**FIKRET ADANIR**

*[Greeks in Foça when he was young]*

**00.20 –** My name is Fikret Adanır and I was born in Foça and I come from a family which entered the town in 192, they came here in 1924 **– 00:42**

**01:05–** In the 1950s I became politically interested quite early and regularly read papers and so I paid attention to developments in the town. For example I had contacts with the mayor of the town and I experienced at that time Greek fishermen, who used to come at that time not far away from the Turkish coast and they would be arrested and they would spend standard prison term was one month **–1:46**

**01:53 –**..five-six people usually they would be in prison, usually, and one person would not be in the prison, he would run around, make shopping for them and organize cooking **– 02:03**

**02:13 –** and there I became aware for the first time that this young Greek boy running around could speak Greek with people, with women, many people in Foça in the streets spoke Greek with this boy and they liked him and he was very popular in the town and I didn’t understand first **– 02:38**

*[His father’s village in Greece]*

**03:26 –** In 1988, 1988, I took my father to Greece for the first time **–03:38**

**05:10 –** The village my father was born in, ~~Osmanlılı, no, Bostancılı, Osmanlılı is another village, Bostancılı, Bostancı but~~ Bostancılı. This is a typical name of Yoruk. **(05:28)**

**06:10 –**  
So, we’ll go there, I found out the Greek name it is Képia or Kepía [Κηπία], the Greek name of the town Bostancılı **–06:20**

**07:22**

We came and sat in the coffee house, young Greeks are looking at us in a very unfriendly manner. I’d learnt 2 or 3 Greek sentences in Greek, prepared myself and I said “Do you have here elderly people, we would like to see elderly people” but they didn’t answer me and I thought they didn’t understand me **(07:49)**

**07:54** As we were sitting, thinking we should probably leave, it won’t work, suddenly we see a big group, 10-15 people, women and men, all elderly people, they are coming and shouting all Turkish they are shouting, coming this way and we got up and it turned out to be that these people were all from Istanbul but a village which remained by chance just outside of the urban metropolitan area and for that reason they had to leave for Greece, whereas Istanbul Greeks could remain. And they were all handicrafts in the city, they were not peasants. They came to this village and this village had only tobacco growing nothing else and they hadn’t seen tobacco or worked in tobacco fields.

**09:00–** So they are supposed to live – they didn’t have any housing- in the Turkish families’ houses for one year. And they’re supposed to learn how to practice tobacco growing (9:17) And the relationship was apparently very good because my mother comes from a different village **(09:30)** ~~it is also there, it’s called Eremli, I don’t remember the Greek name I don’t have it in my mind~~ **(09:42)** and she remembered that a Greek woman (she was a baby my mother) playing with her and throwing her up and holding her and saying Greek words, something like that, my mother remembered and repeated those things to me, what that woman said, playing with her. **–10:05**

**10:16–**

For me it was very surprising because the people all spoke Turkish with us **­–10:25**

**11:51–**

And we went to the next village, my mother’s village, and I sat with the son of one of the persons, the son was my age. And that son spoke with me perfect Turkish **(12:10)**

**12:24–**

To make it short, these people were Turkish -speaking Greeks coming from Istanbul, the village was called Gümüşköy, I never could find it around Istanbul, and they as Greeks and having also now 1988, did they have EU already?, no, but they were economically better off because they had all travelled to Turkey and they didn’t need visa for Turkey. These people had been everywhere around here and very interesting talks we had with them about the situation and we thought all Greeks were nationalists in the past and I realised only the teachers and the officers are nationalist. **(13:13)**

And the real people, and my father was very surprised because the people were very anti-nationalist, and my father was nationalist, but he came up and he said he was no longer nationalist after meeting this people there. **­–13:32**

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**16:36 –**

In Foça the people part of them came from Kavala area, Macedonia, but many came from Limni, the island of Limnos, we have the largest group, and then smaller group, Lesbos, we have some people from Rhodes here, we have even from Cyprus some people who came here really early, settled here **(17:11)** and I started to show interest to what kind of people these are and tried to learn among my school friends **(17:22)**

