

## THE INQUIRIES OF BRITISH LIBERALS INTO THE DESTINY OF MUSLIM AND TURKISH INHABITANTS OF THE BALKANS IN THE LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES\*

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### Abstract

This study delineates the image of Muslims and Turks in Ottoman “European Turkey” as perceived and constructed by the two influential opinion-forming Liberal British periodicals, namely the *Contemporary Review* and the *Fortnightly Review*, between the years of 1865-1923. Being a part of the intellectual influence of modern European nationalism repertoire over the Balkans, the convictions of British journal writers indisputably played a crucial role as a source of both inspiration and vindication in the formation and consolidation of Balkan nationalist ideals and practices. By exploring the literary treatment of Muslim and Turkish inhabitants of the Balkans by these prominent British periodicals this study aims to better understand and contextualize the processes of expulsion, assimilation or accommodation that the Muslim and Turkish population faced after the Ottoman power was partly or completely dismantled in the region and was replaced by successor Balkan nation-states which as essentially ethnic polities saw their Muslim minorities as “aliens” and monumental reminders of the “Ottoman yoke”.

**Keywords:** Ottoman Empire, Balkans, Balkan muslims, Orientalism, Contemporary Review, Fortnightly Review, British perceptions of the Balkans

*Geç Ondokuzuncu ve Erken Yirminci Yüzyılda İngiliz Liberallerinin Gözünden Balkanlar’da Yerleşik Müslüman ve Türk Nüfusun Serencamı*

### Öz

Bu çalışma Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun Avrupa topraklarında yaşayan Müslüman ve Türk tebaasına ilişkin imajın Büyük Britanya’nın son derece etkili ve kamuoyu yaratma gücüne sahip iki Liberal fikir dergisinde, yani *Contemporary Review* ve *Fortnightly Review*’de, 1865-1923 yılları arasında nasıl bir inşa sürecine tabi tutulduğunu ele almaktadır. Modern Avrupa milliyetçiliğine ilişkin repertuarın Balkan coğrafyası üzerindeki entelektüel etkisinin bir parçası olan bu iki süreli yayının yazarlarının Müslümanlara ve Türklere ilişkin görüşleri gerek esin kaynağı gerekse de meşrulaştırma aracı olmak bakımından Balkan milliyetçi ideallerinin ve pratiklerinin üzerinde yaşamsal bir rol oynamıştır. Balkanlarda yerleşik Müslümanların ve Türklerin bu iki dergi tarafından nasıl ele alındığını incelemek söz konusu azınlık nüfusunun ilerleyen dönemlerde karşı karşıya kaldığı dışlama, yerinden etme, asimilasyon ya da içerme süreçlerini daha iyi anlamamızı ve açıklayıcılığı daha yüksek bağlamlara yerleştirebilmemizi sağlayacak türden veriler sunar.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Balkanlar, Balkan müslümanları, Oryantalizm, Contemporary Review, Fortnightly Review, İngiltere’de Balkan imajı

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## **The Inquiries of British Liberals into the Destiny of Muslim and Turkish Inhabitants of the Balkans in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries\***

This study, after having delineated the image of Muslims and Turks in Ottoman “European Turkey” as perceived and constructed by the two influential opinion-forming Liberal British periodicals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, namely the *Contemporary Review* and the *Fortnightly Review*<sup>1</sup>, between the years of 1865-1923 proceeds to analyse the arguments suggested by these periodicals with respect to the future of Balkan<sup>2</sup> Muslims and

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1 *The Fortnightly Review* founded in 1865 and continued until 1954 was one of the most influential and significant periodicals in nineteenth century Britain. It was a Liberal magazine and most of the articles it published were in tune with the political stance taken by the Liberal Party especially until 1880s (Everett, 1971). Likewise, *the Contemporary Review* founded in 1866 was among the very influential publications of the Victorian era. It was intended to operate as the more religiously conscious counterpart of the openly Liberal and secular *the Fortnightly Review*. *The Contemporary Review* too acquired a Liberal outlook without any formal affiliations with the Liberal Party.

