and they could move with speed and agility.
- Artillery recently modernized in accordance with European standards, manned by 15.000 gunners.

Figure 19: Ottoman Army's Attack (Hasan Raza)



- Janissaries were a special military group. Traditionally they were the elite force of the Ottomans, however by 19th century they were in decay and their vast majority lost their military skills. As a result few of them participated in military operations. They were 135.000 strong and generally resisted the efforts of the Sultan for military reform and were aiming to overthrow the Sultan Mahmud the 2nd. Mahmud managed to eliminate them in 1826.
- A big number of Ottoman forces in Greek territories were very similar in structure and tactics to the Greek irregulars. These Balkan Muslims were a formidable force against the Revolutionaries.

Efforts to reorganize the army started in 1792, yet the first western type units even though extremely efficient were shunned by the military establishment. Only after 1826 the Ottomans formed the first western type military units. The Sultan's forces were reinforced by the Egyptian regulars already well equipped and trained in accordance with French tactics and standards and very often led by French mercenary officers. The Egyptians contributed to the Sultan 26.000 foot soldiers, 1000 cavalry and artillery units, substantial reserves in Souda (Crete), Alexandria, supply bases in Peloponnesus and a Fleet of 400 warships and supply ships. Equally important the Egyptian Fleet and Army was led by the extremely educated and able Ibrahim Pasha, son of Mohamed Ali of Egypt and supported by a well-organized and knowledgeable staff of Egyptian and European officers.

Among the weaknesses of the Ottoman Army were:

- Tactics and structure characteristic to its feudal nature which were not suitable for modern battles
- Before the reform the military structure was primarily serving its own interests and not those of the Empire. Very often the military bureaucracy was hindering the Sultan's policies and was oppressing the population.
- The Ottoman Army was spread throughout the realm of a vast empire.
- Their troops were not homogeneous. Local governors were forming units made by mercenaries, *armatoli*(Greek irregulars) and militia.

Figure 20: Ottoman Camp (Adolf Schreyer)



- Campaigns were not supported by the central government and supply authorities. Campaign leaders were responsible for this aspect and they were giving unlimited powers and resources to that end.
- It was difficult to maintain an army during winter as Janissaries were withdrawing in accordance with their tradition and mounted troops returned to the works of their land and properties.
- As mentioned before the army establishment was against any modernization effort, a fact that hindered the army's effectiveness in battle until the appearance of the Egyptians.

For the Ottoman Navy the **Desired End State** was the same with the Army, the suppression of the Revolution and the return of revolting coastal territories and islands under the rule of the Sultan. Consequently the **Objective** was to prevail

over revolutionary naval forces and obtain Sea Control and dominion over islands and coastal territories

Figure 21: Ottoman sailor (Luis Dupre)



The Centers of Gravity were:

- The major Naval Bases in Constantinople and Alexandria and the Fleets.
- Formidable leaders like Ibrahim Pasha.
- Flagships and ships of high value.

Decisive Points were:

- To protect coastal areas and islands loyal to Ottoman rule from the revolutionaries and prevent them from joining the Revolution.
- To safeguard sea lanes of supply and communication.

- To reinforce Ottoman strongholds with military units and supplies.
- To block the supply and reinforcements of the revolutionaries.

To achieve its mission the Ottoman Navy had modern fast ships with heavy armament and strong armor. In 1821 the Ottomans had a crushing superiority of major naval ships, numbering more than 150, 73 of them were heavily armed and armored. Among these major naval ships:

- 17 Ships of the Line (3 rows of guns (canons)) per side, 4 with a total of 120 guns and the rest with 74 guns.
- 10 Frigates of 50 guns.
- 6 Corvettes of 30 guns.
- 40 Brigands of 20 guns.

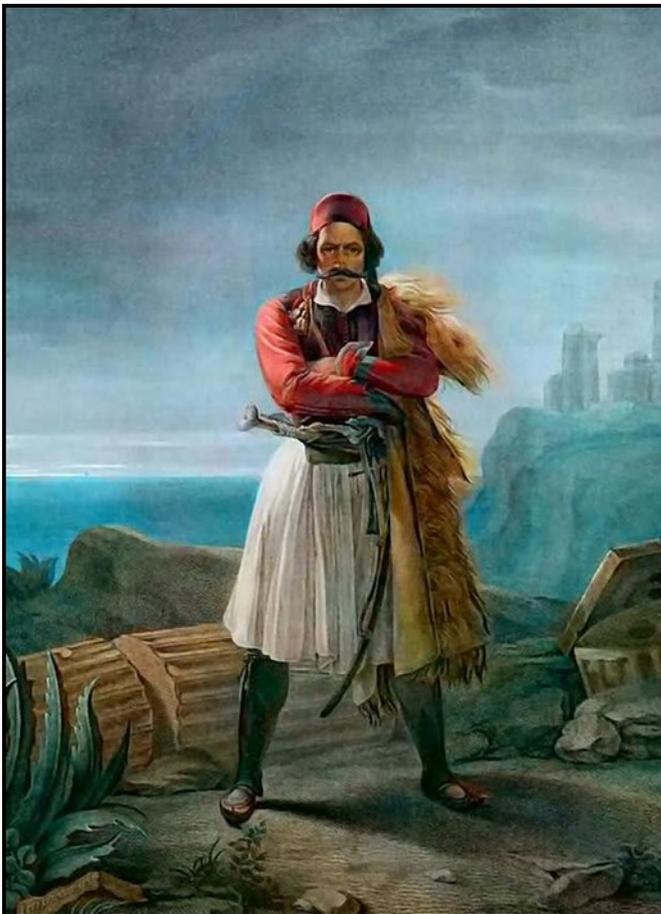
Ottomans were lacking in seamanship. With the eruption of the Revolution the Ottoman Fleet lost a big part of its crews and highly skilled sailors because of their Greek origin. An old Turkish proverb quotes: “God gave the Land to the believers and the sea to the Infidels”.

Chapter 5: Tactics and Weapons of the Struggle

5.1. Characteristics and Tactics of Guerilla Warfare

Guerilla warfare is ruled by the physics of asymmetry which under normal circumstances favor regular armies in the expense of the guerillas. Guerillas are mainly volunteers, organized in small groups, dispersed in neighboring but not close locations. They are not fighting in formation and they cannot do battle against well-equipped regular armies in broad and level battle fields. Regular armies are better organized, led and coordinated and generally are tactically superior.

Figure 22: Kleftis (Ludovico Liparini)



Guerilla warfare during the Greek Revolution had three main characteristics that supported the successful conduct of operations:

Local peoples in the Greek areas supported the Revolution morally and substantially providing fighters, logistics and Intel on the enemy.

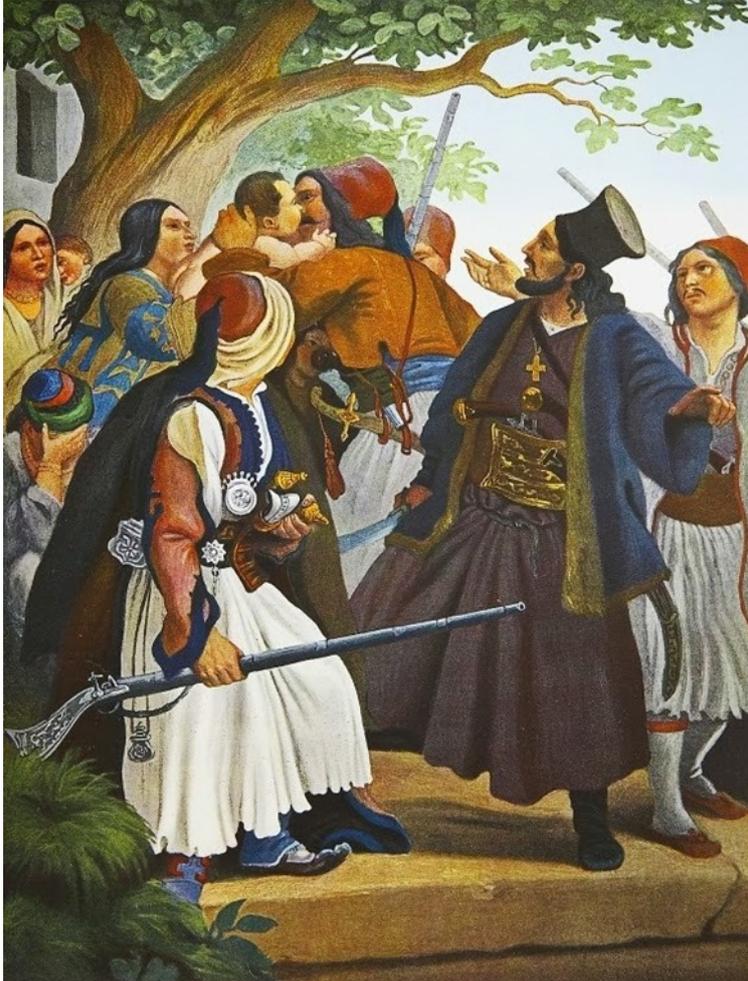
Many of the Greek irregulars had served the Ottoman Army in the past and where acquainted with its tactics and methods, strengths and vulnerabilities.

Familiarization with the operational terrain, battle experience and patriotic motivation allowed them to prevail over Ottoman forces in critical battles and encounters.

Successful operations in Peloponnesus during 1821 – 1822 were based on the following combination of types of warfare and tactics:

- **Decentralized Guerilla Warfare** was disrupting and causing attrition and uncertainty to Ottoman armies on the Revolutionary forces intentions, numbers and capabilities. This tactic was successful against Ottoman Forces moving from the North to Peloponnesus via Sterea Ellada. Greek Revolutionaries were continuously harassing Ottoman forces, with hit and run action, during their movement south, forcing Ottomans to disperse and chase the guerillas.

Figure 23: Athanasios Diakos assembles his warriors (Peter von Hess)



To prevail over Greek irregulars, the Ottomans would have to: either catch up with them and force them into battle under favorable terms, or gain control of the towns and villages that provided support to Revolutionary units.

- **Ambush** was a favorite tactic of the Revolutionaries. Particularly deep ambushes in the form of bait and trap, like in the battles of Vasilika and Dervenakia resulted in neutralizing strong Ottoman

armies in numbers of soldiers and capabilities. Similar historical examples are the elimination of three Roman Legions in Teutoburg Forest and the elimination of a British expeditionary force during the First Anglo Afghan War.

- **Successfully besieging Ottoman Castles, Strongholds and Fortified cities** depended on amassing sufficient forces for the siege. To isolate the besieged position the revolutionaries would have to conduct decentralized guerilla warfare and ambushes over a long range. In coastal areas the Ottomans maintained control of important strongholds and cities either because they could

be supplied and reinforced by the Ottoman Fleet, or because Greek irregulars preferred to operate in the safety of mountainous terrain or because internal strife resulted in a number of lost opportunities to gain control of coastal fortified positions and cities.

The Ottomans fought the Revolution also by devastating villages, towns and farms, and on the other hand rewarding those who pledged to return to Ottoman rule.

Figure 24: Battle Scene (Theodoros Vryzakis)



The fact that when Ibrahim landed in Peloponnesus the civil war was raging, worsened an already perilous situation. Facing extinction the Government reinstated the imprisoned Kolokotronis in his position as general military leader.

Kolokotronis knew that Egyptians could not be defeated on the battlefield so he launched total war, employing scorched earth tactics and decentralized guerilla attrition warfare with hit and run assaults. Big efforts were made to sustain

the support of the population and harsh punishment was inflicted against people who accepted Ottoman rule.

Yet time was a common ally and enemy for both sides. Ibrahim had an abundance of reinforcements and supplies, however this was coming at a great cost financially. The Revolutionaries were aiming to win time hoping for a European intervention, however as time passed the devastation of combatants, people and land in Peloponnesus was very close to being irreversible and Greeks faced extinction.

5.2. Struggle at Sea

The French philhellene and fighter of the Revolution Olivier Voutier⁷, willing to describe the catalytic role played by the Greek Navy in the successful outcome of the Revolution, emphasized the following:

"We can not but sufficiently repeat to the Europeans that the freedom of Greece depends more on the war at sea and less on the war on land. As long as the Greeks had the upper hand at sea, no Turkish army could prevail in Morea."

