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## Summary :

The cholera epidemic which afflicted Smyrna in 1854 came from Marseilles. In order to deal with it the council of the elders took various additional measures.

## Date

July-November 1854

## Geographical Location

Smyrna, kaza of Smyrna, sancak of Smyrna, vilayet of Aydın

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### 1. Appearance and spread of the epidemic

In early June of 1854 an epidemic of cholera broke out in Smyrna, which lasted until the end of November of the same year. The epidemic came from Marseilles.

The first cases appeared in the military prison of the lazaretto outside Smyrna. Most of the patients were male; until the 15th July it is reported that 10 people had died.

The epidemic reached its peak in the beginning of August. Most of the cases were amongst the Orthodox. The majority of the inhabitants left the city and headed for the nearby villages and islands. More than 150 people died in Smyrna.[1] The epidemic mostly afflicted people over 50 years old. After the 8th October the inhabitants gradually returned to the city, but cases were documented even in the beginning of November.

### 2. Measures against the epidemic

To face the epidemic the dimogerontia (council of elders) of Smyrna addressed every doctor of the Orthodox community and made sure they offered free care to the patients. To deal with the epidemic more effectively the areas where Orthodox dwelled were divided into ten peripheries. One or two doctors were appointed in each of them. For the information of the inhabitants of the city an article[2] was published in the Greek newspaper *Amaltheia*, which listed ways to protect from the disease.

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1. Solomonidis reports that the victims of the cholera reached the number of 172 people, out of which 28 were Muslim, 81 Greek-Orthodox, 49 Jews and 12 Europeans. *Amaltheia* newspaper informs us that only 154 people died. See Σολομωνίδης, Χ., *Η ιατρική στη Σμύρνη: Ασκληπιεία, σχολές, το γραικικό νοσοκομείο, επιδημίες, γητείες, γιατροσόφια, γιατροί, φαρμακεία* (Athens 1955), p. 65; *Η Αμάλθεια* (Smyrna, 9th July-15th November 1854).

2. See *Η Αμάλθεια* (Smyrna, 25th July 1854).

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## Bibliography :

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## Glossary :

dimogerontia

Communal authority consisting of the elected community officials, known as *archontes* (potentates), *proestoi* (notables), *epitropoi* (wardens), *dimogerontes* or simply *gerontes* (elders).

## Sources

*Η Αμάλθεια* (Smyrna, July 9th-November 15th 1854).