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Embassy of Greece in Moscow

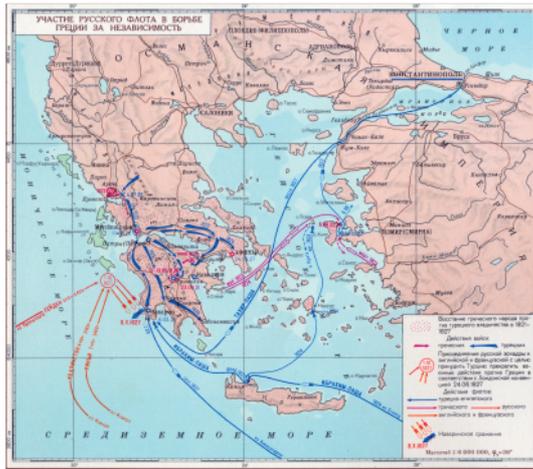
Russian State Archive of the Navy

The Battle of *N*avarino



200 years since the beginning
of the Greek war for Independence



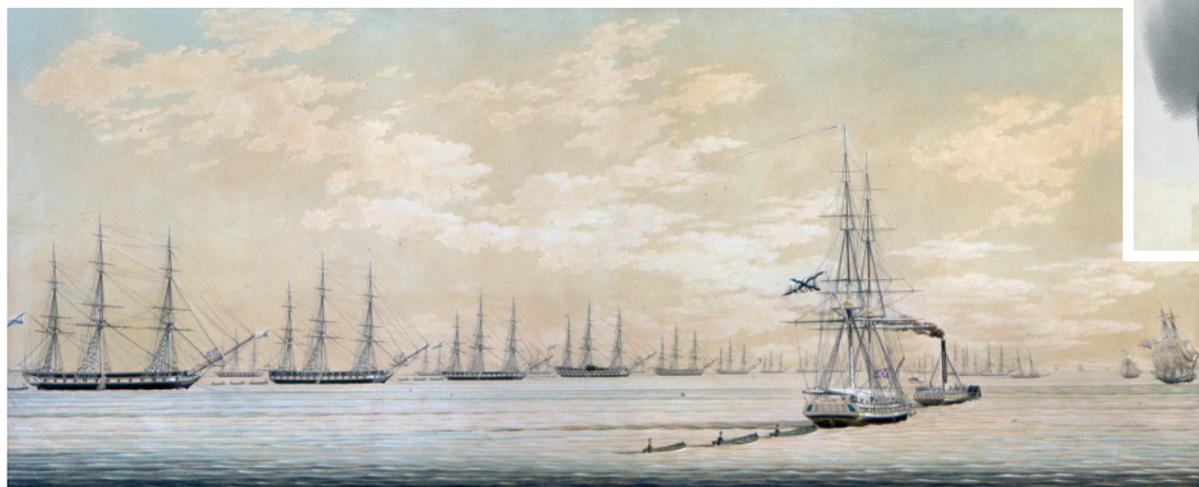


Participation of the Russian Navy in the Greek struggle for independence

From the middle of the XV century, Greece was part of the Ottoman Empire where it was under severe economic and national oppression. The Ottoman yoke caused many Greek uprisings. The national liberation struggle escalated in the 1820s.

In March 1821, the Greeks revolted in Morea (Peloponnese), Epirus and the islands. They won a number of victories over the Ottomans during the period 1821-1822.

The Greek navy also played a key role in the struggle, ensuring the protection of the rebel areas from the sea and preventing the weapon supply and reinforcements of the Ottoman army. Greek ships, although smaller in number and in size, dominated the Aegean, as they were faster and their crews more experienced. Spetses, Psara, Hydra and other islands played a very important role. There were a number of distinguished fighters in the naval battles such as Andreas Miaoulis, Konstantinos Kanaris, Lasarina Bouboulina and many others.



Samuel Shiflyar
Emperor Nicholas I inspecting the squadron of Admiral D. N. Senyavin June 10, 1827
Russia, 1829



Robert Brandard,
based on the drawing by J. Stanfield
Portsmouth Harbour
USA, 1875

The Sultan Mahmud II seeking to suppress the uprising, concluded an agreement with the Egyptian ruler Muhammad Ali to join forces against the Greek national liberation movement in July 1824.



In the summer of 1824, the Egyptian fleet entered the Aegean Sea and occupied the island of Crete. In February 1825

the Egyptian troops took Navarino and launched a brutal retaliation against the revolutionaries. By mid-1827, all the Greek territory North of the Corinth Canal was captured by Turkish-Egyptian forces.



Viktor Bobrov, a copy of the painting by Egor Botman
Admiral van Heiden
(1772-1850)
Russia, 1909



Memorial plate from the 44-gun frigate Constantine
Russia, 1823



Octant
Great Britain, 1803



L. D. Blinov
The Battle of Navarino
Russia, 1888

In the previous period, the Russian fleet had won a series of victories, in the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea. What are the reasons that persuaded the Russian government to again send its fleet to the Aegean, as it had done in 1769 and 1805 and to join forces with Britain and France?

