

Turkifying Poverty, or: the Phantom Pain of İzmir's Lost Christian Working Class, 1924–26

Ellinor Morack, Otto-Friedrich Universität Bamberg

A substantially revised version of this AOM has been published in *Middle Eastern Studies* volume 55, issue 4 (2019), pp. 499–518, • <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2018.1559157>
This is the author's original manuscript (AOM) as it was submitted to peer-review.

Abstract

This article shows that ‘Turkification,’ a term widely used by historians of modern Turkey to refer to the forced transfer of property from Christian into Muslim hands, ought to be conceptualized not only in the sense of ‘enrichment’ but also, with regard to the working classes, as a process in which Muslim people inherited the poverty of their Christian predecessors. Taking İzmir as a case in point, the paper first describes the plight of the overwhelmingly Christian working class prior to 1922. It then studies reports and editorials that discussed the economic and social situation in İzmir in the years 1923 to 1926, after the Turkish victory and forced migration of her Christian population. Over the course of these years, İzmir experienced a serious economic crisis, and bread prices reached levels that lead to widespread undernourishment and hunger among the city's poor. Agricultural production was lagging behind pre-war levels, and positive effects of ‘Turkification’ policies were failing to materialize. By analyzing the contemporary journalists' attempts at explaining the crisis, but also pointing out national and transnational factors that they were probably unaware of, the paper makes an original contribution to the economic and social history of early republican Turkey.

Keywords

Turkey 1922-1938, early republican Turkey, Izmir, Smyrna, labor history, Turkification, poverty, urban poor, bread prices, urban history

Introduction

In the historiography of modern Turkey, the term *Türkleştirme* (‘Turkification’) is usually understood as a process of enrichment during which the wealth of non-Muslim businessmen and middle class people was used to create a Muslim business and middle class.¹ It is part of common wisdom that ‘the departure of the Greeks and Armenians from Turkey meant that the most productive elements of the population, and a good deal of the entrepreneurial know-how, had left the

country for good.² Yet, it is often glossed over that 'productive' here refers not only to artisans and capital owners, but also to peasants and workers. The little work there is about the 'Turkification' of the workforce has not been enough to dispel the widely held belief that non-Muslims were, as a rule, better off than Muslims.³ This prejudice moreover makes it hard to conceptually grasp what is actually a well-known fact, namely that the large-scale violence of the years 1912–22 had long-lasting, destructive effects on the Turkish economy. One obvious factor is the appalling loss of life during the Armenian Genocide, in World War I and the War of Independence, which crippled the economy for years to come. Those skilled workers who survived genocide and forced migration usually ended up abroad, especially in Syria (Armenians) and Greece (Greeks). We know that these people could never be replaced, yet the economic history of the Turkish Republic has hardly been studied from this angle.

This article argues that the term Turkification, if used at all, should also be conceptualized in the sense of 'impoverishment of a whole country' and 'Turkification of the working classes.' In other words, not only non-Muslim wealth, but also non-Muslim poverty was 'Turkified.' Non-Muslims formed the backbone of the late Ottoman (urban and rural) working class, and their loss created a serious problem for those parts of Anatolia where wage labor and commercial agriculture were common, namely port cities such as İzmir and Samsun, and their hinterlands where (cash) crops such as dried fruit, tobacco and cotton were produced for world markets (western Anatolia, the Çukurova plain, and the area around Samsun).⁴ It is hardly a coincidence that the lion's share of incoming exchange migrants ended up in these three areas, arguably becoming part of a new, Muslim working class.⁵

Taking İzmir and its hinterland as a case study, this article argues that post-1922 İzmir witnessed the emergence of a new, Muslim working class. Muslim labor filled the gap left behind by the expelled Christians and helped to repair the export-oriented agriculture in western Anatolia, as well as corresponding processing industries in İzmir. This, however, was accomplished only for the price of appalling poverty, a serious housing crisis, widespread unemployment, and outright hunger among the new urban poor. Early republican local newspaper reports and editorials frequently discussed these issues and tried to come up with explanations for the crisis. They were, however, largely unable to grasp all those reasons connected to the loss of the non-Muslim population. Taking the 'bread question,' a serious peak in bread prices and corresponding popular discontent in 1924–25 as a case in point, this article studies those very reasons and also points at transnational factors that affected local conditions. In sum, the article argues that the Christian working class (rural and urban) constituted a kind of phantom pain in early republican times: the devastat-

ing effects of its loss were painfully obvious, but could not be addressed as such. Those who suffered most from this loss were the people who had replaced Christian labor.

The working class of İzmir until 1922

It is well-known that the population of İzmir or, as it was known among Christians and foreigners, Smyrna, was predominantly Christian until September 1922, when all Greeks and Armenians were forced out of the country at the end of the Greek-Turkish war. This Christian population included many working-class people, especially of the Greek Orthodox faith. According to nationwide statistics from 1915, 15 percent of the industrial workforce were categorized as 'Turkish' (i.e., Muslim), 60 as 'Rum' (Greek Orthodox), 15 percent as Armenian, and 10 percent as Jewish.⁶ This statistic probably categorized according to faith rather than citizenship: 'Foreigners' are not listed as part of the workforce here, but we know that there was a 'migrant lumpen population' that emerged in all commercially important ports of the Empire during the second half of the 19th century.⁷ In İzmir, these people mostly hailed from mainland Greece and the Aegean islands (most of which became part of Greece in 1912), and often held foreign citizenship.⁸ Rural western Anatolia does not seem to have produced a surplus population in late Ottoman times, mainly due to a continuous shortage of labor in its (increasingly commercial) agriculture.⁹ The rural population of western Anatolia continued to perform small-scale farming on their own land, often combining it with share-cropping and/or agricultural wage labor, at times supplementing their income with regional work migration to Smyrna/İzmir.¹⁰ It seems that Muslims only started to become part of the urban working class in İzmir with the Balkan Wars. The local CUP representative in İzmir, Celal Bayar, claimed to have secured employment for Muslim [women] in the tobacco industry, which until then had only employed Muslims as [male] administrators or *kolcus* (the notorious armed guards in charge of tracking down tobacco smugglers).¹¹ If this information is correct, the picture in figure 1.1 must have been taken between 1912 and 1922. **(picture- copyrights?)**

A report on social conditions in Smyrna in 1920–21, during the Greek occupation of the city, estimates the population at 400,000, 90 per cent of whom were directly dependent on the city's industries.¹² A total of 14,074 workplaces in the city employed 44,424 people (24,039 men, 13,529 women, 6856 children under the age of 15).¹³ The list includes various industrial facilities for tobacco-processing, fig-packing, rug factories, oil presses, and flour mills, but also artisan workshops, restaurants, and shops. It also provides the number of street cleaners (37 men, 137 children). Domestic workers are not listed, but we know that this was a major employment sector for Greek girls and women. There is anecdotal evidence that the Greek servants of foreign families

were allowed to stay in 1922.¹⁴ Likewise, professions in the informal sector such as *hammals* (porters), and street vendors are not mentioned in the list, and it appears that the same goes for state servants, including policemen and bureaucrats.

By far the biggest employment sector was retailing, with 13,400 people (8934 men, 3266 women, 1200 children) working in 2344 stores, and 9150 (2040 men, 4690 women, 2420 children) in shops. The next-biggest sector was fig packing, where 4000 people (2300 women, 1050 men, 650 children) worked in ten different facilities. Eight tobacco houses employed 1500 people (355 men, 741 women, 404 children). 1463 people (360 men, 703 women, 400 children) worked in four spinning factories. A total of 2429 people (mostly men) worked in the 495 coffee houses. The railroads employed 1885 men, of whom 394 worked in repair shops, and 1127 people (men and children) worked in the city's stables.¹⁵ Those industries processing agricultural products only provided seasonal work (eight months in the tobacco factories, three months in fig-packing).

The best wages were paid in fig-packing, which, however, only took place during several weeks following the harvest in late summer and early autumn. The lowest-paid jobs, which were also physically demanding, were in tanning, rug-making, the cigarette factory, the bakeries and the railroads.¹⁶ Men were generally paid more than women, and children even less than that. Working conditions were usually unhealthy and physically exhausting, especially in tanning, where men would stand in the water for hours, and in bakeries, where many boys worked under conditions that permanently ruined their health. In the tobacco factories, dust was a major problem. Factories usually didn't provide for their worker's safety, and working accidents were common. The report mentions that the female workers on the Regie tobacco factory were sitting on the bare cement floor during the winter season. Their wages were barely sufficient to feed their families, and many women, who were 'the wage earner of the family', made 'a little extra-money by doing washing or some cleaning.'¹⁷ I assume that these women, probably widows, included those that Celal Bayar had secured employment for.