**17:58–**

Then slowly I discovered that between the Muslims coming from Macedonia and Muslims coming from the islands there was difference in ethnicity. For example they would not intermarry. **(18:18)**

**19:23–**

Then I discovered that the people spoke good Greek and then I discovered that the Cretan Muslims here actually were not Turks. They were Greeks. They were Muslim Greeks. And that’s why Greek was their mother tongue. **(19:48)** And these things became clear to me actually in a retrospective view **(19:59)**

**(20:13)** My memory now, I am telling about my childhood memories, I already was aware of this things but I couldn’t explain, I didn’t think that Cretans were Greeks, that I learnt afterwards, but at that time I was surprised that they spoke among themselves Greek. (20:32)

**20:35–**

Later on, the idea came up, I should try to ask my elderly people what they knew, how they came, when they were born, and I discovered they didn’t know any of them when they were really born. **(20:57)**

**22:33 –** So this… I discovered all these people coming from Greece, these Turks, the Kavala people I know, they really did not know anything about their homeland. **(22:48)**

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**27:27 –**

I am Fikret Adanır, I am by profession a history professor, I am at the moment Emeritus professor, I have taught in Germany, university of Bochum, after I retired I came to Istanbul and taught at Sabancı University for a while **(27:54)**

**28:13** So I was born here in this town, Foça, so I am at home here, I am not just tourist or visiting people

**29:09 –**

They came here and legally, on the paper, they were not going to get distributed land here and houses in Foça. OK? Because these were the Greek population of Foça had left or kicked out but legally now exchanged by of course they already in 1914 started the process and this was after the war, some came (back) and Venizelos wanted to make this Foça again a Greek town but very soon again the Turkish Nationalist movement kicked them all out, so their housing was here to be distributed. **(30:07)**

**30:18 –**

Some people, big shots, in the society already at home in Macedonia they got the best last and best houses here. And my grandmother, who doesn’t know how to write her name and doesn’t hear and they didn’t get anything, my parents didn’t have any house even. **(30:45)**

**HAVE YOU COME ACROSS THE 1914 FORCED DISPLACEMENTS IN YOUR RESEARCH?**

**32:19–**

I think according to Ottoman documents in 1912 about 12,000 people living in Foça, more than 7,000 were Greeks, the rest were Muslims but there were Jews, there were synagogues, there was a Russian community and other foreigners as well **(32:51)** because it was an important port, commercial port **(32:56)**

**33:25–**

I only see on national holidays, one of the important days is the 11th of September, that is the day the Turks liberated Foça, so to speak, this is 1922. Okay? And that day not Turks of Macedonia, Turks of the islands were in the foreground, but local residents, they had experienced this, the other’s hadn’t experienced it, ok? So, these people were shouting and holding talks, how they kicked the enemy into the water and how they suffered and so on and so forth. Okay? SO that was something I learnt as a child the first idea of Greek residents of Foça, that they took [the town] from the Greeks **(34:30)**

Second thing of course we could see the houses, people living in the door you’ll see Greek letter written there or crosses so we knew we were living in houses in which the Christians lived before.**(34:45)**

**34:50–** But later, as a historian, when I started to study Young Turk history, late Ottoman history, Hamidian era, there I discovered of course, I was very much interested to find in the archives documents about Foça **(35:10)**

**36:34–**

And then I discovered this family, Georges family, this Levantine family came to Foça and I discovered these people are not tourists, they are living here and so I understood there were Levantine families here and all this forced me to ask questions about the population, the composition of the population and their historical background. **(37:10)**

**39:35**

I looked in old maps, I found British maps and old maps the village names. For example Bagarasi, they say Vallerias or something like that, It’s a Greek name, they made something out of that. Some villages were Turkish villages but most of them, Greek names were Turkified in a way **(40:03)**