The crushing superiority of the Ottoman Navy in size, capabilities and firepower forced the Greek Revolutionaries to do strategic planning based on the avoidance of pitched battle in the open seas and favor battles in narrow and shallow waters where the Greek ships could use their speed, agility and low keels to their advantage. As the Greek-converted merchant ships were lacking in fire power they made extensive use of fire ships very often in covert operations and raids. Fire ships were a known weapon yet the Greek fleet adopted innovative tactics and ignition techniques and used them against moving ships and not only against anchored ships. The successful use of fire ships was one the main reasons for the preservation of the Revolution at sea during the early stages.

Additionally to successful attacks against enemy ships, the use of fire ships had a devastating impact on the psychological sector. Very often just the appearance of fire ships disorganized the battle formations of the Ottoman Fleets

⁷Olivier Voutier received the rank of Colonel of the Greek Army and participated in many operations during the Revolution. Among them are the siege of Tripoli and the siege of Athens, in which he showed particular devotion to the protection of its ancient monuments. Voutier is the man who discovered in 1820 the sculpture of Aphrodite of Milos, which is on display at the Louvre Museum.

and dispersed their ships; albeit, fireships alone could not counterbalance for long the numbers, firepower, logistics and resources of the Joint Ottoman Egyptian Naval Forces. Capable warships were costly in money, material and personnel and soon after the initial surprise fireships created for the Egyptian Fleet, the experienced Egyptian Fleet found ways to countervail, even including fire ships in their battle lines.

Figure 25: Torching the Ottoman Flagship (Ivan Ivazovski)

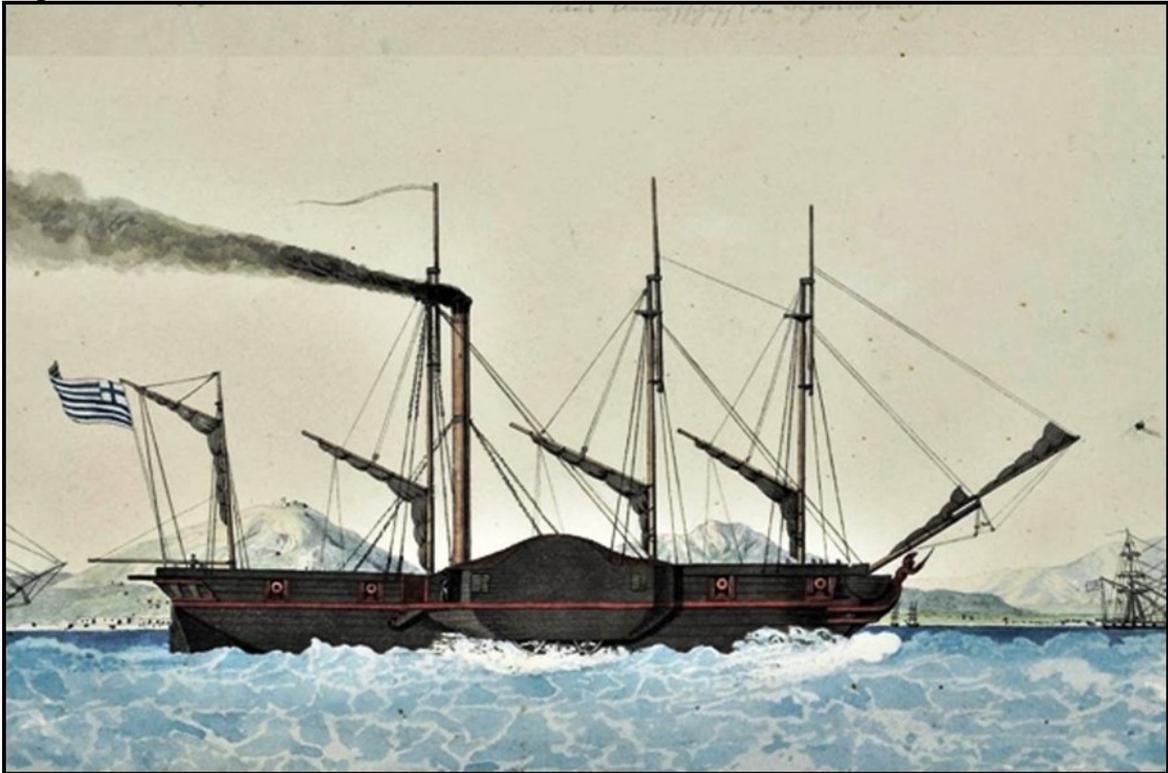


The answer to the Revolutionaries quest for a way to battle the united Ottoman Egyptian forces came in the form of innovation and technology. Lord Frank Abney Hastings a British aristocrat and naval officer was obsessed with the use of steam to propel ships, particularly warships and the use of advanced guns to fire red hot cannon shots. Hastings argued that steam warships that could attack with direct shells and hot shots could balance the might of the Ottoman and Egyptian Ships of the Line and of course Frigates and Corvettes. Hastings' plan was adopted by the Revolutionaries and led to the acquisition of Corvette KARTERIA (PERSEVERENCE) the first steam warship to participate in sea battles and war operations.

During battle KARTERIA had two main advantages. First she could maneuver with a speed of 7 knots in any direction without wind. Second she could fire iron sots heated in the ship's boilers that had a destructive impact on their targets much

more effective than that of guns used at that time. Conventional warships at that time would have an average cost of 63.000 English Pounds and needed a crew of 900 sailors while KARTERIA costed 15.000 English Pounds and needed a crew of 150.

Figure 26: The Steam Powered Corvette KARTERIA

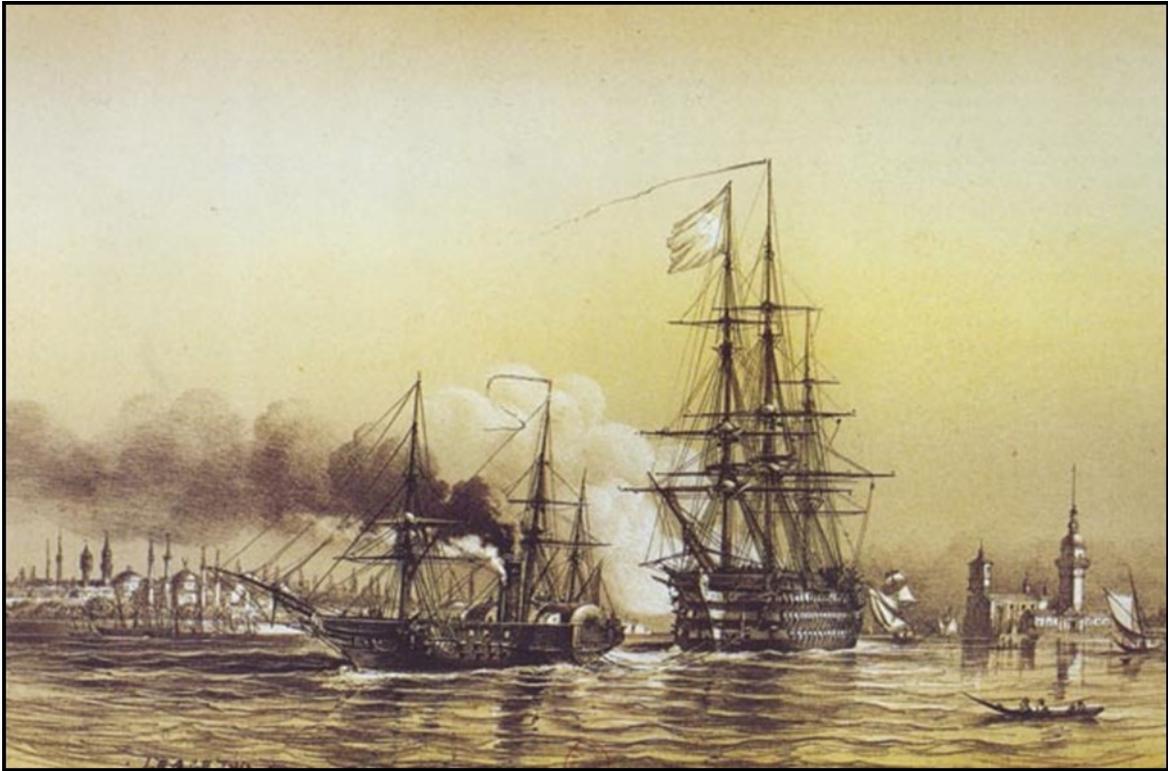


The Greek Administration ordered the construction of six steam warships in total, however only one was delivered to the Revolutionaries. The steam engines were the responsibility of British engineer Alexander Galloway whose son was an engineer in the shipyards of Egypt. There is no actual evidence in our knowledge at the moment, but it would not be a far reaching assumption that fear about his son affected Galloway's effectiveness to deliver the steam engines.

The contribution of Lord Hastings in the acquisition and participation of KARTERIA in the war against the Ottomans and the Egyptians was fundamental. Not only was he a great visionary and designer he also spent a big part of his fortune to complete and operate the ship as her Commanding Officer during operations and battles. Only in 1827, KARTERIA fired 18000 cannon shots and in the Battle of Itea sank 9 Ottoman ships by herself. Lord Hastings had a leading role in the operation to recapture Messolonghi but unfortunately during the

operation he was severely wounded in action and shortly after he passed away on June 1, 1828.

Figure 27: Steam Ships vs Sail Ships



During the Revolution, Greek naval forces managed to inflict substantial blows against the Ottomans and the Egyptians and in many cases managed to repulse and contain them. However, lack of resources, organization, central command, civil strife, and the constant shortage of funds for the war at sea, hindered the Fleet's readiness and availability on a continuous basis, and kept the Revolutionaries from delivering the decisive blow or blows that would deprive the Ottomans from using the sea and leave the Greek Seas to the Revolutionaries control. Cases where the Fleet did not manage to achieve its goals were:

- Inability to successfully support, supply and reinforce Chalkidiki, Magnesia, Souli, Crete, a fact that allowed the Ottomans to prevail in those areas.
- Inability to sail for the defense of Kasos and Psara that were significant naval bases and Revolutionary strongholds with considerable naval power that controlled the movements of the Ottoman and Egyptian Fleet resulting in the destruction of those islands.

- Inability to finally forbid Ibrahim Pasha to land in Crete, reinforce his army and use the strategic island as his base for his operations in Peloponnesus.
- Inability to effectively disrupt Ibrahim's flow of reinforcements and supplies from Alexandria and Crete to Peloponnesus, allowing him to keep his army highly operational and almost fully suppress the Revolution in Peloponnesus.
- Inability to maintain the supply and reinforcement of Messolonghi, a fact that drove the defenders to the epic exodus and brought the city to Ottoman hands.
- Inability to defend Chios, a fact that resulted in the island's destruction and the slaughter and enslavement of its population.

Figure 28: After the destruction of Psara Island (Nikolaos Gizis)

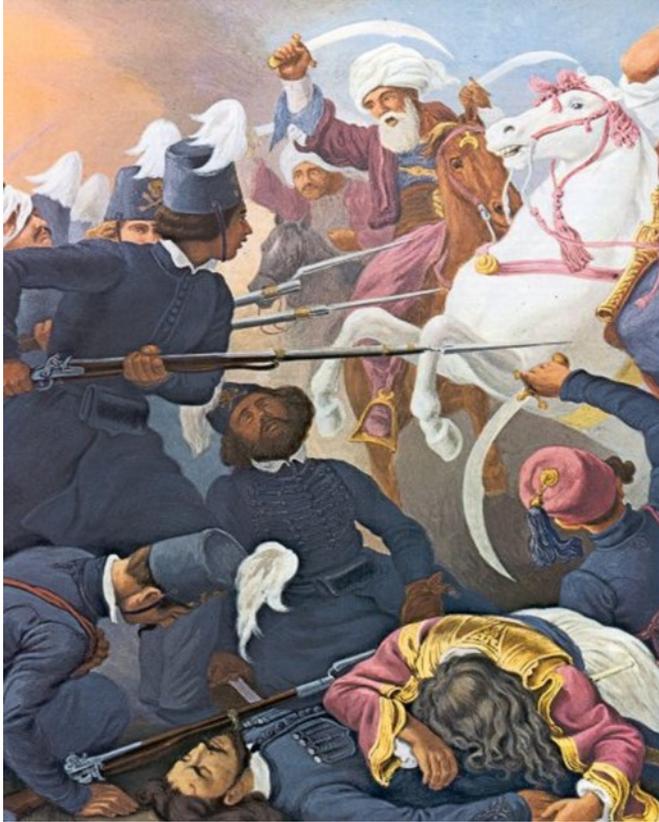


5.3. Greek Regular Forces

Both the Ottomans and the Greek Revolutionaries had few regular units, the term regular meaning, in accordance with the standards and tactics of contemporary European Armies. In those armies soldiers were fighting in linear formations, fired their guns in unison and under coordination, executed precise maneuvers on the battlefield, in close coordination with powerful Cavalry and Artillery units. The infantry man's musket was fitted with a long bayonet, allowing

him to use his rifle like a lance against Cavalry and or Infantry in close combat. Those tactics multiplied the fire power and the battle effectiveness of regular units.