By 1920/21, worker's unions were common in İzmir. Professional specialization and ethno-religious affiliation appear to have overlapped, with Greeks mainly working in industrial and unskilled jobs, and Armenians specializing in arts and crafts. There were 20 Greek unions which represented 3120 workers and also a Greek roof organization for them. The Armenian artisans (tailors, gold smiths, masons etc.) had a similar organization as well as various unions for particular crafts. The report doesn't mention unionized Muslim workers.¹⁸

The living conditions of the working class were generally bad and resulted in serious public health risks. 'Hundreds of under-fed children' could be seen in the streets.¹⁹ The American ob-

server noted that the impact of the war had led to insufficient food production, which had caused prices for basic foodstuffs to rise beyond the means of many people. The American author, rather patronizingly, regarded this as a good thing: 'For it is probable that in Smyrna, as elsewhere in the world, more are injured by eating too much than by eating too little.'²⁰ This judgement appears all the more cynical in the light of information given several pages later: 4 percent of overall deaths were credited to a lack of food.²¹ According to the 1919 municipal statistics, 'lack of food' was the cause of death of 40 Turks and 89 Greeks.²² Out of 3551 total deaths that year, 817 were due to 'sundry diseases', which included many cases of venereal disease (especially syphilis). This was followed by diseases of the bowels (560, probably especially among young children), heart diseases (392), pneumonia (364), kidney diseases (165), tuberculosis (163) and malaria (162 deaths).²³

The poor of Smyrna were cared for by various charitable organizations that often, but not always, specialized in helping a particular ethno-religious group. The Common House of the Greek Orthodox Community, for instance, provided about 500 people of all faiths with food every day.²⁴ For Muslims, the Smyrna report only mentions relatively new institutions such as the orphanages, but no charities run by religious endowments (it is unclear whether such institutions existed or not). Those institutions run by the Greek Orthodox and Armenian communities left the city together with their clientele, and there might have been a shortage of charities for the city's new Muslim poor.

Starving in the face of plenty: the gold-rush of 1922

The civilian population of western Anatolia suffered massively at the end of the Greek-Turkish war. We know that, on their way to the coast, the remnants of the Greek army destroyed many towns and villages, regardless of the inhabitants' faith. We also know that the victorious Turkish army systematically forced Greek people out of their homes and towards the coast. When the Turkish army entered İzmir on September 9, 1922, the city was full of refugees, including Muslims who had lost their livelihoods in the countryside. The disastrous fire that started on September 13, 1922, destroyed 75 percent of the city, killing between 80,000 and 180,000 people.²⁵ The 'Frankish', the Armenian, and the Greek quarters were almost completely destroyed, leaving not only the refugees from the countryside, but also many city residents homeless. The Turkish authorities treated all male Christian survivors as prisoners of war, declaring that all others would be expelled.²⁶ The surviving Christian population was evacuated to the Greek islands, and later to Greece.²⁷ In the course of this forced migration, not only the Greek and Armenian merchants, bankers and clerks of İzmir, but also many of her tobacco workers, fig-packers, rug-makers, arti-

sans, bakers, waiters, shopkeepers, street vendors, maids, cooks and nannies, along with peasants, share-croppers and agricultural laborers from the surrounding countryside, left İzmir for good.

We know that this exodus was immediately followed by large-scale migration of Muslims from rural areas of western Anatolia (and probably beyond) to İzmir and the surrounding area.²⁸ This group included people who had left during the Greek occupation and were now returning, as well as those whose homes and means of living had been destroyed towards the end of the war. This latter group became known as *harikzede* (fire-victim) or *felaketzede* (desaster victim). There were also internal migrants from eastern Anatolia. Contemporary journalists frequently discussed this group's plight, though almost exclusively with regard to housing: *harikzede* often squatted houses abandoned by their Christian owners and were therefore facing state eviction.²⁹ While it may be true that *harikzede* were homeless, in terms of economic history, it is much more instructive to also think of them as *landless*: they were people who, towards the end of the war, had lost their livelihoods in the countryside and had thus been forced to migrate to the city, or to surrounding towns and villages.

A second reason for this migration, which is hard to distinguish from the first, was the desire to obtain a part of the riches that the Christians were forced to leave behind: A house, a farm, a vineyard, a business, or a depot full of that year's harvest. The autumn of 1922 witnessed a veritable gold-rush of people who were trying to get a share of the booty. In this, they competed with state-sponsored commissions in charge of confiscating, registering and selling movable and immovable 'abandoned' property.³⁰ It is immediately obvious that almost all of these assets (apart from dwellings), in order to be of use, required skills or information that the new possessors did not necessarily have. This is especially true for merchandise destined for international markets: tobacco, rugs, figs, raisins, cotton and liquorice, to name but a few. While most of these were also produced for domestic consumption, the sheer amount of merchandise in the city's depots clearly surpassed domestic demand. The looters, however, lacked contacts to companies abroad that were engaged in trading these goods.³¹ Much of the tremendous wealth in the looters' hands was useless to them. They must have felt like the mythical king Midas, who only belatedly realized that gold could not be eaten. Disappointment, combined with blind rage upon this realization, may have driven some of the many arsonists who put İzmir on fire.³²

The economic and social situation after 1922

Contemporary reports on İzmir agree on one point: the city was a mere shadow of her former self after the fire of 1922. Most of the inner city had been completely destroyed, and the fire area,

which was only rebuilt in the 1930s, constituted a gaping hole of rubbish and blackened ruins, which served the poorest of the poor used as dwellings.³³ All others continued to live in the surviving neighborhoods, namely the Muslim and Jewish quarters to the east of Konak square, the 'Point' (Punta, present-day Alsancak), the area around Basmane station, and in suburbs such as Karşıyaka, Bornova and Buca. According to statistics drawn up in late 1923, 97,630 Muslims lived in the city and the surrounding suburbs. There were also 25,385 non-Muslims, who all lived in the city proper. The number of Muslim men (53294) and Muslim households (53962) appears as almost equal.³⁴ This suggests serious undercounting of females and/or that many (Muslim) men were young workers who had arrived without a family. The high number of men is especially surprising because we know that, by 1927, about one in three grown women in the area was a widow.³⁵ In 1923, the provincial statistic counted 451,449 in the province, again in almost equal parts male and female suggesting that many male migrant workers had found employment in the commercial agriculture in the surrounding countryside.³⁶ Apart from population numbers, the data of the 1923 statistics differ considerably from the reports drawn up in 1921, making it hard to compare the two sources at all.³⁷

When seen from a macro perspective, the Turkish economy appears to have recovered slowly but steadily after 1922. Between 1925 and 1927, both production and agricultural exports slowly recovered from the impact of the long war years.³⁸ There was, however, a difference between crops such as cotton, tobacco, and hazelnuts, where the pre-war levels were reached again, and dried fruit, (especially raisins and figs) where this was not the case.³⁹ These two were the most important export goods that were handled in İzmir, and it is thus no surprise that reports – written both by foreign observers and local journalists – frequently describe the economic situation in the city as very serious. A British traveler wrote in November 1926: 'The stream of riches which flowed from Smyrna, spices, silks, carpets and minerals has dried up and commercially the port is a dying one.'⁴⁰ In terms of sheer trade value, the amount of merchandise exported through İzmir in 1924 was 8 percent lower than in 1914 (certainly a bad year due to the outbreak of war in the midst of the trading season), and imports were significantly higher.⁴¹ Although İzmir retained its character as an export harbor, the port company had to apply for government subsidies in 1925 and 1926.⁴²