**40:13–**

What happened in 1914 only I came across when I started to learn something about Balkan Wars, what happened after Balkan Wars, the *muhacir*, that is Muslim Refugees came, where they settled, and there was a figure, Celal Bayar, he was president of Turkey, but he played an important role as a young man, he was the local chief of the Union and Progress in Izmir area and what role he played (40:47), and Talat Pasha and so on, I come to learn this and that these people had been living in tents outside and that they were shown Greek housing they should occupy or settle in or so on, reali conflict started. (41:15) But still not 1914 (41:17)

**41:17–**

1914 first time I learned about it I found this article published by Philip Sartiaux in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, it was published there (41:34), and that I read and then a Norwegian fellow wrote an article, one of the earliest articles about Foça. Then I understood this early phase. (41:51)

*[then he knew the work of Engin Berber, who never spoke of 1914/ then he worked with his student Dilek Güven in Bochum on a project about the political influence of refugees in Greece and Turkey & she wrote her 5/6 September Events PhD with him / then in 2000 he joined Halil Berktay and Stefanos Gerasimos in Paris for a project in Athens, he met Sia Anagnostopoulou and he already knew Christina Koulouri from Thessaloniki and she asked him to write about the history of Izmir and area. Then Emre did his MA in Sabanci on the Ottoman working class and socialism and I suggested to him to work on the working class in Foça.]*

**1919**

**47:31 –**

This 1919 occupation is of course a really important date in the history of Turkish nationalism but there is a heroic background to it, a fictive nationalism heroism, the whole Anatolian Muslims are uniting in the front against the Greek occupying army. I discovered that in reality the Muslims’ attitude toward the Greek occupation forces, in the beginning they didn’t like it because of great mistakes the Greek administration made but immediately after Stergiadis became a governor general in Izmir, he was a Cretan, and he went to Cretan Muslim immigrants here and tried to cooperate with them and very successfully he did. (48:40) And also the Muslim bourgeoisie he won over very easily, esp. since the govt of the Sultan in Istanbul was also against the Kemalist movement so the Muslims could easily collaborate with the Greek govt. **(49:02)**

So this was a very interesting topic for me and I tried to find a student even in Sabanci U to write a doctoral dissertation on this topic. Of course I couldn’t find anybody and I say to myself today Good that nobody wrote because that person wouldn’t get any job in Turkey. It would be a Muslim collaboration with the Greek occupying forces, in that aspect I don’t see any real doctoral dissertation **(49:37)**

*[Then he talks about his interest in the early workers’ movement in Foça]*

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**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

**55:07–**

The Balkan Wars ended with a military debacle for the Ottoman Empire and one of the issue for the Young Turk regime was who would own the Aegean islands **(55:27)** This islands’ question remained very important in their minds, it was the key issue, because they thought one couldn’t defend Izmir and the Dardanelles if you couldn’t control these very close-by islands. **(55:46)**

Now the islands of course population-wise they were majority-wise Greek ethnically, so Young Turks knew it. **(56:00)** But Western Thrace, which was becoming Greek, was ethnically Turkish. And nobody said that ethnic majority Turkish cannot go to Greece, it became Greek. Similarly in the whole of Macedonia, Greek ethnicity was not the majority. So the Young Turks argued this way: they said economically these islands depended on the mainland, they complement the mainland, for that reason, ethnically they may be Greek, but we have Greeks in Istanbul, in Anatolia, in Cappadocia, everywhere, in the Black Sea, so what? Let the islands be Greek, it is no argument that they should be part of Greece. **(57:04)**

They were ready to go to war for that and there were negotiations before the outbreak of WWI for that, between the Venizelos govt and the Young Turks. **(57:26)**

And at that time already, and to my knowledge first by Venizelos, there was a suggestion to make a population exchange. (57:37) This population exchange idea was not a new idea, it was already in 1913 Bulgarians and Turks had made this treaty of population exchange along the border, a belt of 50 kms both sides of the border, but in reality the exchanged fiction: the populations had already been deported. The Bulgarians had deported the Muslims, the Turks had deported the Bulgarians, but they needed an exchange treaty to legalise the territorial ownership issues**.(58:27)**