The heroic struggle of the Greek people for independence aroused the support of France, Britain and Russia (the Philhellenic movement). On March 23, 1826, in St Petersburg, the Anglo-Russian Protocol was signed which aimed to end the Greek-Ottoman conflict. France soon acceded to this Protocol, but the proposal was rejected by the Ottomans.

In view of an independent action by Russia to defend Greece and strengthen its influence in the Balkans, Britain and France decided to conclude a tripartite treaty with Russia to resolve the Greek-



Unknown artist
Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Codrington (1770-1851)
Russia, 1820s



P-Ph. Ducarme
Admiral Henri Gauthier, comte de Rigny (1783-1835)
France, 1820s



Unknown artist
The Battle of Navarino, 20 October 1827
Russia, second half of the 19th century

Ottoman conflict. On July 6, 1827, Britain, France and Russia signed the Treaty of London, which aimed to jointly settle the Greek-Turkish relations.

A secret article of the Treaty was adopted at the insistence of Russia, which allowed for armed intervention of the three powers, in the event that the Ottomans refused to cease hostilities against the Greeks. Due to the latter's refusal to comply with the Allies demand and grant autonomy to the Greeks, the Allies decided to send their squadrons to enforce an end to the conflict.

The squadrons of the Allied Powers were sent to the Mediterranean to prevent the transfer of Turkish-Egyptian troops and weapons to Greece and the Aegean.

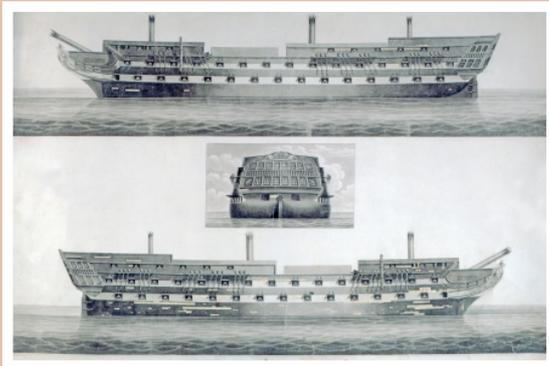
The Russian squadron under the command of Rear Admiral L. P. Heyden approached Navarino on October 1, 1827.

Learning that the Ottomans had rejected the ultimatum of the Allies, Heyden called for an urgent meeting of the united squadron. At the insistence of the Russian side, the flagships who took part in the military council agreed to sail to Navarino Bay. The three Allied Fleets agreed "to destroy the Turkish Fleet if even one shot was fired at the Allied ships".

At 11 o'clock on October the 8th, 1827, the Allied squadron began to enter the Navarino Bay.



Collar of an officer's naval uniform of the first half of the 19th century



Unknown artist
The damaged Azov ship (74-gun) obtained during the Battle of Navarino
Russia, second quarter of 19th century

By 2 o'clock the British and French squadrons had entered the bay and anchored. At the same time the Russian squadron led by the flagship *Azov* began to enter the bay. At this moment the Ottomans fired the first shot at the British boat with a dispatched negotiator on board. Soon an Egyptian ship began to fire at the French flagship. The Allies did not open fire and sent a second negotiator who was also killed. After that, the Allied ships returned fire and the battle began.

In the difficult conditions created by the heavy firing, both by the enemy ships and the troops on land, the Russian squadron carried out the required maneuvers and stayed in the agreed position.

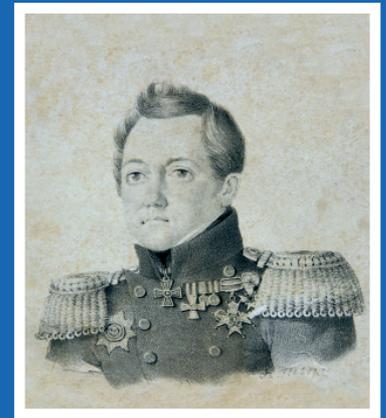
The Battle of Navarino lasted about four hours and ended with the destruction



Unknown artist
Entry of the allied fleet to the Navarino Bay
Great Britain, second quarter of 19th century

of the Turkish-Egyptian fleet. The losses of the Turkish-Egyptian fleet amounted to more than 60 ships and up to 7 thousand sailors. A decisive role was played by the Russian squadron of Admiral Heyden (4 battleships and 4 frigates) which defeated the entire center and the right flank of the enemy fleet. At the same time the flagship *Azov* under the command of Captain M. Lazarev fought with great success.

The defeat of the Turkish-Egyptian fleet contributed to the victory of Russia in the future Russian-Turkish War of 1828-1829 and the national liberation of the Greek people.



N. Tverskoy
Admiral M. P. Lazarev (1788-1851)
Russia, 1820s

Drawing of the St. George flag
Russia, 1828



Sergey Pen
Raising the St. George flag on the Azov ship on March 23, 1828 in La Valletta Bay
Russia, 1997



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ΕΛΛΑΔΑΣ - ΡΩΣΙΑΣ



M. S. Tkachenko
The Battle of Navarino
1907



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