Table 1: Imports and exports through İzmir/Smyrna, 1914 and 1924 (in Turkish Liras)⁴³

year	exports	imports
------	---------	---------

1914	66,102,692	47,587,470
1924	57,448,400	48,288,000

When describing the overall economic situation in those years, Turkish newspapers frequently spoke of stagnation (*durgunluk*) unemployment (*işsizlik*) and misery (*sefalet*). While these problems are named, the people suffering from them, as well as workers in general, are hardly ever mentioned in early republican newspapers. The city's poor are usually discussed either as fire-victims or victims of catastrophe (*harikzede* or *felaketzede*), people who had lost their houses and livelihoods and suffered from the serious housing crisis (including very high rents), or as lower-level state servants (*küçük memurlar*) who had trouble making ends meet. This latter group probably made up an important part of the reading audience in the city.⁴⁴ It was not uncommon for people to be *harikzede* and small state servant at once, but *harikzede* must also have included people who worked in workshops, factories and informal jobs. After 1923, their working conditions are never discussed at all. Instead, we are informed that lower-level state servants had to work up to 15 hours per day and were struggling to feed their families. The problem was not limited to İzmir: Istanbul post office clerks walked out of their job in July 1924.⁴⁵ A piece published on this occasion provides valuable information on the cost of living and wages in İzmir: an average family could not survive on 50 liras per month, but clerks made only between twenty and forty liras, and gendarmes only eight to ten a month.⁴⁶ It is only in passing that we learn about working-class incomes: 'Yes, there are people who live on 30, 20 Lira, and some even on 10 Lira [per month]. This is possible. But those who live like that lose a piece of their life every day and are gradually dying.'⁴⁷ Textile workers, who made 70 *kuruş* per workday, would have been a part of this group.⁴⁸ The last-mentioned sum, 10 Lira, was the same as the monthly allowance for widows of war martyrs.⁴⁹ Sometimes, in passing, we are informed that 'not only lower-level state servants have trouble to stay alive with these high prices.'⁵⁰ This wording conveys the impression that the writer, Mehmet Şevki, was consciously avoiding to mention the word 'worker' (*amele*). The first description of [women] workers I have come across dates from 1930 and informs us that the women were hired as day-laborers on a first-come-first serve basis: every morning, they would gather in front of the *hans* where tobacco was sorted and try to get a job for the day. By 1930, there were so many of them that some – as the author imagined – returned home empty-handed, unable to feed their children.⁵¹

By 1930, world market prices for agricultural products had already slumped, and the tobacco Regie was nationalized in 1925. The situation of tobacco workers may have worsened as a result of both. Overall, the economic situation was deplorable throughout the 1920s, and discontent with it

seems to have played an important part in the success of the short-lived Progressive Republican Party (*Terrakiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası*, TCF) in 1924 and 1925. The party was formed in November 1924, following a summer of severe criticism which had culminated in a heated debate of the government's poor performance in settling exchange refugees.⁵² The chaos surrounding refugee settlement, however, was certainly not the only subject of criticism: a far more important one was the bread price.

The bread question (*ekmek meselesi*)

Bread quality and prices were a common crystallization point of social unrest throughout Ottoman times.⁵³ Increasing prices could easily spark riots in towns and cities, and the local authorities (who, prior to the 19th century, usually blended in with the guilds) were therefore eager to demonstrate their ability to keep both under control.⁵⁴ Tinkering with bread quality was, at least occasionally, severely punished in pre-modern times and continued to be a major concern for local authorities in modern times as well.⁵⁵ Indeed, discontent with high prices for basic necessities was probably one of the factors contributing to the success of the Young Turk revolution in 1908.⁵⁶ Although guilds were officially abolished in 1913, the following discussion shows that the practice to set prices (*narh*), as well as conflicts surrounding bread prices and quality, continued to exist. This is not surprising, given that the policies of the 1920s, far from being 'liberal,' were actually driven by economic nationalism and a corporatist understanding of society.⁵⁷ How this played out when all actors involved in a conflict were Muslim, however, has not sufficiently been studied. With regard to bread prices, we know that the 1930s saw important legal and administrative steps aimed at the provision of cheap, affordable grain all over Turkey. Following the World Economic Crisis, the state started to buy most of the marketed grain harvest in Turkey – which, however, formed only a small part of the produce, most of which was consumed in the countryside.⁵⁸ Grain price policies of the 1920s and their repercussions on the situation in cities have not been studied at all, which is surprising given that early republican newspapers discussed bread prices quite frequently.

Reports surrounding the issue of bread prices in and around İzmir started to appear in the summer of 1923, which probably corresponds to the point when the 1922 harvest had been consumed. The local newspaper *Türk Sesi* reported in August 1923 that the municipality had lowered the fixed bread price (*narh*).⁵⁹ In meetings with several wheat-traders, the paper had learned that they considered the price 'moderate' (*mu'tedil*), while the bakers, who were suffering from it (*mutazzarrır olduklarını*) were refusing to sell at that price. The paper stated not to know the stance of

the municipality on the issue, but pointed out that the ones who really suffered from the conflict were the people (*ahali mutazarrır olmaktadır*). *Türk Sesi* therefore suggested that the municipality make use of force, possibly even call in the army, and re-open bakeries that had been abandoned by their [Christian] owners.⁶⁰ The population was, in other words, suffering from the loss of non-Muslim bakers and decreased competition in that field.

The matter clearly was not only bread prices, but wages that were insufficient for paying them, and thus, labor unrest. An American report on the state of the fig-packing industry in 1923 describes working conditions as bad and speaks of 'general unrest among workmen.' One result of this unrest was a partial strike of the fig-packers in the summer of 1923. Their strike – as was common – was quickly suppressed, but the strikers nevertheless succeeded at having their pay increased by 22 percent.⁶¹ The official statistics of 1923 do not mention this fig-packers' strike, but another one in a Belgian-owned spinning mill, which lasted 4 days. 13 administrators and 540 workers succeeded at having their working time reduced from 15 to 9 hours per day, while their pay (70 kuruş daily) stayed the same.⁶² The railroad workers of the British-owned Smyrna-Aydin company went on strike on August 31, just when that year's fig harvest was ready to be brought to İzmir. The strikers demanded, among other things, an eight-hour working day, a 50 percent raise for all workers and clerks 'who make barely enough to keep body and soul together,' special raises to be paid according to seniority, four weeks of paid leave per year for all employees, and insurance against work accidents, including care for the families of workers who died on the job. The strikers were at first supported by Turkish farmers and merchants. However, when it became clear that camels could not make up for the lack of railroad transport, and that the strike thus harmed themselves, they withdrew their support, calling for the government to suppress the strike.⁶³ This happened on September 9, the first anniversary of the Turkish re-conquest of the city. The failed strike was only one of several that took place around the time, and marks the point at which class conflict could no longer be dressed up as nationalism (and the other way around). The minister of the economy was forced to resign, and a business law, which had been under preparation, was shelved.⁶⁴ It seems that from this point onwards, İzmir papers shied away from open references to the existence of a working class. At the same time, however, class conflict appears to have increased.

Bread prices started to be discussed much more frequently towards the summer of 1924. In May, *Ahenk (Harmony)* ran a piece on a special bakery run by the municipality of Tire (an important market town about 100 km south-east of İzmir).⁶⁵ The bakery had just been opened in order to produce affordable bread for the population, selling it at a price 2,5 *kuruş* lower than usual, and

had thus 'saved them from the bakers (...) who have become accustomed to squeezing the people like a toy.' (*halkı ellerinde bir oyuncak gibi ezmeğe alışmış olan fırıncılar*). Unhappy about the new competition, the bakers had tried to sabotage the new facility by sending an apprentice to mix matches and other inedible materials into the new bakery's dough trough. The apprentice had been caught and handed over to the law enforcement authorities.⁶⁶

The İzmir municipality was facing a similar problem. On 1 July, *Ahenk* published a declaration signed by mayor Muammer bey that, according to a short explanation provided along with it, the municipality had tried to negotiate with the millers, who had refused to accept it. The municipality was therefore now issuing it without their consent and also announced that mills would be expropriated in order to provide the population with affordable flour. The declaration stated that second-quality bread, which had so far been sold at 19 *kuruş* [per oke], was abolished. First-quality bread would be sold at 22 *kuruş*, a price made possible by a reduction of 2 *kuruş* on the price that millers were allowed to charge. This price was based on the prices paid for the latest shipment of American wheat, both first quality (4 stars) and second quality (3 stars). The text stipulated that bread could only be sold in bakeries and that weighing the bread during its sale was made mandatory for all bakeries.⁶⁷ It further announced that consumers would start to benefit from the reduced price within a week.