2 Throughout this study, the Balkans has been defined as a single historical region and refers to the territory in South East of Europe that was still either loosely controlled or directly ruled by the Ottoman Empire towards the end of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth centuries. For an instructive analysis on how the word Balkan was defined and the Balkans were depicted and portrayed within the late nineteenth-and early twentieth century Ottoman context see (Boyar, 2007).

Turks. In so doing, this study aims to better understand the expulsion, assimilation or accommodation processes that the Muslim and Turkish population faced after the Ottoman power was partly or completely dismantled in the region and was replaced by successor Balkan nation-states which as essentially ethnic polities saw them “as sectarian survivals from the Ottoman age posing an intractable problem” (Taji-Farouqi and Poulton, 1997: 4). Considering the discursive power that the intelligentsia and policy makers of the European Powers and exclusively of Britain as the super-power of the time enjoyed over the nationalist founding elites of the Balkan states<sup>3</sup>, an in-depth analysis of the assertions, beliefs and arguments produced and disseminated by the prominent British periodicals promises valuable insights into our understanding of the destiny of Balkan Muslims and Turks after they ceased to be subjects of the Ottoman Sultan, and were either forced to emigrate to a country of Muslims or transformed into the citizens of several Balkan “Christian” nation states. Although the Balkan nationalist elites cannot be completely denied agency in constructing the Balkan nationalisms which “can be characterized in terms of a fusion of ideologies both from other parts of Europe with autonomous trends” (Carmichael, 2003: 104)<sup>4</sup>, nevertheless, as Todorova suggests, “the Balkans have become European by shedding the last residue of an imperial legacy, widely considered an anomaly at the time and by assuming and emulating the homogenous European nation-state as the normative form of social organization” (Todorova, 1997: 13). Being a part of the intellectual influence of modern European nationalism repertoire over the Balkans, the convictions of British

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3 For the British influence on Balkan Christians and the Anglophilia among some prominent Balkan nationalists in the nineteenth century see (Markovich, 2009). For the British public opinion towards the Ottoman Empire in times of some of the Balkan-based crises see (Demirci, 2010).

4 In this study I do not, of course, suggest that the Balkan Christians learnt their anti-Turkish stance from European countries. What I assert is that when they put their anti-Turkish/anti-Muslim agenda to work, they found very enthusiastic supporters in Europe who provided them with a framework and a politico-cultural repertoire that would legitimize their actions as dictates of nation-state building procedure. Neither do I imply that, as debated by Todorova, Balkan national movements were complete “exports” from the Western world and that the Balkans lacked the prerequisite “organic roots” for ideals like nationalism (Todorova, 2005: 140-164). In other words this study is by no means inclined to contribute to the notion that there was a temporal divide between Balkans and Europe and that nationalism, free from violence, otherization and exclusion in its Western form was abused and altered in “evil” Balkanic hands. What I merely point out that Western images of Turks and Muslims provided the Balkan nationalist elites with a powerful discursive armoury that was acceptable to the Western taste.

journal writers indisputably played a crucial role as a source of both inspiration and vindication in the formation and consolidation of Balkan nationalist ideals and practices.

### **Turks and Muslims as “Aliens” in “European Turkey”**

The narratives offered by the Liberal writers in these journals should be read in the well-researched context of the Liberal criticism of Britain’s traditional Near Eastern policy vis-à-vis the notorious Eastern Question that gained impetus especially in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and caused substantial modifications in the Palmerstonian strategy<sup>5</sup> of maintaining the territorial integrity and political independence of the Ottoman Empire for the sake of the balance of power in Europe. The treatment of the Porte as well as of the Muslim and Turkish population in the Balkans by the journal articles under examination which was obviously less than complimentary should also be handled against this well-known historical backdrop in which the ephemerally alluring image of the Ottoman Empire/Turks as the heroic fighters and allies of *John Bull* against the aggressive Russian bear in Crimea rapidly waned and replaced by the image of a ghastly despotism and barbarian oppressors in the face of a series of events such as Ottoman financial bankruptcy, revolts in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgaria and rapport between the Porte and Germany.