Figure 29: The Sacred Band (Peter von Hess)



In some cases Greeks tried to balance the Ottoman superiority with the formation of regular army units. Their first regular unit was the Sacred Band, formed by Alexandros Ypsilantis on the 3rd of March 1821 in Iasi of Moldavia. The Band consisted of an Infantry battalion of 500 soldiers, a battery of 4 guns (canons), and a cavalry unit of 200 horsemen. The Band fought during the operations in Moldavia and Wallachia, however, in the Battle of Dragatsani on June 8 1821 the

Sacred Band suffered defeat and massive losses that led to its extinction.

In June 1821, Dimitrios Ypsilantis assigned a Philhellene of French father and Greek mother, Joseph Valest, the mission to assemble a regular unit of 300 soldiers. Valest's unit deterred the landing of the Turkish Fleet in Kalamata, and was extremely successful in battles on the Corinthian Gulf, Nauplius and Tripolis. Valest's unit was disbanded in January 1822 because of the number of casualties, the unwillingness of irregular units to cooperate with the regulars but mainly because of Ypsilantis' removal. Valest was sent to Crete to advise the Revolutionaries on the tactics of regular units. He was killed in action during a battle near Rethymnon on April 14 1822.

It is important to make a special remark for the Revolutionary Units of the Ionian Islands (or Eptanisa) operating in Peloponnesus. The soldiers of Eptanisian units had previous experience serving in the British Army and they were familiar both with the way regular armies conduct war and with guerilla warfare. This

allowed them to bring together the best of two worlds. Eptanisian units were extremely effective, well organized, had good logistics and they also had their own artillery. Under the leadership of Andreas Metaxas from Kefalonia, Eptanisian Units played the main role in defeating and permanently neutralizing the extremely dangerous Ottoman units from the area of Lala in Elis, where elite mounted warriors of significant force, numbers and wealth, were considered as “the best fighters in Morea”.

On the 23rd of April 1822, Mavrokordatos acting on behalf of the Administration formed a regular regiment of 520 soldiers, among them many Philhellenes, equipped in accordance with European standards. This Regiment suffered great losses during the battle of Peta on July 4 1822, mainly because its men did not follow the advice of Greek Irregulars and faced the superior forces of Ottoman Cavalry without taking cover. Later on, Mavrokordatos regulars fought in Athens and in Nauplius but in the end the Regiment was disbanded due to lack of resources.

The increased liquidity, after the British loan to the Revolution, allowed the Revolutionaries to form the Regiment of 500 soldiers again on July 1824. On May 1825, the Government decided the obligatory recruitment of young men from 18 to 30 years old with a lottery system to fill in the ranks of the Regulars. The French Colonel Favier was assigned to form a Regular Army called “Taktikon” of 4000 men organized in 5 infantry battalions, 3 cavalry squadrons and Artillery.

Despite the continuous lack of resources, “Taktikon” took part in operations, attempted without success to storm the castle of Karistos and on December 13 1826 managed to break through the Ottoman forces that sieged Acropolis in Athens, and bring supplies and reinforcements to the besieged garrison prolonging the siege of Acropolis by four months. Taktikon was also deployed in operations in the island of Chios in 1827.

Regular Forces proved their value in battle; however, their sustainment was difficult mainly because of lack of the necessary resources and the individualism and reluctance of combatants to obey leaders or officers whose value was not proven in battle, a belief often proven true by destructive command decisions that led to disasters or faulty leadership on the battlefield.

In January 1828, Kapodistrias arrived in Greece as the first Governor of the Greek State. Kapodistrias took action to reorganize "Taktikon", regroup the Cavalry and the Artillery and form an Engineering Corps. Kapodistrias focused also on the education of the military and founded specialty schools. The spearhead of his effort was the foundation of the Officers School, in Greek "Scholi Evelpidon" the first academic institution in modern Greece.

Chapter 6: Characteristic Phases & Events

6.1. The period of success 1821-1823

The Revolution in Moldavia and Wallachia was declared on 21st of February 1821, and a little more than a month afterwards the areas of Southern Greece declared Revolution as well starting from Kalavrita and Kalamata on 23rd of March 1821. Within a month all areas of Peloponnesus declared Revolution and by April 1822 most Greek territories joined the Revolutionaries. The plan of Filiki Etaireia was set in motion. Ottomans withdrew inside their strongholds while Greeks controlled non-fortified cities and villages as well as the countryside.

Figure 30: The Revolutionaries' Oath (Theodorus Vrizakis)



6.2. Period of Decline 1824-1827

Despite predictions to the contrary, at the end of 1822, the Revolution was still alive and Greeks had established authorities to handle the war in a more centralized form and represent them abroad. Unfortunately, internal friction, envy and civil strife developed during the civil war between power groups that expressed opposing local interests, disparate political beliefs on the nature of the future State, liberal or

conservative. The above ultimately affected the distribution of power in the post war status quo. The fierce civil war of 1824 – 1825 exhausted the valuable human, moral and material resources of the Revolutionaries so when Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt with his modern westernized Army and Navy stepped in as an Ally of Sultan Mahmud the Revolution came close to extinction. Ibrahim was able to gain control of most of Peloponnesus and in cooperation with Kioutahi Pasha of Sterea Ellada they sieged and captured Messolonghi after the besieged population and defenders became exhausted from famine fought their way out of

the city in the famous exodus of Messolonghi. The demoralized and desperate Greeks held their 3rd national assembly in the spring of 1826 ready to negotiate some form of autonomy with the Sultan. A year later the National Assembly voted the “Political Constitution of Greece” and established the institution of the Governor.

Figure 31: Exodus of Messolonghi (Theodoros Vrizakis)



The Acropolis of Athens fell to the Ottomans in May 1827, and at that time it seemed that the Revolution was doomed. Total catastrophe was prevented by the intervention of the Great Powers (Great Britain, France, and Russia) as they had adopted a more favorable stance towards the Revolutionaries, partly as a result of pressure from their public opinion, partly because they aimed for a better share in the equilibrium of power in the East Mediterranean and the Middle East. The Great Powers produced a solution to the “Greek Question” with the Treaty of London on June 24, 1827, which provided for the creation of an independent Greek State. Non- acceptance of the terms of the treaty by the Ottoman Empire and Egypt, resulted in the formation of a joint Great Powers Fleet that sailed to

Navarino Bay to put pressure on the Ottoman and Egyptian Fleets anchored there. Tension created friction that sparked a large-scale sea battle that resulted in the destruction of the Ottoman and Egyptian Fleets. After the battle of Navarino freedom for Greece was closer.

6.3. The Period of Kapodistrias (1828-1832)

Ioannis Kapodistrias arrived in Nauplius (then capital of Greece) in January 1828, as the first Governor of Greece. One of his primary goals was to regain areas in Peloponnesus and Sterea Ellada that had fallen under Ottoman control and include them within the border of the new State. The operations were successful and the last battle was fought in Petra of Viotia in September 1829.

Intense disputes and arguments on the political and diplomatic level about the borders of the new State, the form of Government and the most suitable status, autonomy or independence, dominated this period. The main factors for the delineation of borders were, military control, significantly bigger Greek population compared to the Ottomans and the existence of natural barriers (rivers, mountains, sea etc). The new Greek State was recognized by the Protocol of London on February 1830, as an independent Kingdom with its northern border on the line of the rivers Sperheios and Acheloos. With a later protocol in 1832 the northern boundaries of Greece moved extended northward between the Amvrakikos and Pagaseticos Gulf.

6.4. Revolution in Macedonia

Soon after the eruption of Revolution in Southern Greece, Macedonia hoisted the flag of Revolution as part of the broader plan of Filiki Etaireia. Ottoman **Centers of Gravity** in Macedonia were:

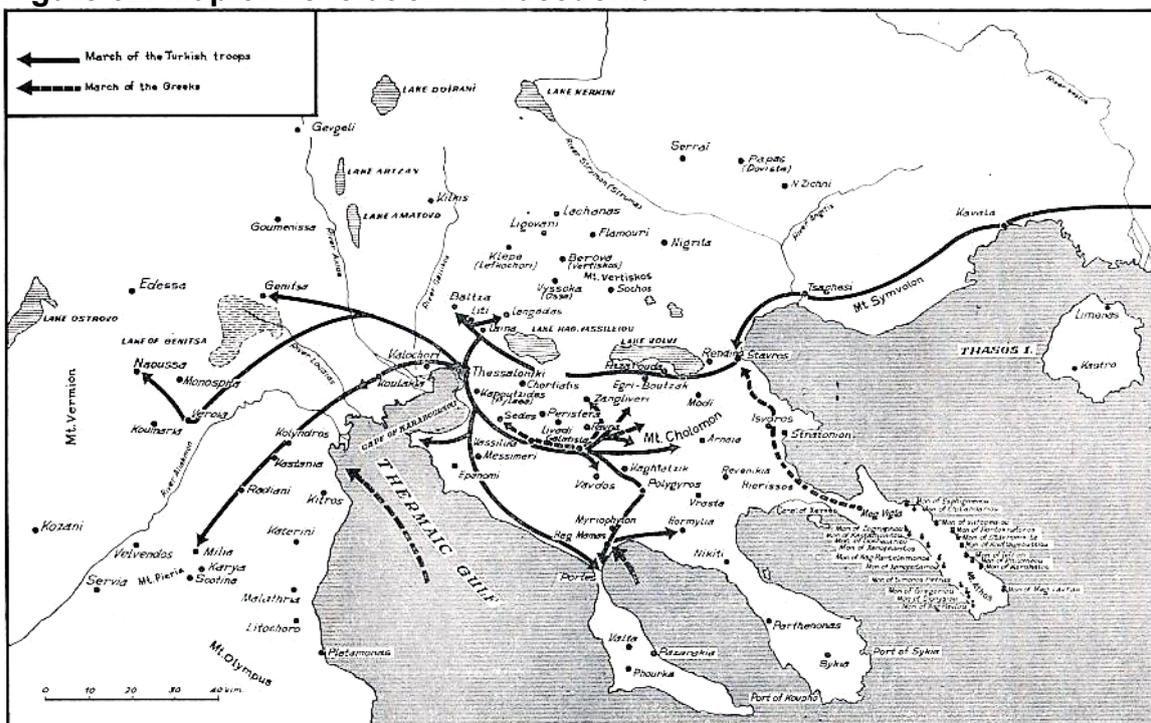
- The cities of Thessaloniki, Kavala and Veroia.
- Neighboring Ottoman camps and cities in Thrace.
- Flat lands favorable for Cavalry, Artillery and Infantry maneuvers.
- Ottomans Controlled routes of communication and transportation by land.

Decisive Points, meaning necessary steps for the Revolution to succeed in Macedonia:

- Cut off routes of communication and transportation among Ottoman cities, camps and strongholds.
- Occupy cities, locations and strongholds.
- Cut off Ottoman reinforcements.
- Reinforce and Supply the Revolutionaries by sea.

After the Revolution in Moldavia – Wallachia and Morea, the Ottomans took preventive measures to discourage and disrupt in advance any revolt in Macedonia. Facing the possibility of suppression before they began, the Revolutionaries led by Emmanouel Pappas, expedited their plans and declared Revolution in Chalkidiki on 17th of May, 1821. Greek Forces blocked the roads and passes of Redina aiming to cut off Thessaloniki from Kavala and Constantinople. The Ottomans pushed them back in Chalkidiki where they managed to hold their positions with the help of ships from Psara. Eventually they were defeated on the 30th of October 1821 overwhelmed by Ottoman superiority in forces and resources.

Figure 32: Map of Revolution in Macedonia



In September of 1821, Kasomoulis and Ypsilantis drafted a plan to occupy the mountainous area of Tempi, the bridge or river Axios and the narrow passes

of Kastoria, with the Kleftes and Armatoloi, of Olympus, Vermio and Pieria. The operations started on the 8th of March 1822 and lasted until 2nd of April 1822. The Revolutionaries were lacking fighters and supplies and could not hold their positions any longer.