Like most legal texts, this document tells us more about the context it was written in than about its enforcement: Bread had apparently sometimes been sold in places other than bakeries, and bakers and millers were suspected to be tinkering with both the quality and the weight of loafs. Most importantly, the text indicates that İzmir was dependent on wheat imports, which by June 1924 usually came from the United States. As for the effect of the declaration, pieces published over the course of the next few weeks indicate that prices further increased. By August 3, the price of an okka of bread was again 24 *kuruş*.⁶⁸ By August 11 *Seda-yı Hakk* called the 'bread issue' a 'bread crisis' (*ekmek buhranı*). *Ahenk* followed suit on August 13, running similar co-eds on August 17 and 18. On August 15, *Sedayı Hakk* published a caricature titled 'Newspapers: İzmir and Istanbul are experiencing severe crisis and hunger.' It depicts a voluptuous mother who, while nursing a fez-wearing, well-fed boy, triumphantly puts off the other, visibly under-nourished and similarly fez-wearing boy. The dialogue line reads: 'Mother State: Wait for your sibling Ankara to be sated, after that it's your turn.'⁶⁹ By depicting Ankara as a boy who was fed at the expense of his sibling (İzmir and Istanbul), the caricature makes a claim otherwise absent from newspaper reporting, namely that Ankara, a small town turned capital, was provisioned at the expense of İzmir and Istanbul. This was certainly true for many other resources, such as infrastructure in-

vestments. Food, however, was now eaten by people in Ankara who had previously lived in Istanbul and other places. I therefore think that a lack of production in Anatolia, not Ankara's needs, was the reason for high prices in the cities.

Considering the monthly wages given above, the depiction of İzmir as a starving child was probably not so far-fetched: We know that bread was the most important staple food, especially for the poor. For buying two loafs per day, a family of four would have needed 44 kuruş daily or 13,2 Liras per month.⁷⁰ This was more than half of a lower-level clerk's salary (20 Liras) and more than a widow's pension (10 Liras).⁷¹ In the face of such numbers, there must have been great demand for lower-quality bread, and a considerable part of the population must have been on the verge of starvation. And indeed, in September 1924, *Ahenk* reported on an interview with Mazhar Osman, a famous psychiatrist from Istanbul, who told the paper that cases of madness had significantly increased. While he attributed most cases to drug abuse (he named alcohol, heroin, and cocaine) and untreated syphilis, Mazhar Osman also pointed out that many people were driven crazy by chronic hunger:

Many people go crazy because they are hungry. These people usually get better within a couple of weeks. And while they are still crazy, they eat [the most basic] things like bread and watermelon, bread and [drink] ayran. They get well again. The problem is not how to treat them, but the fact that hunger has reached such levels as to drive people crazy. Hunger is a socio-economic issue that needs to be investigated and fixed (...)⁷²

It is interesting that Mazhar Osman didn't describe the hungry people he talked about as simulants: He seems to have believed in their madness. That some people were so hungry as to go crazy also suggests that charitable organizations such as soup kitchens were either inexistent or insufficient to satisfy the needs of the urban poor. The situation appears to have further deteriorated throughout 1924 and 1925, leading to ever harsher criticism in local papers. On February 18, 1925, *Anadolu*, the local mouthpiece of the ruling Republican People's Party (henceforth: RPP) called the bread question a 'matter (...) of life and death:'

We cry out in the name of the nation! We cry out to the national assembly, the government, and the municipality. (...) Talk alone won't accomplish anything, nor do words fill the stomach of the nations' poor. What we want is work, not empty words!⁷³

The piece stated that bread prices had recently increased up to 20 para⁷⁴ [per okka] every other day, and pointed out that this situation, if unchecked, amounted to a death warrant for the population: if help from Ankara (which had apparently been granted, but not sent) wouldn't arrive

soon, 'we cry out as a nation of the poor: cover up, let's die.' (ikide birde YIRMI PARA ZAM denilirse, bütün fukara-yı millet bağıyoruz. ÖRTÜN ÖLELİM!).⁷⁵

Help eventually arrived in the form of a loan. The municipality announced on February 23 that it had taken out a loan of 60,000 Lira in order to purchase 2000 tons of wheat.⁷⁶ It is unclear if this measure was effective: by February 27, news of the Şeyh Said rebellion in Eastern Anatolia arrived, pushing the bread question off the headlines. Subsequently, the RPP government used the uprising as a pretext for a nation-wide crackdown on the opposition and the shutting down of many newspapers, including *Seda-yı Hakk*. The surviving papers were subject to press censorship again, and it is therefore much harder to find critical voices in them. It is, however, clear from price indices that bread prices continued to rise.

Table 2: average wheat prices 1923 – 1930, nationwide⁷⁷

year	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930
kuruş/kg	7,7	10,6	14,4	12,4	11,8	13,5	12,5	7,3

In this table, 1925 marks the year with the highest bread price. If we compare this to the monthly figures given for Istanbul, however, it appears that the prices were considerably higher in some months of 1924 and 1925 (even considering that one oke was 1,2 kg):

Table 3: Istanbul prices for the cheapest available kind of wheat per oke, in *kuruş*⁷⁸

January	
1924	13,25 (")
February	14-14,5 (")
March	13,25 (")
April	13,25 (")
May	13,5 (")
June	14,25 (")
July	17,5 (Anatolia)
August	18-18,5 (")
September	18,5-19 (")
October	19,25-19,75 (")
November	20,5-21 (")
December	22-22,5 (")
January	
1925	23 (")
February	22,5 (")
March	22-22,5 (")
April	21,5 (")

May	16,5 (")
June	19,5 (")
July	19-20 (")
	16,75
August	(Thrace)

According to a newspaper report published in *Hizmet/Yanık Yurt* in February 1926, the İzmir municipality had not been very successful in its subsidization campaign in 1925, and the 60,000 had dealt a severe blow to the city budget. A decision to run a model bakery [like the one in Tire mentioned above] had been taken, but not yet been put into practice. In contrast to Istanbul, where the municipality had finally managed to offer affordable bread for the poor, the İzmir municipality (probably in an attempt to fulfill the promise made in the 1924 declaration) had expropriated a mill owned by a certain Tozakoğlu, only to then rent it out to a profit-oriented company.⁷⁹ An American report provides the details that the journalist must have not dared to relate: the new tenant of the mill was a prominent member of the People's Party and operator of several other mills in the area. By putting the municipality under pressure, the People's Party enabled him to secure the very monopoly the municipality had intended to crush. The man paid 45,000 Lira of rent only to shut the mill down.⁸⁰ Since many mills in the area were owned by Greeks who had been forced to leave the country, the local 'abandoned property' administration would, at least in theory, have been able to mitigate the problem. However, in the case of a mill in Çeşme which had been left behind by the owner, a Greek citizen, the administration of national property in Ankara preferred to sell it rather than pay 400 Lira for necessary maintenance work in 1927.⁸¹

While it may be true that millers and bakers were eager to make high profits, the crisis had another reason that is hardly ever mentioned in contemporary Turkish reports. This is the country's dependency on imported wheat, which in itself was not a new phenomenon: Already in 1907/08, failing harvests in (post-Ottoman) Roumania and (still nominally Ottoman) Bulgaria, which usually supplied a major part of Ottoman demand, had forced Ottoman traders to buy lower-quality French wheat instead.⁸² Bulgarian independence in 1908 possibly affected the Ottoman trade balance by turning Bulgarian wheat into an imported commodity. As for Anatolian production, we know that the Anatolian railway connecting Istanbul to Eskişehir, Ankara and Konya supplied most of Istanbul's grain needs prior to 1908. Grain was also shipped through port cities such as İzmir, Mersin and Samsun.⁸³ By the 1920s, however, this source seems to have all but dried up: the legacy of war-time requisitions and shortages of labor had caused a dramatic decrease in domestic grain production. A British consular report stated in 1924: 'The country is essentially agricultural, but the cereal crop has gradually declined since the war began, until today it is only a

tenth of what it was. Far from exporting grain, Smyrna imports it.' The problem, according to the British consul, was not so much the activity of profiteers, but the lack of animals, technology (such as heavy ploughs and carts) and affordable credit in agriculture, problems in the face of which all government measures taken were 'a drop in the ocean.'⁸⁴

Turkey was dependent on grain imports, and world market prices for grain, as well as other food-stuffs, were exceptionally high during the 1920s. The only article to mention this point is that published in 1925 in *Anadolu*: it argues that the bread crisis also affected other countries, which however, handled it much better than Turkey. In order to understand how much Turkey depended on grain imports and international prices, and to get an idea of the domestic harvests of those years, the following section examines the monthly reports of the Ionian Bank in Istanbul for 1924 and 1925.