**59:02 –**

There was another issue for the Young Turks. A bigger issue, a national issue. For the first time they were concerned with Anatolia. It was going to be no longer to be an Ottoman Empire, it was going to be a nation-state. Because only a nation-state was going to be able to survive in the future. Empires had finished their time. **(59:34)**

**59:41 –**

But Anatolia was still to a high percentage non-Muslim and the Muslims did not think in national terms, they were not Turks for example. They were Çerkez, they were Albanians, they were Kurds, Arabs and so on. So they had to create a Turkish national conscience. So this is an ideological aspect without which we cannot understand what happened here. **(01:00:10)**

**01:00:18 –**

We are talking about these events, June 1914, in the same month, the Great War started so to speak, big crisis everywhere. So this is a time that, actually in the mind of Young Turk leadership is to resort to radical means to solve the national issue, in my opinion, because even in what happened in 1915 in the Armenian issue, for example, the Armenian genocide issue, you cannot understand without considering this earlier history, without considering what happened in the Aegean area, not only in Foça, in the Aegean area. **(01:01:18)**

**01:01:19 –**

So, we know that in 1914 there were real threats against the local Greek communities, like rumours that something will happen to them. Then the community leaders would go to the Ottoman administrators, governors and say “we hear this kind of rumours, something will happen against us, massacres or attack or whatnot and for that reason we need protection.” But the authorities then, as if all planned, answered like “we’ll do whatever we can” but didn’t give a guarantee. So this was language that was not meant to soothe the local fears but, so to speak, would like them to leave. **(01:02:27)**

**01:02:50 –**

Foça is in that context, what happened in Foça is just some traditional time of bandits entering on horse, riding their horses, coming to town, plundering shops and shooting in the air and shooting at the people, killing some people and so on, creating chaos and threatening people so that the people would leave at the time. **(01:03:24)** Anyhow, there are numbers like 100,000 or so from the Aegean coastal areas left in 1914. **(01:03:34)**

**01:03:59 –**

The war comes. Under war conditions now, immediately, Ottomans enter the war in the fall of 1914 but Greece is neutral. Now the King is pro-German and Germany is an Ottoman ally so the Greek islands issue is shelved. And Germans are telling the Turks that “Greece will be probably on our side during the war so you cannot now bring up the islands’ question.” **(01:04:47)**

That way now the attitude toward the Greek population in Western Anatolia is ambivalent: on one hand, if it comes to a war with Greece, then these people here are a so- called 5th column; on the other hand, if we do anything to them then we cause Greece (esp. in the context of the Dardanelles campaign), force Greece to enter the war on the side of the Entente, that would be something wished by the regime. **(01:05:34)** That’s why real violence against the Greek population in Western Anatolia, you don’t see much. But **(01:05:47)** as the Venizelos’ movement starts in Greece and there is an opposition to the King and the chances that probably Entente will get the upper hand in Greek politics, they start to deport Greek population into the interior. This is a forced deportation. But this is wartime and you have such deportations constantly and everywhere. **(01:06:20)**

**01:06:32 –**

So that means that the Greek population is pulled in the interior, some already had left, but the city of Izmir for example, the Greeks are still there, it’s not empty the Greeks are still there. But when Greece enters the war, in the Salonika front, after the Dardanelles campaign, they are fighting against the Bulgarian army mostly, not the Ottomans, but the situation is, since the Ottomans are losing the war and Entente winning the war, the situation gets more critical. **(01:07:21)**

**1:09:05 –**

With that chance, gaining a foothold, an important foothold in Ionia so to speak, and now all those Greeks, how many of them they were? I don’t know and the sources cannot tell you exactly, several hundred thousand I can imagine, they now came back to their area here.**(01:09:32)**