On February 19, 1822 the Revolution erupted in Veroia, Naussa and Edessa under the leadership of Tasos Karatasos. Greeks stormed the fortress of Veroia, however the Ottomans managed to recapture the fortress and annihilate them on the 9th of April 1822.

Revolution in Macedonia would have to overcome enormous difficulties in order to succeed, mainly:

- Lack of supplies, forces and reinforcements
- Lack of enough ships to supply and protect the Revolution by sea
- Ottoman superiority in forces and capabilities
- Favorable terrain for the Ottomans to deploy their superior units
- Thick and strong Ottoman network of military camps, cities and strongholds
- Communication and Transportation routes under Ottoman control

Regardless of the outcome, the Revolution in Macedonia, as was the case in Thrace, worked as a diversion and prevented significant Ottoman Forces from moving south to Sterea Ellada and Peloponnesus.

Many Macedonian and Thracian fighters left their areas, to continue the struggle in Trikeri, Psara, Evvoia, Sterea Ellada, Peloponnesus, Crete etc.

6.5. Revolution in Crete

On Crete, Revolution was declared on April 7, 1821. Filiki Etaireia did not manage to infiltrate Crete, as the Ottoman population was almost similar in numbers with the Greeks and Cretans did not have the system of local government run by the Greeks as was the case in other Greek regions. Furthermore, Ottomans had strong military units in Crete and oppression towards the Christian Cretans was heavier than other areas. Regardless of the difficulties, the Greek **Objective** was to liberate the island from the Turks.

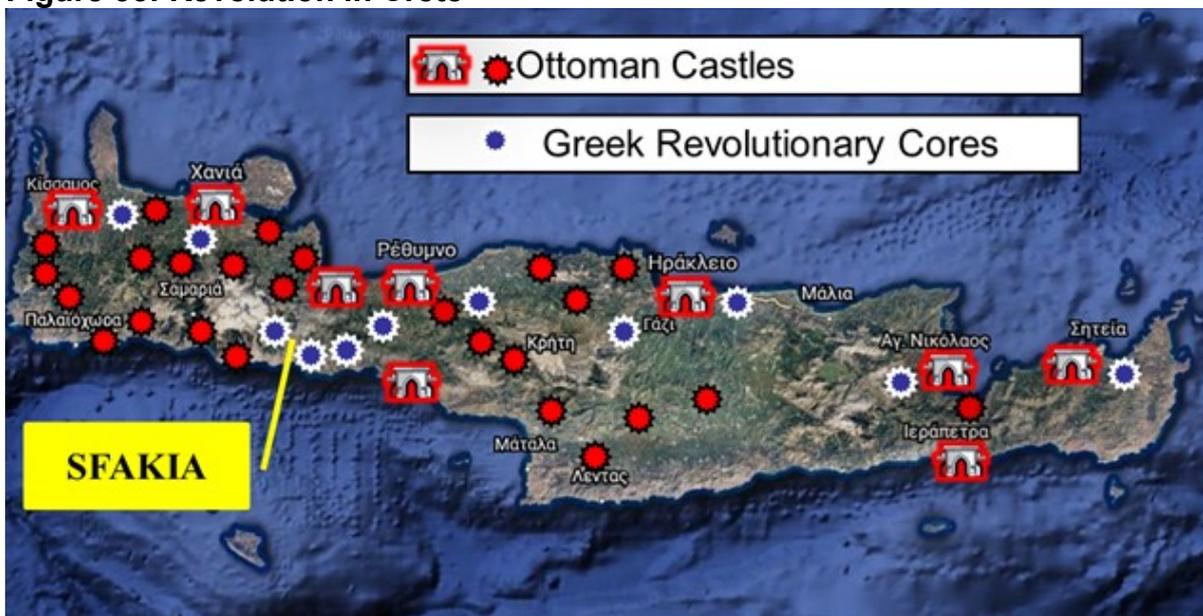
Ottoman Centers of Gravity were:

A wide network of castles and strongholds. As shown on the map Ottomans controlled the island with major castles and smaller forts named koules. Greek foci of resistance were very few on the other hand.

Strong Armed Forces, of 20.000 men including 4 regiments of Janissaries of 11.000 men.

Large Muslim population. The two communities, Greek and Turkish, in the island were close in numbers, specifically 140.000 Greeks and 120.000 Turks. In Peloponnesus the analogy of Greeks vs Turks was 10 to 1.

Figure 33: Revolution in Crete



Decisive Points for the Revolution to succeed in Crete:

- Contain Ottomans inside their Castles and Forts.
- Obtain weapons and supplies.
- Receive reinforcements from the other revolted areas.
- Receive supplies by the sea.
- Deny Egyptian reinforcements to land on Crete
- Receive naval forces for protection by the sea and participate in operations in coastal areas.

Critical Weaknesses of the Greeks were:

- The small number of fighters and ships. 1.200 men and 20 small ships.
- Lack of arms and ammunition.
- Difficulties to supply combatants and strongholds.
- Lack of suitable locations to support the Revolution. The equivalent of Kleftes were small groups living in Sfakia and the White Mountains.
- Lack of preparation, central planning and coordination.
- Inability from the side of the Revolutionaries to gather enough ships to protect, support and supply the Revolution.

Internal strife and competition among Cretan chieftains.

Figure 34: The slaughter in Chania (Hydacobe)



After the eruption of the Revolution in Peloponnesus, the Ottomans took harsh and cruel preemptive actions, not to forget the Jihad declared by the Sultan. Facing Turkish retaliation, many Greeks took refuge in Sfakia, where the Revolution was declared on the 7th of April 1821.

From the 14th of June to the 29th of August 1821 the Revolutionaries managed to succeed in local operations. Internal strife and competition took

dangerous dimensions and the Cretans sought from Filiki Etaireia to send a leader. In October 1821, Filiki Etaireia sent an ex Russian officer of Greek origin named Afentouliev to assume the leadership. In 1822 Ottomans remained inside their castles, cities and strongholds and in May 1822, they were reinforced by strong units of the Egyptian Navy and Army.

On the 22nd of May 1823, Manolis Tompazis from the island of Hydra assumed leadership but Greeks could not send sufficient forces, ships and men to reinforce the Revolution. In April 1824, the Ottomans took Sfakia and the Revolution in Crete was suppressed. Efforts to keep the Revolution alive continued until 1830, but in vain.

Revolution in Crete had unique characteristics. It happened spontaneously without preparation and coordination with other areas. As the Revolutionaries in general did not manage to overcome their weaknesses and counteract the strength of the Ottomans, the Revolution did not succeed, even though all revolting Greeks realized the strategic importance of the Island. For example the island of Kasos was participating in operations with all their ships and the rich Greek merchant Varvakis bought and transferred 1000 rifles and ammunition to Crete. Kapodistrias made an effort to include Crete in the territories of the new Greek State but conditions both on the island and internationally were not favorable. Cretans would have to wait for almost one century to unify with Greece.

6.6. Characteristic Battles and Events

6.6.1. Battle of Vasilika

The battles in Alamana (23 April 1821), Gravia (8 May 1821) and Vrisakia of Evvoia (15 July 1821) were part of the Greek effort to block Ottomans from moving their forces in Peloponnesus. As a result, Ottoman forces remained in Boeotia waiting for reinforcements. In August 1821, Ottomans organized a new campaign against Peloponnesus. An army of 8.000 soldiers and 1000 wagons under the leadership of Beyran Pasha, moved from Larissa to Lamia, while a second army of 4.000 soldiers under Mahmut Pasha of Drama made camp in Domokos. These armies were to join forces with Kiose Mehmet and Omer Vrionis and advance to Peloponnesus and break the siege of Tripolis.

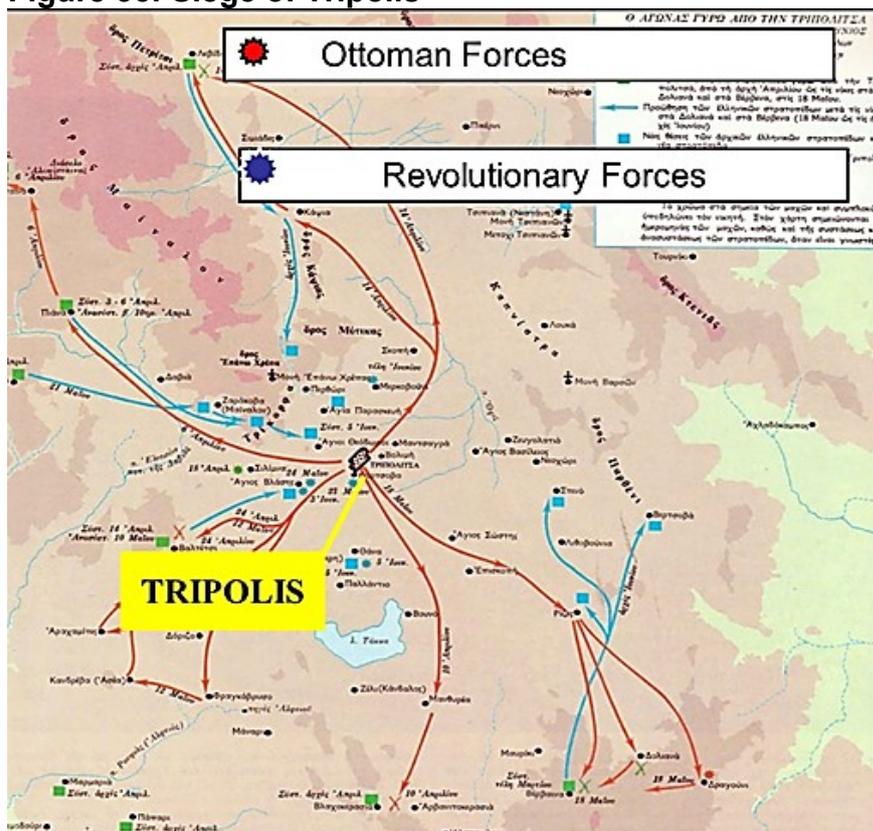
The Greek chieftain Diovouniotis anticipated Ottoman movements and blocked the narrow pass of Vasilika as it was the only pass suitable for Cavalry

and wagons. Diouvouniotis accomplished this with 1.000 men and kept a reserve of 600. The Revolutionaries led Ottomans to a trap and encircled them inside the valley. Facing annihilation, Ottoman forces retreated, losing 1/3 of their strength and a big part of their supplies.

6.6.2. Siege of Tripolis

Once the Ottomans retreated to the safety of their Castles, strongholds and fortified cities in Peloponnesus, the Revolutionaries were conflicted on what to do next, between two approaches. One, the most popular, suggested that Greeks should focus on taking coastal cities and fortresses one by one, and then besiege Tripolis in the end. Kolokotronis on the other hand, suggested that Tripolis should be first, since because of its central position and the strength of forces encamped there, the Ottomans could intervene effectively in any part of Peloponnesus, without the Revolutionaries being able to stop them.

Figure 35: Siege of Tripolis



Additionally since Tripolis was the seat of Government and the center for Administration in Peloponnesus, its capture would establish the Revolution de facto, extinguish the bigger Ottoman force in Peloponnesus, deliver an important blow to Ottoman morale in the other strongholds and boost the morale of the

Revolutionaries at a critical moment. Kolokotronis took the initiative for the operation almost alone in the beginning. He planned a noose of camps around Tripolis at strategic points on the hills, mountains and the surrounding valley. Camps were supporting each other to block or defend from Ottoman forces. Significant victories of the Revolutionaries in Levidi, Vervaina, Valtetsi and Doliana allowed the noose around Tripolis to become tighter. Until the battle of Levidi (April 1821), it was often that irregulars would disperse once Ottoman forces would appear, particularly when facing cavalry and artillery in open ground. In Levidi, revolutionaries decided to take the fight inside a village fortifying themselves inside houses until reinforcements would arrive. The tactic worked well and this built up their confidence.

6.6.2.1. Battle of Lala

Before focusing on Tripolis the Revolutionaries had to face the threat of Lala, a town on the mountainous part of Elis. The inhabitants were Albanian Muslims with large financial and military strength, and Elis was their dominion.

Greeks were conflicted on how to best face this serious threat. The Eptanesians (Ionian Islanders), an organized unit of 500 men and artillery favored an immediate, head on attack before the Ottomans could send reinforcements. The other Greeks were hesitant, and preferred to wait until the conditions were more suitable, at some time in the future. Laleans were playing for time, on one hand corresponding and negotiating with the Eptanesians on a possible surrender, on the other hand corresponding with Yousouf Pasha of Patra to ask for reinforcements. On June 13, 1821, 1,000 Laleans reinforced by 1,500 more Ottomans attacked the Eptanesian positions aiming to wipe them out and capture their cannons. The battle was conducted in close quarters and the Eptanesians prevailed. Laleans and the forces of Yusuf Pasha retreated, abandoning their area and departing for Patra, where they reinforced the local garrison.