Grain production and prices in Turkey, 1923–25

The major shift from a grain-exporter to an importer certainly was a result of a decade of war in general and the Armenian Genocide in particular. This effect was already visible during the military mobilization in the summer of 1915. An American missionary in Mardin noted in August 1915:

(...) The Govt. has robbed the city, and the country around, of its men, of its animals, of its money, leaving the threshing floors loaded down with a richer harvest than has ever been laid upon, to rot where they are, for lack of men and beasts to tread them out and care for them. The millions that will be lost to the people and the Govt. cannot be estimated. (...)⁸⁵

By 1923, Anatolia's cities and towns were dependent on grain imports, which mostly came from post-Ottoman states such as Bulgaria and Rumania, as well as the USA, and later into 1924, from Australia (via Alexandria). Since the Istanbul markets also counted grain coming from Thrace and Anatolia as imports, we can compare their volume to that of imports from abroad.⁸⁶ Data for 1922 is scarce and, if at all, given in numbers of sacks (of which only 200 each were imported from Anatolia and Thrace in January and February 1923, respectively). The data for September 1923 onwards is given in tons. The data shows that grain imports from Turkey (Anatolia and Thrace) between September and December 1923 were negligible: only 377 tons were imported to Istanbul. In contrast, 14783 tons arrived from the USA, and 18135 tons from Bulgaria. Between January and June 1924, no Turkish wheat was recorded as imported to Istanbul. Shipments from Anatolia and Thrace only picked up again in July 1924, gaining in volume over the following months. American imports were strong in January, April and June 1924. However, there were no imports of Ameri-

can grain in July, August and September and very little of flour. In fact, the only grain imports recorded for July 1924 are 25 tons from Anatolia and 1062 from Roumania.

The price of locally milled wheat rose considerably between 1922 and 1925. Though no imports from Turkey were recorded in early 1923, the relatively low prices for milled wheat suggest that there was enough wheat available, be it from local sources or from abroad. The increase from below 8 kuruş to around 10 (per oke/okka, i.e. ca. 1,2 kilos) may have been a result of an increase in import duties on wheat that was imposed starting in March 1923.⁸⁷ Prices ranged around 10,7 Lira per sack of 72 kg throughout 1923 and in the early months of 1924, rising beyond 11 Lira in June 1924. A first peak at 13,6 Lira/sack occurred in July 1924, exactly at the point when Anatolian wheat became available again, but hardly any other imports arrived. By August 1923, Istanbul merchants anticipated another increase in the import duty on wheat, and the authorities imposed a maximum price of 13,25 Lira per sack.⁸⁸ This policy appears to have failed, as that threshold was already broken in September 1924. Prices rose steadily from then onwards, passing 15 Lira in November, and 16 in December, peaking at 16,4 Lira in March 1925. The October report of the Ionian Bank mentions a disappointing wheat crop due to heavy and prolonged rain in Anatolia. By December 1924, there was talk of rampant speculation, and by January 1925 of a crisis, which seems to have lasted until May, at which point the next, much better crop from Anatolia started to arrive in Istanbul.

The reports of the Ionian Bank suggest that an important factor driving the price crisis was a bad harvest in Thrace and Anatolia, and therefore a lack of locally produced wheat. However, since very little locally produced wheat had been available already in 1923, it is likely that other, non-domestic factors played a part as well. Anatolia was already dependent on imports by 1923 and continued to be so in 1925, so it is likely that a bad harvest in 1924 merely aggravated an already existing external surge in prices. This indeed seems to have been the case. Throughout 1924 and 1925, there was massive grain speculation in the US market, with prices almost doubling between January and May 1925.⁸⁹ An additional domestic factor that may have driven local demand in Turkey beyond the ordinary was the immigration of most exchangees from Greece, whom the government was obliged to feed for at least several days, in the course of the summer of 1924. There was also the military campaign against the Şeyh Said uprising in the spring of 1925. According to the LTR report of March 1925, the government had indeed purchased 5000 tons of wheat in February. The May report mentions that parts of this were being sold below current market prices.

Contemporary explanations

In a piece titled 'let's solve the problem,' Mehmet Şevki of *Ahenk* attempted to explain the economic reasons for the general misery.⁹⁰ Correctly observing that production in Turkey was not sufficient to meet domestic demand, he focused on the reasons for low production and high consumption in the country. As for the latter, which he identified as the main reason for growing destitution, he found the main culprits to be women who wasted precious resources on 'useless dolling up,' (*faydasız süsler*) – presumably with imported textiles – and blamed not only urban women for doing this, but also villagers, lamenting the decline of domestic [textile] industries. Imports of such vital importance as foodstuffs are not mentioned. As for the producing sector, M. Şevki observed: 'We are collapsing. Apart from [agricultural] producers, no productive element has remained in our country. But this segment, too, lives in a state of dissolution.' This, Şevki argued, was the main reason that agricultural production destined for exports was stagnating: 'the farmer works, and brings his produce to the market, but cannot make money with it' – he was exploited by intermediaries who took all [the surplus value] for themselves. At first admitting that many Turks were among these profiteers, 'who, for a slightly higher profit, stab hundreds of thousands of laborers in the back,' Şevki continued to suggest that they were actually all non-Muslims: 'The first profiteers are the foreigners, and the second their accomplices. At that point, the Armenians are threatening our lives.'⁹¹

Şevki's piece is remarkable for bringing up the issue of trade deficits. The remedies he discusses, however, are more than conventional for not actually discussing production as such, but only trade and (supposedly unnecessary) consumption. Non-Muslims are only mentioned as the clichéd trading profiteers, remaining invisible as agricultural producers (who had been killed or expelled). Solutions for the agricultural misery are not really discussed in this piece – indeed, it seems possible that the writer couldn't think of any. By 1926, however, he argued that the state ought to establish agricultural cooperatives, which would allow farmers to become independent from intermediary traders.⁹²

The situation of agricultural producers is discussed most openly for İzmir's traditional export items, namely raisins and figs. Grapes and figs had been grown throughout the region since ancient times, but cultivation was greatly expanded over the course of the 19th century, when the export of dried fruit reached unprecedented levels. (As a side effect, grain cultivation decreased and the countryside became dependent on traded wheat). The two railway lines connecting İzmir to its hinterland (the Aydın and the Kasaba lines) ran along the two main areas of cultivation for figs and raisins and further accelerated the commercialization of agriculture in areas close to the

railroads.⁹³ Unlike figs (which also formed an important export crop), grapes required a lot of maintenance work, in which many rural Greeks used to be involved. When this skilled workforce was forced out of the country, it could not so easily be replaced: The Giraud company at İzmir reported in 1924 that „the winter of 1922-1923 was exceptionally rainy, *labor was scarce and dear*, work on the vineyards was delayed and the outlook of the raisin crop appeared generally very unfavorable.⁹⁴ Due to great efforts on the part of the new owners, however, the 1923 harvest turned out much better than initially expected. The report also mentions that 5000 tons of raisins that could not be exported in 1922 were stored until 1923, at which point they could finally be sold.