When they came back to Foça, Foça was partly destroyed. By whom? By the British. We have Ingiliz Burnu, the cap [promontory] and there apparently the British landed forces in the port, you can see it here, you can visit the area, and from there they bombed Foça and apparently destroyed the centre of the town this Kale Iç area **(01:10:13)** and the British also occupied this Long Island, the island that controls entry into the guld of Izmir, already during the war the British nave came and occupied the area **(01:10:28)**

So when the Greeks are going to come and land in Izmir in 1919, the Greek population movement toward Asia Minor took momentum. **(01:10:43)** And Venizelos was very muc interested that anybody who had some connection here would come back here, okay? **(01:10:51)**

*[Then he talks about the first wave of Young Turks leaving, the second wave coming under Mustafa Kemal, how Kemal was against his pro-German predecessors in the CUP, but he needed the support of the first wave cadres who were still running Anatolia when he won, that’s why the bureaucrats in 1922 refused to have absolutely any Greek civilians left in the area. Not all Greeks wanted to leave. The Karaburun Greeks were not even aware they were supposed to leave, Greek warships came and run up to the villages and said, you must leave; but there was also fear: if they didn’t leave willingly militias would attack them and kill them. This is how the Asia Minor Expedition ends and why the chances of the Greek population staying here were nil. (01:15:04)]*

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**KNOWLEDGE OF 1914**

**01:15:44 –**

MY father came here as a child, he was 9 years old probably, 1915-to 24, 9 years old. So he didn’t have any idea what had happened here. He knew there was a war, that’s why they were compelled to leave, and Greeks had been compelled to leave Asian Minor because they had lived in the same house in Macedonia already with the Greeks, he had that idea. But he wouldn’t have known exactly when the Greeks left here. **(01:16:27)** But especially the 1914 events are not known much in this local population, they didn’t know it at all. They learnt it, they learnt it when our generation, Emre’s generation of people started to talk about it, to publish about it. For example this book, Harris’ book, in photocopied version went hand to hand, many people read it in the town. **(01:17:03)**

**01:17:16 –**

Even people who are not historically interested they got interested on the topic. [So we could talk about it with everyone here and people would be very much interested.] **(01:17:28)**

**\* 01:18:42 –**

Reaction is remarkable, then you understand also (that the) Turkish population is not really nationalist. Again in Turkey there are nationalists, mostly teachers and officers and so on, but the Turkish population is not really nationalist. (01:18:59) I was myself surprised actually how the people showed empathy and understanding. We had in 1994 for example the meeting here in Foça and I was really surprised, 3 full days they had a really, I don’t know how they managed it, on TV channels uninterruptedly shown the discussions here in Foça, but you could see it only in Foça. Some kind of electricians managed it.**(01:19:39)**  ~~And my mother, who couldn’t read and write, she was watching all the time the discussions, they were very open, Hercule Millas was talking and Greeks were talking from Cyprus and so on, talking about Foça what happened to Foça and everything.~~ (01:20:05)

**01:20:05 –**

And people were very much interested. And when I took a walk through the town I noticed people who did not know me saying “oh this fellow who’s passing by we saw him today he was talking”. So my discussion contributions, people in coffee houses they knew. **(01:20:28)**

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**[Back to personal story]**

**01:17:28 –** We just knew that people who owned the houses here before us they were living in Greece still. **(01:17:40)**

In 1950s when I was a child, with my own eyes I saw Greek women coming to Foça as a tourist, coming to the houses and starting to cry. That was the house in which they were born. And we knew why they were crying. But we imagined it was 1922. We didn’t know that it was 1914 that Greeks had to leave. And in our school books they didn’t write about it at all. But 1922 they write about, we know about it. **(01:18:23)**

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**01:23:16 –**

We see that on the popular level, people understand the problems involved in such movements because they’re all trying to discover where we come from. Every young person today in Turkey [is] trying to discover his or her roots. Am I a Turk? Am I a Kurd? Am I, I descend from Caucasian background? And so on. So under these conditions people understand the problems involved with the Greeks who suffered here in Asia Minor, okay? But it wasn’t like that always. **(01:24:08)**