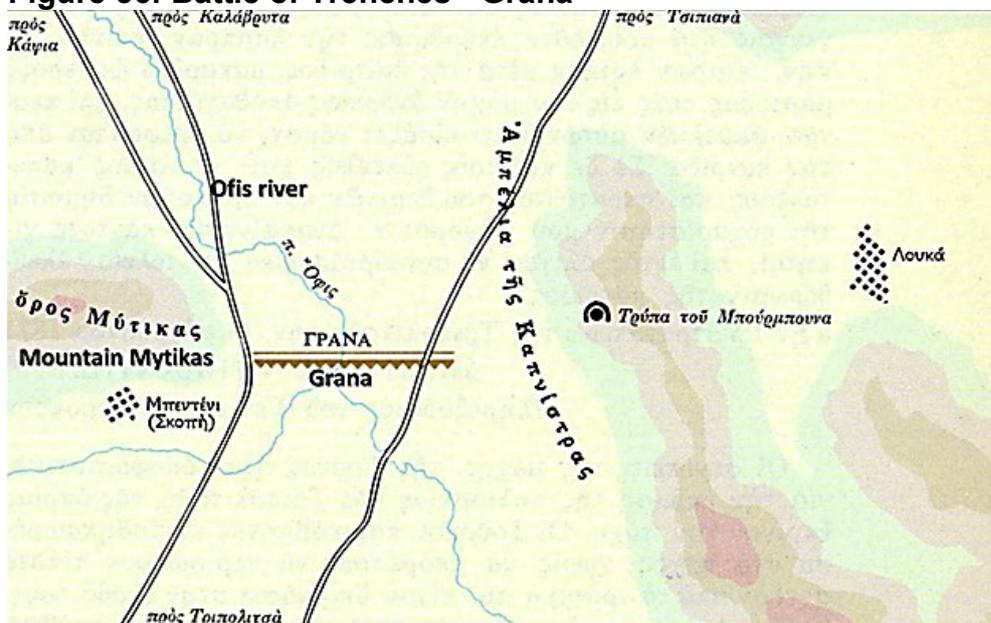
The Eptanesian leader, Andreas Metaxas from Kefallinia, was highly distinguished during the negotiations and during the battle, where he took severe wounds on both arms and could not fight any more. From then on he served the country as a politician, and after the independence, in the period of King Otto he became Greece's first Prime minister.

The Greeks torched Lala (Souli in Epirus, would also suffer a similar fate shortly afterwards) ending the domination of Laleans in Elis and securing the flanks of Greek forces in Tripolis.

6.6.2.2. Grana (Trench)

As the area around Tripolis is flat and the Ottomans had strong cavalry units, Greeks could not block the supply and reinforcement of Tripolis. To do that, they would have to abandon their high ground and move closer to the city, but, without artillery they would be easy prey for the Ottoman horsemen. Kolokotronis ordered a long trench dug with embankments on the side, 700 meters long, 2 meters wide, 1 meter deep.

Figure 36: Battle of Trenches - Grana



The trench allowed Greeks to block the movement of Ottoman units, and on August the 10th 1821 the trench was put to an extreme test, with Greeks fighting back to back against Ottoman units from both sides. The fight ended in Greek victory and as the tactic proved successful the Revolutionaries dug more trenches around the city. As supplies became scarce, conditions inside the city became impossible on the 23rd of September 1821, Tripolis was taken by the Revolutionaries. The fall of Tripoli created a domino effect and besieged Turkish strongholds and cities were negotiating their surrender.

Patra is a characteristic case of a missed opportunity. It along with Rio and Antirio were vital for communications and transportation between Western Greece

and Peloponnesus. As the Ottomans were besieged in the acropolis by General Kolokotronis' forces, they requested to surrender, but only to Kolokotronis, as he had a reputation of following the terms of surrender and escorting surrendered garrisons and populations to safety. Internal bickering and jealousy of Kolokotronis by the local Greek command authorities served to hinder and delay negotiations. In the meantime, Ottoman reinforcements arrived to strengthen the garrison of the acropolis. Subsequently, Kolokotronis was tasked to repeat the siege, but, without being given the necessary forces and supplies. Had Patra been retaken this early in the Revolution it was likely to have changed the dynamics of the war.

6.6.3. Battle in Dervenakia

In 1822, the Ottomans decided to suppress the Revolution by having two armies, one on the Eastern Sterea Ellada and one on the Western Sterea Ellada advancing to Peloponnesus. Mahmut Pasha Dramalis was given leadership of the whole operation. He assembled an army of 25.000 men, moved swiftly on Eastern Sterea Ellada and without facing resistance he reached Peloponnesus and made camp in Corinth on the 6th of July 1822. News of his arrival had a devastating effect on the Greeks as the siege of Nauplius was dissolved resulting in the Government being relocated to Argos, and the population fleeing by ship.

The large army of Dramalis struck paralyzing fear as his forces were too powerful to be faced in pitched battle. Kolokotronis chose to follow a scorched earth tactic and deprive Dramalis' army from the vast quantity of supplies he needed every day. Kolokotronis also delayed Dramalis advance with continuous hit and run attacks and attrition warfare. Every delay meant more need for supplies and as they were not enough, in combination with the summer heat, it meant fatigue and demoralization.

Dramalis, now confined in Argolis, canceled his advance to Tripolis and decided to return to Corinth but tried to mislead the Revolutionaries about his intentions. Kolokotronis anticipated his intentions and despite the unwillingness of most of the other leaders to follow his plan, he proceeded to block the narrow passages from Argos to Korinth with 2.500 men. On 26th of July 1822 the Turks tried to cross Dervenakia and lost 3000 men. On the 28th of July a new battle in

Agionorio inflicted more casualties. Dramalis lost about one fifth of his army, most of his supplies, cargo animals and horses. None of the losses were irreplaceable, yet the psychological impact of the defeat was heavy and it took the Ottomans a little bit more than a year to change their strategy and launch their next major attack to suppress the Revolution.

6.6.4. Torching the Ottoman Flagship in Chios.

Following the massacre on the island of Chios in April 1822, the Ottoman Fleet remained in the area to continue operations against the Greek Revolution.

Figure 37: Torching the Ottoman Flagship (Nikiforos Lytras)



On the 7th of June 1822, Greek Revolutionaries launched an attack against the anchored ships of the Ottoman Fleet outside the port of Chios. Konstantios Kanaris from Psara managed to attach his fireship to the Ottoman Flagship which very fast was set into flames and exploded. The explosion took the lives of 2000 men, among them Chief of the Ottoman Fleet (Capoudan Pasha) Kara Ali, most of the Fleet's

high ranking and commanding officers and European officials who were onboard to participate in the festivities for Bairami. The mighty warship was one of the most expensive and significant ships of the Ottoman Fleet. Her destruction was the Revolutionaries' answer to the Massacre of Chios and a very potent blow to the Ottomans morale and will to continue operations against the Greeks.

Both the massacre at Chios and the explosion of the Ottoman Fleet Flagship were turning points swaying European public opinion in favor of the Greeks.

6.6.5. Naval Battle of Spetsai

The Battle of Spetsai took place on September 8, 1822. The Ottomans were aiming to destroy one of the Revolutionaries' Centers of Gravity, the Island of Spetsai (Spetsai was one of the main sources of the Greek naval power), to supply the army of Dramalis (Ottoman decisive point) by sea, and supply the besieged Nauplius (Ottoman decisive point) by sea. During the battle the Greek fleet managed to push the Ottoman ships back and not allow them to fulfill their mission.

Without supplies, Dramalis' army lost its cohesion and the Ottoman garrison of Nauplius surrendered the city to the Revolutionaries. The Sultan held the Ottoman Admiral responsible and beheaded him.

6.6.6. Events in Western Greece

In January 1822, the insurrection between the Sultan and Ali Pasha of Ioannina ended with the defeat and death of the latter in his capital, Ioannina. Soon after, the Ottomans prepared to advance back to Peloponnesus with a force of 36.000 Turkish-Albanian troops, under the leadership of Hursit Pasha. Hursit and his allies were reluctant to leave the threat of Souli in their rear. He offered peace to the Souliotes in exchange for declaring allegiance to the Sultan. However, the proud Souliotes refused, thus they were besieged.

As the siege was making conditions more and more difficult in Souli, Souliotes asked for help in men and supplies from the Revolutionaries in Peloponnesus. Keeping the area of Souli free would pin a big part of the Ottoman force in Epirus away from Peloponnesus where the Greeks were struggling to establish themselves. The campaign for the aid of Souli was assigned to Alexandros Mavrokordatos and his army was a patch of heterogeneous units, irregulars, European philhellenes and a small regular unit.

Mavrokordatos' army had small scale successes but mainly suffered defeats and losses, the bigger one during the battle of Peta on the 4th of July 1822. There, the European fighters decided to face the superior Ottoman forces

in pitched battle on open ground and suffered severe losses. The Greek force of 2000 men was defeated and overrun by the experienced force of 8000 Turkish Albanians of Kioutahi Pasha.

After the battle of Peta, the combined Ottoman armies of Kioutahi and Omer Vrioni besieged Messolonghi for three months with a force of 12.000 men against 1.700 defenders. On Christmas Day 1822, after a failed attempt to take Messolonghi by a surprise attack, the Ottomans abandoned the siege.

Greek revolutionaries had sufficient forces to harass the Ottomans returning from Messolonghi, however they remained idle and the two Pashas continued operating in Sterea Ellada. Marvokordatos redeemed himself for the defeat in Peta as he stayed inside Messolonghi during the siege. However, Souli was running low on time and Ottomans had freedom of movement in Sterea Ellada.

6.6.7. Naval Battle of Gerontas

In 1824, the Sultan set his new strategy into motion. Kioutahi Pasha would advance from the North while Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt would land his army on Peloponnesus sailing from Alexandria⁸. To reach Peloponnesus Ibrahim used Halicarnassus in Asia Minor and Souda in Crete as intermediate bases to replenish and reinforce Ibrahim's army of 26.000 men and 2.000 horses with their supplies and ammunition that were transported by 300 cargo ships and protected by 100 warships. The unified Greek fleet of 70 ships attempted to stop or delay Ibrahim. From August 1824 until middle November 1824 the two fleets engaged in a number of battles resulting in losses of 12.000 casualties and 4.000 prisoners, for the Turkish Egyptian Fleet. Significant casualties were caused by diseases and sickness, as Ibrahim did not expect to be opposed for such a long time by the Greek fleet, plus the Egyptian troops were clothed for summer. Greek casualties were small and the Greek fleet managed to save the island of Samos, which under the leadership of Lykourgos Logothetis was one of the Greek Decisive Points.

⁸ This was the time when the Sultan altered his objective. He realized he could not gain Peloponnesus back with his own means, and faced with the probability of an Independent Greek State in the Aegean, he decided to offer Peloponnesus to Mohamed Ali of Egypt for colonization if the latter managed to suppress the Revolution.

Figure 38: Movements of the Ottoman -Egyptian Fleet against the Revolution



The Naval Battle of Gerontas was the major one in the series of confrontations between the two Fleets. The battle took place on the 29th of August 1824, in the confined waters between the island of Kalymnos and the coast of Asia Minor. Before the battle's commencing, the wind at the Greek side ceased leaving the Greek fleet stationary and vulnerable. Miaoulis, the admiral of the Revolutionary Fleet, ordered ships to be towed by rowing boats outside the straits in search of favorable wind and simultaneously sending fire ships against the joined Ottoman Egyptian Fleet that had to break formation to avoid them. The Greek Fleet then found favorable wind, exploiting the opportunity to attack the Ottomans who did not have time to assume their battle formation, thereby suffering significant losses. The Greek Fleet would not have had any hope if the battle would have been given earlier between regular battle formations.

The French Admiral Edmond Jurien de la Graviere commented on the battle of Gerontas saying "Perhaps the world naval history does not have a more interesting page, for a man of the sea".