Due to their owner's expulsion from Turkey, a great number of vineyards ended up as 'abandoned property.' It is evident that they were quickly taken over by Muslims, who were either former neighbors, internal refugees (*harikzede*) or, from 1924 onwards, so-called 'exchangees' (*mübadil*) from Greece. Yet, despite this quick takeover, vineyards formed an object of considerable anxiety on the part of early republican journalists in İzmir. *Çiftçi* ('farmer') Necati, who regularly wrote co-eds on agricultural topics in several local papers, broke the problem down to the formula 'if we tend to them, they will flourish, if we don't, they will go to waste' (*bakarsak bağ olur, bakmazsak dağ olur*).⁹⁵ The tendency was more to the latter. *Türk Sesi* ran an interview with the new owner of a vineyard in September 1923, who related that he had participated in the İzmir Economic Congress, where he and his colleagues had tried to raise awareness for their problems, but had not been heard. The government's promises had not come true. Instead, 'viniculture is now in the enemy's hands in Europe, and the Franks have [the trade of] İzmir under their foot.'⁹⁶ The man explained that he had paid 1000 Lira for a vineyard, and was now disappointed upon having made less than 500 with that year's harvest. As a consequence, he was no longer tending to the vineyard and considering to plant tobacco instead.⁹⁷ A similar piece published in October 1923 lists the expenses of an average viniculturist, who said he had made 5000 kuruş (50 Lira) with 1000 okka (1,2 tons) of grapes. Out of that money, a tenth went to pay the *aşar* (tithe), and another unspecified amount to the liquidation of debt. What remained was so little that the family often went hungry. The grape-grower lamented that demand was low and described the situation as a general crisis.

98

We know that international trade networks were still in the process of recovery in 1923, and at least partly, business may have been low because business contacts had to not yet been established again. But the text raises at least two other issues as well: first, the matter of the (probably inflated) prices that had been paid when abandoned property was auctioned in 1922 (which in-

vestment would pay off within only one year?), and second, that of inferior product quality. Contemporary trade reports state time and again that the quality of grapes available in İzmir was unsatisfactory, and this may have been due to a lack of experience on the part of new owners and their workers. This is corroborated by the 'experienced' viniculturalist's idea to plant tobacco instead of grapes, an idea that appears to have been widespread: As Çiftçi Necati warned in February 1924, tobacco wouldn't grow well in former vineyards because it required a different kind of soil. Locals would have known about this, and the fact that this piece (as well as many other advisory columns on agriculture) was published suggests that most 'locals' were actually relative newcomers. A third issue is the grape growers' complaint that viticulture was 'in the enemy's hands in Europe and the Franks have İzmir under their foot.' He didn't like that European traders continued to be influential in İzmir and expressed his frustration with the fact that some Greeks of Asia Minor had managed to transfer their business to Greece and other places. Greek labor went unmentioned.

This glossing over of labor is even more obvious in a piece about the situation of the carpet weaving sector published in *Anadolu* in July 1924. Going back to ancient times, the author provided a very detailed account of the trade's history but failed to mention that rural Greek women from western and central Anatolia had been important producers of carpets until 1922. He complained that the carpet-industry in Greece was thriving and had recently started to seriously compete with that in Turkey. The reason for this recent development, namely the forced migration of skilled carpet-weavers from Anatolia to Greece, was not discussed at all.

Conclusion

Both the city of İzmir and the surrounding province of the same name experienced a time of severe economic crisis during the first years of the republic. As a result of a combination of domestic as well as international factors, bread prices rose to levels that even white-collar workers could hardly afford, and hunger was a serious problem among the poor. In the countryside, stolen assets such as vineyards had quickly turned sour in the hands of their new owners, who were unable to generate the profits they had anticipated. The overall atmosphere was characterized by deep disappointment with the new regime, which had failed to fulfill promises of prosperity and well-being.

In their analyses of the situation, local journalists generally avoided to discuss the plight of the working class, which by 1923 must have been overwhelmingly Muslim. One possible reason for this reluctance is that they were afraid of triggering a new wave of strikes, and therefore pre-

ferred to discuss the situation of lower-level state servants. But one layer deeper, they possibly were unable to conceptually grasp a class conflict that no longer followed ethno-religious lines: the railway worker's strike had shown that there was a conflict between Turkish businessmen and Turkish workers, and there was no language available to express this conflict. In ordinary times, journalists and state servants could have remained silent about poverty altogether. However, in the course of the precipitating bread crisis, they found themselves suffering from a serious gap between their incomes and the cost of living in İzmir. The inability or unwillingness to articulate class conflict and consider the plight of the working class thus harmed white-collar workers as well.

At the heart of the conflict lay the – perpetually unaddressed, but painfully obvious – fact that, as far as the general population was concerned, not prosperity, but poverty had been Turkified. Muslims who had been uprooted from their villages and towns had taken the place of İzmir's Christian lumpen proletariat. As for agricultural production in the surrounding countryside, journalists occasionally addressed the problem of insufficient production, yet they could not (and would not) admit that one major reason for this was the loss of skilled Christian labor. Instead, they complained about 'enemy' competition from Greece. Grain production for commercial purposes took place elsewhere and was probably too far away from İzmir to be considered, yet the same problem also plagued the carpet and raisin industries. These sectors suffered heavily from the loss of the skilled workforce, which could not be addressed at all. The Christians had left, but continued to cause problems, and can thus be likened to the phenomenon of phantom pain.

Bibliography

Archival Sources:

Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi, Ankara (CA), muhacirin fonu (272.)

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD. Smyrna consular records.

National Archives at Kew, London Foreign Office Records (FO).

Ahmet Piriştina Kent Arşivi ve Müzesi (APIKAM), İzmir, İzmir Milli Kütüphane Gazeteler Fonu.

Notes

- 1 From 1908 onwards, boycott movements used the term *milli iktisat* to refer to the promotion of more Ottomans, and from 1911 onwards, of Muslims, in the Ottoman economy. Y. D. Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest and the Working Classes in the Formation of Modern Turkey*, Library of Ottoman Studies 41 (London: Tauris, 2014); Zafer Toprak, *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat 1908–1918* (Ankara: Yurt Yayıncılık, 1982). *Türkleştirme* on the other hand, was first used in the sense of cultural assimilation by Tekin Alp: Tekin Alp, *Türkleştirme* (Istanbul: Resimli Ay, 1928). The first one to use the term in the sense of *economic* Turkification appears to have been Ayhan Aktar in his important book on the notorious *Varlık Vergisi*, a special tax that especially targeted Jews in the 1940s. See Ayhan Aktar, *Varlık Vergisi ve "Türkleştirme" Politikaları*, İletişim yayınları Tarih dizisi 4 (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2000). Though his book deals with the republican period, other authors such as Mehmet Polatel and Uğur Ümit Üngör have retroactively used the term 'Turkification' also for Ottoman times. See Uğur Ü. Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London: Continuum, 2011).
- 2 Ayhan Aktar, 'Homogenising the Nation, Turkifying the Economy: The Turkish Experience of Population Exchange Reconsidered,' in *Crossing the Aegean: An appraisal of the 1923 compulsory population exchange between Greece and Turkey*, ed. Renée Hirschon, 79–95, Refugee and forced migration studies 12 (New York, NY [u.a.]: Berghahn Books, 2003), 81.
- 3 An important exception to that rule are two chapters in Murat Koraltürk's book that study policies of the 1920s and 1930s aimed at giving menial jobs in the railroad companies and in the entertainment sector to Muslims. These policies targeted the non-Muslim population of Istanbul. Koraltürk doesn't study their aftermath. See Murat Koraltürk, *Erken Cumhuriyet Döneminde Ekonominin Türkleştirilmesi*, 1. baskı, İletişim yayınları Araştırma - inceleme dizisi 273 (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2011).
- 4 By 'working class' I mean people who had no control over the means of production and therefore had to sell their labor, regardless of the technologies used or the amount of capital involved. This definition includes both urban and rural people who worked as wage-laborers or artisans and also covers sharecroppers. This conceptualization is taken from Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement*, 34.
- 5 Works that have studied exchangee settlement have generally not done so from the perspective of labor history, but they clearly show that these three areas were major destinations for exchangees: Nedim İpek, *Mübadele ve Samsun*, Türk Tarih Kurumu yayınları Dizi 16 85 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2000); Tülay Alim Baran, *Bir Kentin Yeniden Yapılanması: İzmir, 1923-1938* (Istanbul: Arma, 2003); Onur Yıldırım, *Diplomacy and Displacement: Reconsidering the Turco-Greek Exchange of Populations, 1922 - 1934*, Middle East studies - history, politics, and law (New York, NY, London: Routledge, 2006); Ellinor Morack, *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and Nation-Building in Turkey, 1921-1945*, Bamberger Orientstudien 9 (Bamberg: Bamberg University Press, 2017).
- 6 Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü 1973, 143, cited in Rıfat N. Bali, *Cumhuriyet Yıllarında Türkiye Yahudileri. Bir Türkleştirme Serüveni: (1923 - 1945)*, 7. baskı (İstanbul: İletişim, 2005), 197.
- 7 Çağlar Keyder, *State and class in Turkey : a study in capitalist development* (London [u.a.]: Verso, 1987), 21.
- 8 Ibid..
- 9 Reşat Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: The Nineteenth Century*, SUNY series in Middle Eastern studies (Albany, NY: State Univ. of New York Pr, 1988), 100.
- 10 Ibid., 193.
- 11 Celal Bayar, *Ben de Yazdım. Milli Mücadeleye Giriş: c. 5* (Istanbul: Baha, 1967), 1554.
- 12 Rıfat Bali, *A Survey of Some Social Conditions in Smyrna, Asia Minor, May 1921*, 1. ed., Libra kitap History (İstanbul: Libra Kitapçılık ve Yayıncılık, 2009), 36.
- 13 Ibid., 41–42.
- 14 Philip Mansel, *Levant: Splendour and catastrophe on the mediterranean* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2011), 223.
- 15 Bali, *A Survey of Some Social Conditions in Smyrna, Asia Minor, May 1921*, 39–40.
- 16 Ibid., 37.
- 17 Ibid., 45.
- 18 Ibid., 47.
- 19 Ibid., 45.
- 20 Ibid., 53.
- 21 Ibid., 59.
- 22 Ibid., 56. The statistics for Jews and Armenians (which, for instance, show no cancer deaths) appear to be incomplete. They were probably obtained from their respective religious communities, which may have only had (or provided) insufficient data.
- 23 Ibid..
- 24 Ibid., 157.

