



Summary :

A cholera epidemic which spread from Constantinople (Istanbul) to the region of Smyrna and caused panic in the city in 1848.

Date

July-October 1848

Geographical Location

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

1. Spread of the epidemic

The cholera epidemic initially came from [Trebizond](#), from where it passed to Istanbul ([Constantinople](#)). Then it appeared at Çeşme from a military unit which had come from Constantinople on 1st June 1848; 44 soldiers died in their camp. From [Çeşme](#) it gradually reached many villages of the area of [Smyrna](#). Jewish families from Çeşme moved to Bunarbaşı (today Pınarbaşı), a village near Smyrna, from where the epidemic spread into the city. By the beginning of July the cholera had reached [Kırkağaç](#).

2. The epidemic in Smyrna

In Smyrna the epidemic appeared on 12th July 1848 and lasted until 6th October of the same year. Until the 3rd September the epidemic was at its peak. From the 3rd until the 18th of September its cases were sporadic. Approximately 2,000 people died in Smyrna,¹ mainly women. From the Christian quarters, those of St Dimitrios and St Aikaterini were more afflicted by the epidemic, since they had narrow streets traversed by streams of filthy water and low houses which were not well ventilated. The greatest part of the inhabitants found refuge in the nearby villages and islands.

1. Solomonidis reports that the cholera's victims were 1,200 Ottomans (i.e. Muslims), 702 Greek Orthodox, 295 Jews, 125 Europeans and 105 Armenians. See Σολομωνίδης, Χ., *Η ιατρική στη Σμύρνη: Ασκληπιεία, σχολές, το γραϊκικό νοσοκομείο, επιδημίες, γητείες, γιατροσόφια, γιατροί, φαρμακεία* (Athens 1955), p. 64. Tsakiroglou gives the following numbers concerning the victims: Muslims 900, Orthodox 600, Armenians 40, Catholics 160, Jews 250, in total 1.950. He does not mention the Europeans as a separate category. See Τσακίρογλου, Μ., *Χρονικόν της εν Σμύρνη χολερικής επιδημίας* (Smyrna 1893), p. 15.

Bibliography :

Σολομωνίδης Χ., *Η ιατρική στη Σμύρνη. Ασκληπιεία, σχολές, το γραϊκικό νοσοκομείο, επιδημίες, γητείες, γιατροσόφια, γιατροί, φαρμακεία*, Αθήνα 1955

Τσακίρογλου Μ., *Χρονικόν της εν Σμύρνη χολερικής επιδημίας*, Σμύρνη 1893



Quotations

Cholera epidemic in the region of Smyrna, early August 1848

«Φόβος, πανικός ακολουθεί διώκων εκ της πόλεως εις τα παρακείμενα χωριά και τας νήσους μέγα μέρος των κατοίκων της Σμύρνης. Συνοικίαι τινές έμειναν αληθώς κεναί και παντάπασιν έρημοι. Εάν παραβάλωμεν τον ως έγγιστα αριθμόν των από χολέρας απίστευτον ερημίαν των οδών, την οποίαν παρατηρήσαμεν οι μείναντες, οφείλομεν να ομολογήσωμεν ότι τρόμος, μη ανάλογος προς την εκ της νόσου γενομένην θραύσιν, μηδέ προς την άλλοτε υπό των Σμυρναίων επιδειχθείσαν γενναιότητα, εκυρίευσε μέγα μέρος του πληθυσμού».

Σολομωνίδης, Χ., *Η ιατρική στη Σμύρνη. Ασκληπιεία, σχολές, το γραιοικό νοσοκομείο, επιδημίες, γητείες, γιατροσόφια, γιατροί, φαρμακεία* (Athens 1955), p. 64.