Greek Fleet was a Center of Gravity for the Revolution and Ibrahim was planning to destroy the Greek ships in one decisive battle. As the Greek Fleet won the battle, the Revolutionaries protected their main asset and delayed Ibrahim's campaign in Peloponnesus winning valuable time. Without the Greek Fleet the Revolution would not survive, while at that particular period, time was on the Greek side as public opinion in Europe was pressing for an intervention in favor of the Greeks. Strategic time won can show its benefits afterwards. The decisive battle of Navarino and the European Victory against the united Egyptian – Ottoman Fleet almost three years later, in October 1827, could not have happened seven months earlier. Recall that, more than one century later, the Axis operations against Greece delayed the Nazi invasion against the Soviet Union by three months resulting in Nazi forces fighting during winter unprepared, losing more time, a fact that perhaps contributed to their defeat. Coming back to the Revolution, Greek leaders absorbed in the civil war did not take advantage of the time won by their fleet to prepare for Ibrahim's juggernaut.

In November 1824, the Greek Fleet was fighting for seven consecutive months with all the suitable available ships. Greek naval strength was severely damaged by the destruction of two naval islands, Kasos and Psara in May and June 1824, respectively. Loss of those islands meant loss of their strategic location as bases and forward strongholds, loss of their ships and loss of their experienced and battle-hardened crews. The destruction of Kasos and Psara was not inevitable, however the Greek Government was absorbed by the second and most devastating civil war and did not take the necessary action and allocate resources to protect them. As a result in strategic terms, in mid November 1824 the Greek Fleet did not have the critical mass to sustain a continuous, effective battle rhythm against the combined Egyptian – Ottoman naval power.

Even though the Greek Fleet won the battles during the last seven months and inflicted losses against his opponent, he did not and perhaps could not deliver a decisive blow to alter the tides of war. Egyptians and Ottomans with their towering size and resources covered their losses and as soon as the Greek Fleet withdrew the Ottomans continued with their plan. Greek naval power survived and the Fleet gained time, yet still the situation was extremely precarious for the Revolutionaries.

6.6.8. Attack against the Egyptian Fleet in Alexandria

From February 1825 Ibrahim disembarked his army on Peloponnesus and campaigned almost ceaselessly. Egyptians in particular had adapted their tactics to face fireships and they even included fireships in their fleet. The Greek Fleet could not effectively disrupt Ibrahim's supplies and reinforcements from Crete and Alexandria at sea. As a result, a Greek force led by Kanaris devised a plan to attack and torch the Egyptian Fleet at his home port, Alexandria. The Egyptian Fleet was an Ottoman Center of Gravity as without his ships, Ibrahim could not sustain his operations in Peloponnesus for long, therefore he was more likely to suffer the fate of Dramalis. The attack took place on July 25 1825, but was not successful. Kanaris tried one more time two years after, but again, opposing winds prevented him from achieving his goal.

Another plan to release Ibrahim's pressure in Peloponnesus was to support the Revolution of the Lebanese Emir Besir against Egypt with fourteen Greek ships on March 1826. The plan was not endorsed by the Revolutionary Government and was not put into motion.

6.6.9. Battle at Myloi of Lerna

After Ibrahim landed in Peloponnesus in February 1825, he moved fast and captured territories and cities that the Revolutionaries had liberated with so much effort, Tripolis being the most characteristic case. Ibrahim defeated the Revolutionary forces in Kremmydi, Maniaki and Trampala and achieved his first operational goal to recapture Tripolis. Revolutionaries knew they could not defend Tripolis against Ibrahim's army, artillery and engineers, so they decided to scorch the city and abandon it. At that time, and particularly after the battle at Trampala (5-7 June 1825), Greeks thought Ibrahim was undefeatable. Kolokotronis said about him "Ibrahim is nothing like the Turkish Pashas. He is a General who uses science, he has staff officers, and an abundance of means to make war at his disposal". After securing Tripolis, Ibrahim was well established in Peloponnesus and his next target was Nauplius, the naturally protected and well-fortified port city, east of Peloponnesus.

To attack Nauplius, Ibrahim should take the port town of Myloi (Mills) in Lerna (a territory known from Hercules' labors) 7 km south of Argos. Myloi was the closest port for the supply of Tripolis and a major food storage hub for the army of

Kolokotronis. Myloi were naturally fortified as they were surrounded by marsh land and a major stronghold for the defense of Nauplius. Myloi would also be used to supply Nauplius with water in case Ibrahim would destroy the city's aqueduct during a siege. Except for the natural defense of the swamp, the area of Myloi was not fortified.

The Revolutionaries decided to make a stand at Myloi, with a force of 500 men lead by Ypsilantis, Makrigiannis and Mavromihalis and protection from the sea by 3 brigands. The French Admiral Henri De Rigny is said to have expressed his worries about the weakness of Greek position of Makrigiannis who responded, "If our positions, or we, are weak, the God who protects us is strong, and we take comfort in the thought that luck has it that we Greeks are always a few, but when the few decide to die, a few times they lose and many times they win".

Figure 40: Battle at Myloi of Lerne



On the 13th of July 1825, the Egyptians launched a general attack but they were pushed back repeatedly. The Greeks noticed that during battle, Egyptians soldiers became inactive when they lost their officers, so Greeks were concentrating their fire against Egyptian Officers to disrupt Egyptian attacks. Ibrahim did not manage to overcome the Revolutionaries in Myloi and was obliged

to withdraw to Tripolis. Shortly after, he rushed to aid Kioutahi Pasha with the siege of Messolonghi.

The battle of Myloi marked the first major victory of the Revolutionaries against Ibrahim's regular army and kept Nauplius from falling into Ibrahim's hands. If this would have happened Ibrahim would have acquired a major port for his supply and a base for the Ottoman and Egyptian ships. Most importantly he would have deprived the Revolutionaries from one of their major ports of supply. Victory at Myloi boosted revolutionary morale and proved that Ibrahim could be defeated if proper tactics were adopted. That meant a large scale attrition warfare that hindered Ibrahim's movements and drove the situation in Peloponnesus to a strategic stalemate.

Ibrahim had military superiority on the field but did not manage to crush the Revolution. Revolutionaries could not win a decisive battle against Ibrahim but managed to win battles that prevented him from achieving his objectives like taking Nauplius or the area of Mani. Greeks were playing for time so that diplomacy would lead to a European intervention, and as time was passing Ibrahim was spending his resources without tangible results. However, Ibrahim engaged in large scale counter guerilla operations, which meant that the Greek population and areas that supported Revolutionaries were now a target. Peloponnesus, which was severely devastated during the civil war, was now facing the rage of Ibrahim. As the Egyptian plan was to bring Egyptian settlers into Peloponnesus, Greek populations would probably not be included, thus it was possible that when Europeans would finally decide to intervene there would not be any Greeks left alive in Peloponnesus! It took two and a half years after the arrival of Ibrahim in Peloponnesus to reach the battle of Navarino and break the strategic stalemate.

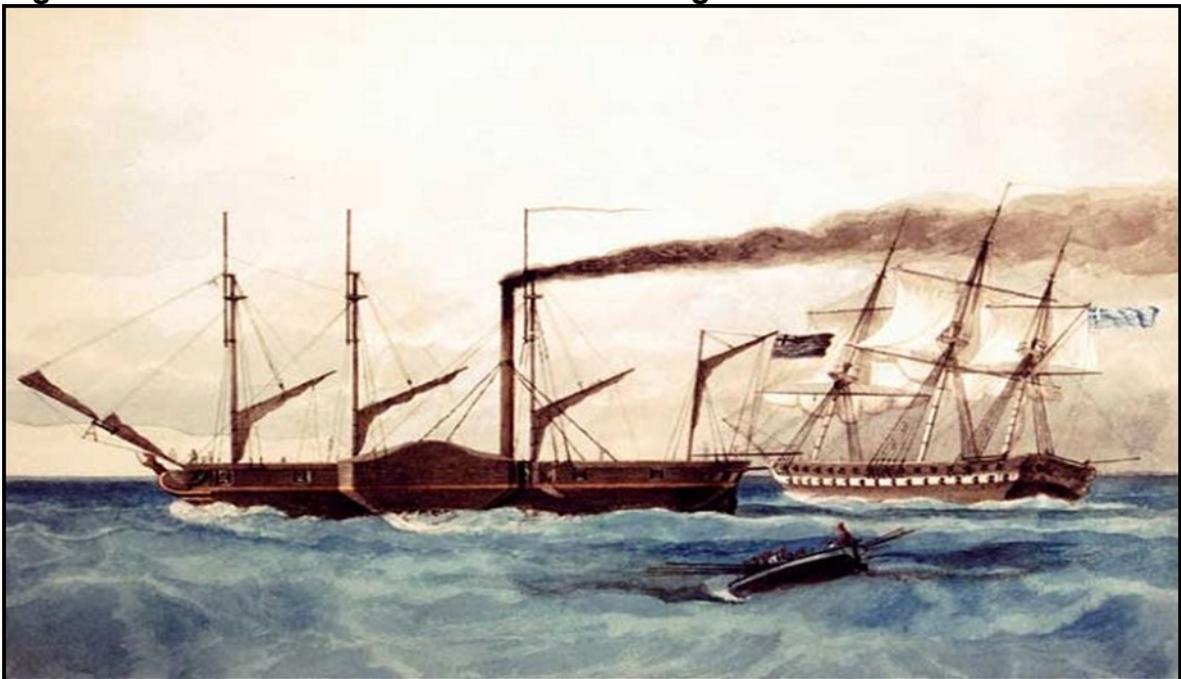
Until the battle of Navarino, the Egyptian General was trying to engage Greeks in a pitched, decisive battle which he knew he could win. In one of these attempts, he sent a letter to Kolokotronis calling him and the Greeks cowards who avoid to fight. Kolokotronis answered the letter with the following words "You cannot act brave when you drag with you such a big army, the science and the war staffs of Europe. If you are truly as valiant as you write, take as many of your

men you wish, I will take the same amount and we will fight fairly. Or if you prefer let us fight each other alone”.

6.6.10. Naval Battle of Agali (Itea)

The Naval Battle of Agali took place on the 17th of September 1827. During the battle steamship KARTERIA destroyed 9 Ottoman ships with an equivalent number of gun shots an extraordinary achievement compared to the barrage of cannon balls needed to destroy one ship at that time. The Greek victory reestablished communication between Peloponnesus and Sterea Ellada.

Figure 41: KARTERIA in the Naval Battle of Agali



Furthermore, the enraged Ibrahim decided to break the truce dictated by the Treaty of London, reinforce Patra and send a powerful squadron of his ships to its port, despite previous arrangements he had made with the British Admiral Codrington. A British squadron of warships obliged Ibrahim's ships to return to his base in Navarino. This skirmish worsened relations between the two men and prepared the setting for the following Battle at Navarino.

This change in Anglo-Ottoman relations is remarkable. Six years earlier on the 22nd of September 1821, Ottomans supported by the English sacked the city of Galaxidi, massacred or enslaved the inhabitants, captured 70 ships at the port, confiscated the 34 largest ships for the Ottoman Fleet and destroyed the rest.

6.6.11. Naval Battle of Navarino

The London Treaty of 1827 dictated that in case one of the two warring parties rejected the truce, a Fleet of warships from England, France and Russia would sail and oblige peace. Ships of the Great Powers should avoid to engage in battle. In modern terms the European Fleet was there to enforce peace rather than make peace.

Figure 42: Naval Battle of Navarino (Abroise Garneray)



As Ibrahim did not cease his counter-revolution operations, on the 20th of October 1827, the Allied Fleet entered the Gulf of Navarino where the combined Egyptian – Ottoman fleet had its base. The European fleet numbered 27 ships, about one-third of the Sultan's force; however, the Western Powers ships were superior in discipline and artillery accuracy. Sporadic fire and movements of fire ships from the Egyptian side sparked a battle that resulted in the Ottoman allies losing 6000 men and 2/3 of their fleet which meant that the threat to the Revolution was neutralized for the time being. Europeans lost 174 men and none of their ships.

Victory in Navarino was celebrated in France and Russia, however English newspapers characterized it “an unfortunate and awful event”. Furthermore, Ottomans asked compensation by the Great Powers for the destruction of their ships.

6.6.12. Battle of Petra

In the summer of 1829, the tides of war had changed mainly after Navarino and the arrival of Kapodistrias as Governor of Greece in January 1828. Peloponnesus and the greater part of Sterea Ellada were free. One of Kapodistrias' main goals was to create a regular army and remove the Ottomans from Sterea Ellada. Kapodistrias was well aware of the value of de facto situations on the diplomatic table.