- 25 Estimates for the number of deaths range from as little as several thousand Norman M. Naimark, *Fires of hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*, 1. Harvard Univ. Press paperback ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 2002), 52 to between 80,000 and 180,000: Mansel, *Levant*, 220.
- 26 Ibid., 219.
- 27 Michelle E. Tusan, *Smyrna's Ashes: Humanitarianism, Genocide, and the Birth of the Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).
- 28 In October 1924, *Ahenk* estimated their number at 200,000 in the province and 20,000 in the city of İzmir. Kemal Arı, *Büyük mübadele: Türkiye'ye Zorunlu Göç, 1923-1925*, 4. Aufl., Türkiye araştırmaları 17 (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2007), 9.
- 29 For discussions surrounding legitimate vs. illegitimate squatting, see Kemal Arı, 'Yunan İşgalinden sonra İzmir'de 'Emval-i Metruke' ve 'Fuzuli İşgal' Sorunu,' *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 5, no. 18 (1989); Ellinor Morack, 'Refugees, Locals, and 'the' State: Property Compensation in the Province of İzmir Following the Greco-Turkish Population Exchange of 1923,' in *Law and Legality in the Ottoman Empire and Republic of Turkey*, ed. Kent Schull, M. S. Saraçoğlu and Robert Zens, 179–200 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016).
- 30 See Morack, *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and Nation-Building in Turkey, 1921-1945*.
- 31 Mansel, *Levant*
- 32 We know that there were many cases of arson already in the four days prior to the fire, and that the big fire had several starting points. See Biray Kolluoğlu Kırılı, 'Forgetting the Smyrna Fire', *History Workshop Journal* 60, no. 1 (2005): 32.
- 33 'While approximately 2000 refugees have found abodes among the ruins of the disaster (this quarter skirts the present inhabitable portions of the city), few cases however, are heard, concerning attacks in that section, as the other and better class Smyrna residents have no logical reason to visit that quarter, and if they did so, their own presence there could be cloaked with suspicion. Furthermore, armed guards are stationed throughout the entire devastated area at all times. (...) Public Security in Smyrna – Confidential Report by Frederick O. Bird, March 23, 1924. NARA, Smyrna Consular Records, box 070.
- 34 Numbers taken from Erkan Serçe, *1923 Senesi İzmir Vilayeti İstatistiği*, Kent kitaplığı dizisi 18 (İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür Yayını, 2001), 7.
- 35 Webster mentions both undercounting of girls and a relative parity of adult men and women in Ankara, Istanbul and İzmir in the 1927 census. He explains that the latter was, by the 1930s, due to work migration 'to İstanbul and İzmir for all kinds of employment (...).' Donald E. Webster, *The Turkey of Atatürk: Social Process in the Turkish Reformation* (Philadelphia: American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1939), 59. His map showing the rate of widowhood is in the public domain: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1927-widowhood-Turkey.png>
- 36 226,261 males and 225,188 females. Serçe, *1923 Senesi İzmir Vilayeti İstatistiği*, vol. I, 35.
- 37 For instance, the 1923 statistic doesn't provide overall mortality, only numbers for people who died of infectious diseases. On the other hand, suicides, which were not covered in 1921, are counted. See Serçe, *1923 Senesi İzmir Vilayeti İstatistiği*, vol. II, 30–31.
- 38 Keyder, *State and class in Turkey: a study in capitalist development*, 93.
- 39 Ibid.. He doesn't discuss grain prices, probably because this crop was no longer exported after 1922.
- 40 Report Greenway, October 12, 1926. FO 371/11360/C11563.
- 41 *Levant Trade Review*, 14:1, 1926, 16.
- 42 Economic and general conditions in Smyrna district, February 27, 1926, FO 371/11548/E 1897.
- 43 In order to compare pre-war and post-war values, the *Levant Trade Review* converted gold liras into paper money, multiplying the amount by factor 8,20. *Levant Trade Review*, 14:1, 1926, 16.
- 44 An American consular report estimated the illiteracy rate in İzmir, including women, at only 25 to 30 percent in 1925. NARA İzmir consular records, box 025, Notes from Smyrna, Enclosure No 1, with letter to High commission, dated June 12, 1925. This is remarkable given that the nation-wide rate of literacy was found to be 7 percent in 1927.
- 45 Mehmet Şevki, 'İyi İş, İyi Para,' in: *Ahenk*, 3 July 1924.
- 46 The wages given in the official statistics of 1922-23 are considerably lower, suggesting a copying mistake: monthly teachers' wages start at 650 kuruş (6,5 Liras). See Serçe, *1923 Senesi İzmir Vilayeti İstatistiği*, vol. I, 109–137. 6500 kuruş or 65 Liras per month (about 2 Lira per day) appear to be more likely. .
- 47 Mehmet Şevki, 'İyi İş, İyi Para,' in: *Ahenk*, 3 July 1924.
- 48 Ibid., 232–33. *Kuruş* was the subunit of the Turkish Lira, with 100 *kuruş* = 1 Lira. 1 *kuruş* was further divided into 40 *para*.
- 49 'Ne Olurdu?' in: *Ahenk*, 2 May 1924.
- 50 'Ne Olacak?' in: *Ahenk*, 13 August 1924.
- 51 Zeynel Besim, 'Amele,' in: *Hizmet*, February 22, 1930, in: Zeki Arıkan, *İzmir Basınından Seçmeler (1923-1945): II. Cilt I. Kitap* (İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 2003), 445–46.