In August 1829, the Ottomans were assembling their armies in Adrianoupolis to advance against the Russians. Ypsilantis ambushed an Ottoman force of 7.000 soldiers in the narrow pass of Petra, as they were moving to the North. The Greeks presented a regular force of 4000 men. Ypsilantis had his army build fortified positions and on the morning of 12th September 1829 the Ottomans tried to break the line and pass without result. The next day the Ottomans asked for terms to be allowed passage. The Revolutionaries accepted under the condition of the Ottomans surrendering the area between Alamana, Thermopyles and Alamana. The agreement was signed on the evening of 13th to 14th of September 1829. The battle of Petra was the last battle of the Revolution and its importance lies in the fact that in the end, the Ottomans surrendered land to the Revolutionaries that could potentially be included in the boundaries of a future Greek state. Thus it was also the last 'battle' in Kapodistrias' strenuous effort to include as many de facto situations as possible, in view of the expected border negotiations for the treaty of London in 1830. He was hoping to include Sterea Ellada in the new Greek State. However, this was not an easy task since at first, the English aimed to restrict the new state borders to the Peloponnesus and the nearby islands, not even considering the western Sterea Ellada, since the Ionian Islands (under British rule at that time) were just opposite.

When Kapodistrias arrived in November 6, 1828 to assume his duties as Governor, he found that Sterea Ellada was fully under Ottoman control after the fall of Messolongi, the death of Karaiskakis, the crushing defeat at Analatos and the surrender of the Acropolis in Athens. Kapodistrias tried to reestablish revolutionary control in Sterea Ellada and gain control of Crete so that both territories would be included in the New Greek state. The effort was successful for Sterea Ellada but unfortunately not for Crete.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

Following the analysis of the Revolution from a geopolitical, strategic, operational and tactical perspective we could summarize with the following:

Decision for the Greek Revolution

The War for Independence, or the Greek Revolution, of 1821 was the result of the decision of a Greek patriotic organization, Filiki Etaireia, to take arms against the Ottoman Empire as the best of three possible way for Greeks to gain their freedom. The other two approaches were, either a gradual empowerment and permeation of Greeks in commerce, science, administration, government etc of the Greek areas within the Ottoman Empire, or to receive autonomy after a Russian Intervention in the Balkans that would start with Slavic states first and at some point Greece would follow to join a federation of autonomous states in the Balkans under Russian protection. While the other two solutions had much lesser risks and dangers, Greeks would have to rely on the wishes of other states on when, how and what. They chose to risk as the motto of the Revolution bluntly indicates: "Freedom or Death".

The Plan of Filiki Etaireia

The plan dictated to start the Revolution in Moldavia and Wallachia under the leadership of Alexandros Ypsilantis. This was intended to make Ottomans believe that the revolt was incited by Russians and very soon the Revolutionaries and the Russians would move to attack Constantinople which was the primary target.

The primary target, or main effort, was for the Revolution to be established in Peloponnesus, as this was the most suitable territory from many aspects, including the overwhelming majority of the Greek population of about 10 to 1. The Revolution was declared one month later around the predetermined date of 25th of March 1821. Until July 1821 almost all Greek regions had declared Revolution.

Filiki Etaireia intended to establish a de facto Revolutionary Government that would be sooner or later recognized by European countries as a result of pressure by their public opinion.

The naval power of islands and naval cities like Hydra, Spetsai, Psara, Kasos, Galaxidi, Ainos etc were vital for the Revolution. Revolutionaries needed ships to

protect and supply revolted areas by the sea and prevent the Ottoman Fleet from supplying Ottoman Forces and recapturing revolting areas.

On land the main effort was to capture Ottoman castles, Cities and strongholds through siege, and control roads and passes so that besieged Ottomans could not receive reinforcements from other areas or campaign to each other's aid.

International Environment

The situation in the international environment was extremely adverse for the Revolutionaries in the beginning. Strong European States were battling against anything that could threaten the existing status quo. In the best case they were following a neutrality policy in favor of the Ottomans and in many cases they cooperated with the Ottomans closely against the Revolution.

Participation

All Greek regions supported the Revolution when possible with fighters, ships, funds, supplies and support. Other Regions that could not hoist the flag of Revolution, those that knew that the Revolution in their area would be doomed, or those under foreign rule such as the Ionian Islands, Crete, Souli, Thessaly, Macedonia, Epirus, the Greek Diaspora abroad etc, nevertheless supported the goals of the Revolution.

Women had a massive and extremely active part in the Revolution in battle, in support, or on the home front. They fought fiercely, worked relentlessly, held family and household together, endured oppression and retaliations and kept morale and patriotic standards high.

Philhellenes, such as Greeks from more westernized regions like the Hellenic populations of the Ionian Islands, had a massive participation in the Revolution. They had an active part on the battlefield bringing with them methods and tactics to wage war unknown to the Revolutionaries as artillery, warfare with regular units, steam war ships, use of special ammunition and high performance guns, engineering, medical support on the battlefield as well as diplomatic skills etc.

Comparative Strengths and Weaknesses between Greeks and Ottomans

Weaknesses of the Revolutionaries on land included lack of: resources, regular forces, artillery, cavalry, organized logistics, central organization for the administration, command and support of operations.

Weaknesses of the Revolutionaries at sea included lack of: warships able to oppose Ottomans in lined up battle, unified organization to administer, command and prepare operations at sea, and sufficient funds and resources for the continuous sustainment of the Fleet at sea against Ottoman ships.

The Ottoman Empire faced serious internal challenges and external threats. However, despite the problems, the Empire was a mighty state in means and resources, compared to the Revolutionaries. The Egyptian Army and Navy that entered the war on the side of the Sultan, had a devastating effect and tilted the scale even more against the Revolutionaries.

Revolting Greeks had the advantage in asymmetric warfare, had better knowledge of the area of operations either at land or at sea, they had a core of battle hardened and experienced combatants either from previous service in the Ottomans, or in the service of European Armies, facing pirates or running blockades during the Napoleonic Wars.

The crushing superiority of the Ottomans in power, means and resources was opposed by the Revolutionaries by using their strength in: agile asymmetric warfare, indirect strategy, attrition warfare, ambush, hit and run tactics, pursuing battles in narrow passes or high lands, pursuing sea battles in confined and shallow waters, broad use of fire ships and advance tactics to deploy them, use of innovation in the form of steam warship and advanced artillery at sea.

Plan Implementation – Strategy – Conduct of Operations

The Revolutionaries made great effort not to justify intervention of the Holy Alliance in favor of the Sultan and to make clear that the Revolution had a national character and did not aim to alter the social structure in the region.

The stance of Souliotes in Epirus prolonged the war between Ali Pasha and Hoursit Pasha and kept Hoursit Pasha from returning to Peloponnesus with his mighty army before the Revolution had a chance to be established.

The Revolution in Macedonia and Thrace nailed down significant Ottoman forces at the first stages of the Revolution.

The Sultan's directive not to risk his high value warships during operations, gave valuable freedom of movement at sea to the Greek ships, in the first stages of the Revolution.

Despite the predictions of the Europeans that the Revolution would be quickly suppressed by the end of 1822, the Revolutionaries had defeated the Ottoman campaigns to suppress them by land and sea, they had formed a de facto government and the Revolution remained alive.

Internal strife and envy that from 1823 onward took the form of civil war, resulted in waste of critical time and resources, devastation of the land and population, loss of valuable leading personalities and combatants, loss of valuable opportunities, and, was transformed to an existential threat much more dangerous than that of the Ottoman Forces or the opposing international environment.

Loss of time and focusing on internal antagonisms led to the loss of Galaxidi, Evvoia, Crete, Kasos, and Psara. On land, the loss of Souli and Messolonghi, and failure to establish themselves in Evvoia and Magnesia resulted in the loss of control of Sterea Ellada and the confinement of the Revolution in Peloponnesus and the neighboring islands. Ottoman control of Crete meant that the Sultan and his ally Ibrahim of Egypt had a strategic foothold against the Revolutionaries in Peloponnesus.

Loss of Galaxidi, Kasos, Psara, Ainos decreased the size of the fleet below the necessary critical mass to sustain an effective rhythm of battle, on a constant basis, throughout the area of operations. The result was that despite Greek victories in a tactical and operational level, Ibrahim managed to disembark in Crete and after that in Messenia, and commence his campaign to erase the Revolution and colonize Peloponnesus while his supply from Crete and Alexandria was not successfully hindered.

A big part of military operations was spent on sieges like the ones in Tripolis, Acropolis of Athens, Nauplius, Korinthos or the monumental in length and intensity

of operations at the last siege of Messolonghi, the bastion of Greece, that ended with the epic exodus.

The reversal of the Sultan's objective to recapture Peloponnesus resulted in offering this region to Egypt for colonization in return for Ibrahim's support had proven extremely effective and dangerous. Combined with the effect of the Civil War among the Revolutionaries, it almost brought Revolution to its end.

Among the turning points were the capture of Tripolis, as it brought Peloponnesus under Revolutionary control, the destruction of Chios and the torching of the Ottoman Flagship in Chios by Kanaris, as they marked a swing in European public opinion in favor of the Revolution, the Greek victory in the Battle of Gerontas as it saved the Greek Fleet substantially delaying Ibrahim's campaign in Peloponnesus, gaining valuable time.

The area of operations was expanding from Moldavia and Wallachia to the East Mediterranean. The Revolutionaries were favoring ambush, surprise attacks, bold plans to disbalance the Ottomans, and innovation, such as the attack against the Egyptian Fleet in Alexandria, the use of fire ships against moving warships instead of anchored, the effort to capture Ibrahim or to support operations of Lebanon against Egypt, and the use of steam warships.

Epilogue

The success of the Greek Revolution for the freedom of Hellenes in 1821, was a product of many factors and the result of many forces favoring and opposing. The most important though, the driving force and basis for any progress, let alone a progress that demands pain, blood, tears and sacrifices, is the will for freedom and the responsibility that comes with freedom. During the nine years of struggle, fighters and protagonists, known and unknown, renowned and unsung heroes, faced many enemies and obstacles on the way to their freedom, which is our freedom: the fortitude and power of the Ottoman Empire, the opposing interests of the Great Powers of that time, the dormancy of centuries under the Ottoman Empire, the crushing problems of coordination, supply, resources, administration and leadership. Yet, if someone would ask who was the biggest, the most formidable enemy, we would answer our bad selves! What we become when we allow ourselves to be lured by envy and enmity born inside us, or when we allow ourselves to be parts or pawns in intrigue and machinations. When the unsurpassable will for freedom was combined with enlightened leadership, clear thought, diligence, logic, hard work, courage and pure patriotism, all obstacles, all enemies, foes, opponents, were overcome. The urging of Ypsilantis remains imperative and relevant today:

“We must compete for the honor (filotimoumetha – φιλοτιμούμεθα) of who will benefit our fatherland (patrida – πατρίδα) the most, without envying the one who most benefits the fatherland”.

We tried not to exalt one area or one leader, because there were many who suffered, risked, put themselves in harm way, and sacrificed to water the tree of Freedom. We tried also to maintain a phlegmatic approach in our military analysis, and it is for the reader to conclude if we were successful or not. We were familiar with a number of events and many were completely unknown to us. We examined all, with a clear view and that brought us enthusiasm, emotion and awe. Perhaps, it is, to borrow an expression from a beloved writer, the memory of blood. Fighters of Land and Sea, people and populations of, Messenia, Sfakia, Souli, Crete, Sterea Ellada, Athens, Attika, Messolonghi, Epirus, Peloponnesus, Ionian Islands(Eptanisa), Islands of the Aegean, Psara, Kasos, Ainos, Hydra,

Spetsai, Samos and her leader Lykourgos Logothetis, Thessaly, Macedonia, Thrace, Moldavia and Wallachia, Ionia and Asia Minor, Cyprus, people of the clergy and monks of every rank, Greeks of the Diaspora, fought, struggled, suffered persecution and genocide, witnessed the death and suffering of family and kin, had to abandon their homes or wrecked their homes to build fortifications, worked indefatigably to prepare and keep the struggle and war effort alive. .

Figure 43: Litography (Benaki Museum)



(on the left of the image you can see sitting Spyridon Dagliostros from Zakynthos Island, writing to his mother using the blood of his wound: «I announce that you lost your son who dies for the fatherland»).

On their side Philhellenes¹⁰, sharing all dangers and suffering, struggled, fought, died for the independence of Greece. Hellenes and Philhellenes fought, struggled, suffered and died together nourishing the tree of freedom with their blood, and should any one wonder why, we leave the answer to Kioutahis, the Ottoman Pasha who was besieging the Acropolis of Athens. Kioutahis wrote to the Sultan: «it is imperative for us to take the Acropolis, because all the infidels believe it is their home». As we see it, those who believe Acropolis their home, are our ancestors, our brothers and compatriots, most importantly not because they have to, but because they choose to.

¹⁰ The French Philhellene Olivier Voutier, a distinguished warrior during the Revolution, asked that the inscription on his tomb be: "He fought in the Greek Revolution". Almost 2300 years before, the renowned Athenian poet and tragedy writer Aeschylus wished that the sole inscription on his tombstone would be about his participation in the Battle of Marathon.

We aimed to project this enormous feat, this 'athlos', from our perspective, and we hope our performance and particularly mine as head of this effort, did not diminish in your eyes the extraordinary achievements of those close ancestors, who did so much having much less from what we have today, created a State from nothing paying very often the ultimate price and, "returned to the Greeks the heritage of their ancestors".

Epimeter

Opening Remarks Dr Nikoalos Papaioannou Rector Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to another joint endeavor of the Aristotelian University and the Supreme Joint War College. Our last conference last month on the energy aspects in the East Mediterranean kicked off the cooperation between our organizations on the field.

Today, as the title “From Kalavrita to Navarino” indicates, our speakers will elaborate on the military aspect of the War of Independence 1821. This dimension is less known, much less than it should, on the historical valuation of the Revolution and particularly its prevailing interpretation. In tonight’s discussion we will try to shed light, on these sides of the national narrative and the public history, that define the memory and public opinion of the citizens of our country.

In parallel we are exceptionally happy for a development that puts the cooperation of our two organizations on a new basis, as we just signed, me as Rector of the Aristotelian University and the Commandant of the Supreme Joint College, Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kavoulakos, a memorandum of cooperation that, among other synergies, includes a direct link between graduates of the two organizations.

Signing this Memorandum marks the closer cooperation of the two Schools. Graduates will have the opportunity to participate in lessons and programs of both Organizations, as well as in Master’s and PhD programs and projects of their sector of interest.

Steps like that have their own distinct impact, as in this way we avoid, in word and in deeds, self-isolation, a recurring pattern in the everyday life of Greek public educational institutions. We are confident that the effort that starts today will achieve the impact it deserves in both academic and research level.

Concluding, I would like to extend my warm thanks to all who labored for the successful outcome of our Memorandum, an effort which was not easy at all, and of course all contributors of tonight’s event. I am certain that the Admiral will agree, that our impeccable cooperation, under such particular circumstances, is a sample of what we would call, the art of possible, when the persistence and hard work of our people take center stage.

I warmly thank you.

Closing Remarks Dr Pangiotis Glavinis Deputy Dean Law School Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki

Admiral,

On behalf of the Aristotelian University, and I believe on behalf of all the audience that viewed us today and will be watching this event for long time in the future, I would like to thank you and your lecturers for the wonderful journey you offered us. It is important to see events with your perspective as you shed light to aspects, that we civilians cannot comprehend as fully as you do.

It is not only the technocratic aspects that you brought to our attention, it is also the emotional and very often affectionate eye that you put on your colleagues, our grandfathers who gave this struggle. If this was yesterday, today we would be mourning, shedding tears for them. But as these events are long ago, the best way I thought of, to hail those ancestors and honor their memory, is a poem by a poet who was their contemporary and lived these events from very close. With verses of this poem, I would like to close this exceptional evening.

“I recognize you by the fearsome sharpness, of your sword,

(Σε γνωρίζω από την κόψη του σπαθιού την τρομερή)

I recognize you by your look that at once measures the earth

(Σε γνωρίζω από την όψη που με βία μετράει τη γη)

Born from the sacred Greek bones

(Απ’ τα κόκκαλα βγαλμένη των Ελλήνων τα ιερά)

And Valiant as in the past, Hail o Hail Freedom

(Και σαν πρώτα αντρειωμένη χείρε ω χείρε ελευτεριά)”

We thank you.

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ANNEX A: Biographies (CVs)

Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kavoulakos HN



Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kavoulakos HN is the Commandant of the Hellenic Supreme Joint War College. He was born in Athens, Greece on February 1966. He entered the Hellenic Naval Academy in 1983 and graduated as a Battle Officer in 1987 with the rank of ensign..

Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kavoulakos HN previous assignments include service on board Hellenic Navy frigates in operational and navigational posts, including Air Defense, Anti-Submarine, Surface Warfare, Operations Director and Executive Officer. His staff experience includes positions as Department Head for the Defense Planning and Standardization Department of the Hellenic Navy General Staff (HNGS), Intelligence Director for the Hellenic Fleet, Director of the Chief of the Fleet Staff Office, Naval Exercises Staff officer for the Military Cooperation Division in SHAPE, Director for the Human Resources and Organization Directorate of the Hellenic Navy General Staff, Director for the Hellenic Navy General Staff Plans, Policy Directorate, Chief of Staff for the Hellenic Frigates Command and Director of the Chief of the Hellenic Navy Staff Office, Director of Defence Planning and Standardization Directorate, of the Hellenic National Defence General Staff and the Representative of Greece to the Senior NATO Committee for Standardization.

Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kavoulakos HN recently served as the Director of Policy, Strategy, and Defence Planning Division (D Branch) of the Hellenic National Defence General Staff (HNDGS).

Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kavoulakos HN was assigned Commands at Sea as Commanding Officer of patrol Corvette HS KARTERIA, Commanding Officer of the Frigate HS SPETSAI and Commander of the 1st Frigate Squadron.

He attended successfully Navy, Joint and National Staff Schools including Post Graduate School, Antisubmarine Warfare School, in Greece and the US, the Navy Staff Officer School, the Supreme Joint Staff School and the National Defence

Academy. Additionally he holds a Master of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering, from the US Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA.

Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kavoulakos HN is a fluent English speaker while he has an elementary knowledge of French.

He is married and has one son.

Colonel Chariton Charousis



He was born in Thessaloniki in 1968. He entered the Air Force Academy in 1987, from where he graduated in 1991 with the rank of Second Lieutenant. He served in 348 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron 355 Tactical Transport Squadron & 383 Special Operation and Firefighting Squadron. He also served in staff positions at 113 Combat Wing, at Hellenic Air Force General Staff, at National Center of Air Force Operations and at Cyprus National Guard General Staff GEEF, as well as an Instructor at HJSWC.

He has a flight experience of 3,300 flight hours, mainly in RF-4E Phantom II fighters and CL-415 firefighting aircrafts.

He has served as:

- Training Officer and Commander of Pilots Training Flight of 113CW with CL-415 firefighting aircraft (2009-2012).
- Commander of the Chrysoupoli Air Force Detachment (2017-2018).
- Operation & Training Director of 113CW (2018-2019).

He was trained in the procedures of the European Civil Protection Mechanism. He has joined the pool of executives of the Mechanism as a High Level Coordinator.

He deals systematically (2005-2021) with issues of historical interest, with the main subject being the history of aviation and the history of the Hellenic Air Force. He has published 90 articles and 5 monographs, while he has participated as a speaker in 5 conferences and events of historical interest.

He speaks English and German.

He is married and has a son and a daughter.

Captain Ioannis Samothrakis HN



Captain Ioannis Samothrakis HN is a Staff Officer of the Hellenic Supreme Joint War College. He was born in Athens, Greece on July 1966. He entered the Hellenic Naval Academy in 1986 and graduated as a Battle Officer in 1990 with the rank of ensign.

Captain Ioannis Samothrakis HN previous assignments include service on board Hellenic Navy frigates in operational and navigational posts, including Air Defense and Weapons Director. His staff experience includes positions as Head of Security at the Salamis Naval Base, Staff Officer of the Press Information Department of the Chief of Staff of the Hellenic National Defense General Staff, Head of Promotion and Public Relations of the Hellenic Navy General Staff and Head of the Environment Department of the Hellenic Navy General Staff.

Captain Ioannis Samothrakis HN was assigned Commands at Sea as Commanding Officer of the Minesweeper Kihli.

He attended successfully Navy, Joint and National Staff Schools including Post Graduate School, Weapons School, the Navy Staff Officer School and the Supreme Joint War College. Additionally he holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the US Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA.

Captain Ioannis Samothrakis HN is married and has two children.

Colonel (GRC Arty) Anastasios Bletsas



Colonel Anastasios Bletsas was born in Nicosia, Cyprus in 1972. He joined the Hellenic Army Academy in 1990 and graduated as an Artillery Lieutenant, in 1994. Since 1996 he has served in Artillery Units in all the Artillery Combat systems of the Hellenic Army, and in HQs up to Corps level. He has been assigned Commander of an Artillery Battalion and an Artillery Regiment.

He has experience in NATO and Peacekeeping Operations as he served in SFOR, NRDC-GR, HQ ARRC and IJC HQ / ISAF.

Col Bletsas was trained at the US Army - Artillery School, he has graduated from Hellenic Supreme Joint War College (HSJWC) and Hellenic National Defense School and has postgraduate studies in Business Administration and International Relations.

Since 2017 he serves as Joint Operational Planning and Crisis Management Instructor in HSJWC for national and international students, representative to European Security and Defense College (ESDC) and responsible for EU's Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) courses.

He is married to the Sociologist - Special Educator Aikaterini Tsakalou and father of 12-year-old Aggelos - Ioannis and 7-year-old Iasonas - Thomas.

Dr. Aikaterini Balla



She studied Archeology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She holds a PhD and two Master's Degrees. She worked as an Archaeologist in programs-projects of the Ministry of Culture in several Ephorates of Antiquities. Since 2019, she belongs to the civil staff of The Supreme Joint War College and works in the Department of Studies.

Thomas R. Maguire



Thomas R. Maguire, Major, US Army (retired) was born in October, 1953 in Philadelphia, PA. He attended Pennsylvania State University. In 1972, when drafted, he served in the US Air Force. While at Spangdahlem AB, 1974, he was the 52d Tactical Fighter Wing's Airman of the Year. In 1978, as Distinguished Military Graduate, Penn State Army ROTC, he was commissioned in Field Artillery.

From 1978, Major Maguire served in Greece and Germany in Battalion and Brigade staff positions as well as Detachment and Battery commands, completed an MA in International Relations from Boston University, 1989, as well as the Army's Command and Staff College in 1991. From 1989 he was Deputy Professor of Military Science, at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. In 1991, he was assigned to the Pentagon, Washington, D.C. as a Foreign Area Officer (48-G) in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence as an Action Officer for International Intelligence programs focusing on the SE Mediterranean. In 1993, he was transferred to HQ Allied Forces South's (AFSOUTH) Advanced Command Post in Thessaloniki, Greece from where he was ultimately retired from the Army in 1996.

Personal decorations include: Defenses Meritorious Service Medal, Army Meritorious Service Medal, and Air Force's Commendation Medal.

From October, 1996, Mr. Maguire was the Administrative Officer for the American College of Thessaloniki (ACT), a division of Anatolia College.

In 2000, Mr. Maguire became a NATO International Civilian, reaching rank of NATO brevet A-5 (O-6 US, Συν/χης ΕΛ) serving in Greece and deployments as Chief J-8/ Financial Controller for: HQ KFOR, NATO HQ Sarajevo, and NATO Training Mission Iraq (NTMI) Baghdad. In 2014, he was awarded the NATO Secretary General's Meritorious Service Medal. In September, 2015, he retired from NATO.

President, Hellenic Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA); Vice President, AHEPA Chapter HJ 41, Kalamaria; member, American Legion - Athens. Mr Maguire is married and living in Thessaloniki, Greece.

ANNEX B: Photo Gallery

Figure 44: Signing of the MOC between the Commandant of HSJWC and the Rector of AUT



Figure 45: Exchange of Official Crests



Figure 46: Opening remarks by the AUT Rector



Figure 47: Presentation by Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kavoulakos



Figure 48: Presentation by Captain Ioannis Samothrakis



Figure 49: Presentation by Colonel Chariton Charousis



Figure 50: The HSJWC team



Figure 51: Presentation by Colonel Anastasios Bletsas



Figure 52: Presentation by Dr Aikaterini Balla



Figure 53: Panel Discussion by HSJWC Team



Figure 54: Conclusions - Epilogue by Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kanoulakos



Figure 55: Closing Remarks by the Deputy Dean of Law School AUT



Figure 56: Rear Admiral Dimitrios Kavoulakos grants to Mr Tomas R. Maguire the Official Crest of HSJWC