- 52 For a partial discussion of that debate, see Ayhan Aktar, 'Homogenising the Nation, Turkifying the Economy: The Turkish Experience of Population Exchange Reconsidered' in *Crossing the Aegean*. For the party, see Erik J. Zürcher, *Political Opposition in the Early Turkish Republic: The Progressive Republican Party; 1924 - 1925*, Social, economic and political studies of the Middle East 44 (Leiden: Brill, 1991).
- 53 Ebru Boyar and Kate Fleet, *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 158–59.
- 54 On the fixing of prices, see Kütükoğlu, M.S., 'Narkh', in: Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition. For mid-19th century Istanbul, see Mevlüt Camgöz, *Ekmek Buğday ve Şehir* (Istanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2017).
- 55 Fatih Ermiş, *A History of Ottoman Economic Thought: Developments before the Nineteenth Century*, Routledge history of economic thought 12 (London: Routledge, 2014), 171.
- 56 See Donald Quataert, 'The Economic Climate of the 'Young Turk Revolution' in 1908,' *Journal of Modern History* 51, no. 3 (1979).
- 57 Murat Koraltürk, 'Milli İktisat, Ekonominin Türkleştirilmesi ve İzmir İktisat Kongresi,' *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 182 (2009).
- 58 Nadir Özbek, 'Kemalist Rejim ve Popülizm Sınırları: Büyük Buhran ve Buğday Alım Politikaları,' *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 96 (2003).
- 59 Having been founded in May 1923, *Türk Sesi* (The Turkish Voice) appears to have been a hardcore nationalist, loudmouthed, and relatively shortlived paper. A piece published on the occasion of its first (and last) anniversary contains the self-description 'jealously, but not excessively nationalist.' Zeki Arıkan, *İzmir Basınından Seçmeler (1923–1938): II. Cilt II. Kitap*, Kent kitaplığı dizisi 58 (İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 2008), 14. Agitation against the city's Jewish population is more prominent here than in other papers of the time.
- 60 Belediye icraatında asabet ediyorsa halkın ekmeğe ihtiyacı temin için cezri bir surette hareket etmelidir. Fırıncılar ekmeğe çıkarmak istemiyorlarsa belediye emval-i metruke fırınlarına vaz'iyet etmeli ve halkın ekmeğini temin eylemelidir. Bu mesele etrafında cihet-i askeriyenin de meşgul olmasını temenni ederiz. 'Vilayet Haberler: Ekmek Me-selesi,' *Türk Sesi*, 15 August 1923, 2.
- 61 'FIGS', summer 1923. NARA, İzmir consular records, box 018, 1923.
- 62 Serçe, *1923 Senesi İzmir Vilayeti İstatistiği*, vol. II, 232.
- 63 For an excellent discussion of the railroad strike, including the list of workers' demands, see Erkan Serçe, '1923 İzmir-Aydın Demiryolu Grevi: Siyasal İktidar, Sermaye ve İşçi Sınıfı Üçgeni Üzerine Bir Deneme,' *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 66 (1995).
- 64 Ibid., 98.
- 65 *Ahenk* had been founded in 1894. An American report estimated the daily circulation in 1925 at 1000 copies in İzmir and 500 in the surrounding provinces and described its political character as 'conservative in all respects and in many ways (...) colorless.' NARA, Smyrna Consulate Records, Vol. 025, Notes from Smyrna, Enclosure No 1, with letter to High commission, dated June 12, 1925.
- 66 'Tire'de belediyenin faaliyeti: halka ucuz ekmeğe yedirmek için bir numune fırını açıldı,' *Ahenk*, 21 May 1924.
- 67 'Bir haftaya kadar ekmeğe ucuzlayacaktır,' in: *Ahenk*, July 1, 1924.
- 68 *Seda-yı Hakk*, 3 August 1924. According to a US American consular report, *Seda-yı Hakk* ('The Voice of Reason/God') was the most influential paper published in İzmir by 1925, selling 5000 copies daily. The paper was closed down following the February 1925 crackdown on the opposition. Zeki Arıkan, *İzmir Basınından Seçmeler (1923-1945): II. Cilt I. Kitap* (İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 2003), 22–23.
- 69 *Seda-yı Hakk*, 15 August 1924. **See attached jpeg file.**
- 70 This assumption (2 okka of bread per day for a family of four) is based on two sources. First, according to a present-day Turkish dietary website, 1,2 kilo (i.e., one okka) of white bread contain about 3000 calories, which may have been complemented with olives, or, if affordable, cheese etc. Second, (Greek) POWs in Turkey received 1 kilo of bread per day, along with some dried legumes, potatoes and other foodstuffs in 1921. A German(?) doctor found this ration to be more than sufficient. 'Pontus Hristiyanları, Anadolu'daki Yunan esirleri ve Türk mültecilerinin durumlarına dair Dr. A. Roehrich tarafından hazırlanan raporun sureti.' BOA HR.İM 60/28, March 3, 1922. (Thanks to XXX)
- 71 Rent was not an issue: During the first years of the republic, state servants in İzmir were often allowed to live in abandoned houses (usually those owned by Greek citizens) for free. See Morack, *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and Nation-Building in Turkey, 1921-1945*, 285–86.
- 72 'Harab Oluyoruz (Delilerin Miktarı),' in: *Ahenk*, September 24, 1924.
- 73 'Ekmek Derdi,' in: *Anadolu*, February 18, 1925, in: Arıkan, *İzmir Basınından Seçmeler (1923-1945)*, 130–31.
- 74 1 kuruş was subdivided into 40 para, so 20 para was 0,5 kuruş.
- 75 'Ekmek Derdi.' Capitalization (probably representing bold print in the original text) taken from Arıkan.
- 76 *Seda-yı Hakk*, 23 and 24 February 1925.
- 77 Özbek, 'Kemalist Rejim ve Popülizm Sınırları: Büyük Buhran ve Buğday Alım Politikaları': 221.

-
- 78 According to the monthly reports of the Ionian Bank in Istanbul published in the *Levant Trade Review*, vol 11, no 9 (1923) – vol. 12 no. 9 (1925). Available online at <http://www.dlir.org/eresources/93-american-board-periodical-collection/205-the-levant-trade-review.html>.
- 79 'Ekmek Meselesi,' in: *Yanık Yurt/Hizmet*, February 12, 1926.
- 80 Brief information respecting certain political matters. From Consul Samuel W. Honaker. American consulate Smyrna, Turkey, January 7, 1926, pp. 10-11. To U.S. High Commission, Constantinople. NARA, Smyrna consulate, Box 029, 1926.
- 81 CA 272...12.51.114.23., January 31, 1927. The case illustrates how short of cash (and skilled, hence expensive, labor) the government was. It also seems possible that, just as in the case of the other mill, a local miller was successfully trying to get a competing mill off the market. In their correspondence, neither the Ministry of Finance nor that of Interior Affairs mentioned the possibility to run the mill as public property.
- 82 See Quataert, 'The Economic Climate of the "Young Turk Revolution" in 1908': 1156.
- 83 See *ibid.*, 1157.
- 84 Consul-General Edmonds to Lindsay, Smyrna, October 31, 1924. FO 371/10228/E 9733.
- 85 M.B. Thom, Mardin, August 16, 1915, to Peet, ABC bh. Cited in: Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Der verpasste Friede: Mission, Ethnie und Staat in den Ostprovinzen der Türkei 1839 - 1938* (Zürich: Chronos, 2000), 336.
- 86 According to the monthly reports of the Ionian Bank in Istanbul published in the *Levant Trade Review*, vol 10, no 12 (1922) – vol. 12 no. 9 (1925).
- 87 LTR February, March, April mention the duty, which was 95 kuruş per 100 kilos, a fifthfold increase to the previous one.
- 88 LTR vol 10, no. 10, report on September 1923.
- 89 See Jerry Markham, *A Financial History of the United States: From J.P. Morgan to the Institutional Investor* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2002), 103.
- 90 Mehmet Şevki, 'Çaresine Bakalım,' in: *Ahenk*, 7 December/Kanunuevvel 1924.
- 91 Mehmet Şevki, 'Çaresine Bakalım,' in: *Ahenk*, 7 December/Kanunuevvel 1924.
- 92 M. Şevki, 'Nasıl Çalışmalıyız?' in: *Ahenk*, 19 May 1926. The intermediaries, in turn, could put their money to use by investing in urban infrastructure [thus replacing foreign capital]. The cooperative idea was probably inspired by a report on economic life in British Mandate Palestine ('New Life in the Jewish Homeland') that *Ahenk* had published the previous day: 'Musevi Vatanında Yeni Hayat,' in: *Ahenk* 18 May 1926.
- 93 See Onur İnal, 'Fruits of Empire: Figs, Raisins, and Transformation of Western Anatolia in the Late Nineteenth Century,' *Environment and History*, (forthcoming) (2017).
- 94 Emphasis mine. *Levant Trade Review* vol 12, no 5, May 1924, 220.
- 95 Literally: if we tend to them, they shall be vineyards, if we don't, they shall be rocks. Çiftçi Necati, 'Emval-i metruke bağlar ne olacak?' in: *Türk Sesi*, March 14, 1924.
- 96 Çiftçi Necati, 'Bağlar Sökülüyor,' in: *Türk Sesi*, 28 September 1923.
- 97 'Satmadım duruyor.' (I haven't sold, it's still there). This may either be a reference to him not selling the produce, waiting for prices to rise, or to the vineyard waiting to be tended to again.
- 98 'Bağcılığın İflası,' in: *Türk Sesi*, 10 October 1923.