It should also be kept in mind that the British Liberal political polemic of the Victorian era was largely couched within and filtered through the alteritist, Eurocentric, essentialist and domineering parameters of the Orientalist discourse in Saidian terms (Said, 1995: 2)<sup>6</sup> whereby an inherently and infinitely stagnant, violent and inferior Orient as opposed to the dynamic, humanitarian and superior Occident was regulated, defined and constructed. Accordingly, the Islamic Orient was imagined as immanently violent, despotic, fanatical, morally corrupt and irrational, destitute of the preconditions of social change and incapable of adaptation to certain aspects of Western liberal ideology (Elgamri, 2008: 26-38).

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5 For a detailed analysis of Palmerstonian strategy that was fully implemented by the British policy makers until the last quarter of the nineteenth century; revised after the Bulgarian Crisis of 1876 and remodelled in the Berlin Treaty of 1878 and completely abandoned at the turn of the century see (Anderson, 1966); (Bailey, 1942); (Davison, 1963); (Rautsi, 1993); (Rodkey, 1930).

6 In Said’s own terms, Orientalism is “a style of thought based upon the ontological and the epistemological distinction between the Orient and the Occident, in which the latter is regarded as essentially and inherently superior to the former.”

As many scholars convincingly argued construction of the Balkans or the Eastern Europe by the Western world appeared “as a paradox of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion, Europe but not Europe” (Wolf, 1994: 7). Although the Western world’s approach to the Balkans in the nineteenth century operated within the established framework of Orientalism, the status of the Christian Balkans nevertheless differed from that of the absolute external other, namely the Muslim Ottoman Empire. As Ana Savic asserts “the Balkan other is represented as “an intimate other, the other within, an intrinsic though dark aspect of the self” (Savic, 2008: 162). Through their geographical location and Christian creed the Balkans were thought to have been linked to Europe, but their economic and social “backwardness”, cultural “primitiveness” and criss-crossed relationships with the Islamic world assigned them to an Oriental position. Majority of the Liberal writers of the Victorian era whose articles appeared in the *Contemporary Review* and the *Fortnightly Review* were inclined to emphasize the Europeanness of the Christian Balkan peoples and/or their ability to become “fully” European albeit with reservations and always with an added sense of political expediency. Western world’s Orientalist gaze cast upon the Ottoman Empire was inherited and shared by the Christian Balkan nation-states but as Mary Neuburger comments on the Bulgarian case, although “nation building demanded a negation of all that was Eastern within—an explicit rejection of Bulgaria’s Ottoman past and its Muslim minority presence” and “purveyors of the national idea had found inspiration in the European ‘Orientalization’ of the Ottoman East”, they most of the time “also were well aware of Western European diffidence for the purportedly less civilized ‘other Europe’” (Neuburger, 2004: 3). What is more, “as Europe alternatively Orientalized and hybridized the Balkan Christian peoples, so too were Muslim minorities defined in terms of shifting categories of difference and sameness, that were constructed in response to their perceived in-betweenness” (Neuburger, 2004: 5).

As Cathie Carmichael succinctly asserts “despite a fascination with variety and larger than life Homeric types and cultural variety, many of those [Europeans] who wrote about Balkans cultures had a desire to homogenize and simplify what they saw in order to ‘Europeanize’ the region” (2003: 11). With only a few exceptions all the articles devoted to the Ottoman rule in Europe and discussed in this study unswervingly label the Muslim and Turkish population in the Balkans as an “alien race” and set out to propose a so-called workable scenario through which they suggest the emancipation of the Balkan nations and the termination of the Ottoman existence in Europe can be achieved with the least damages and potential long term complications. It is agreed virtually in unanimity that “Mussulman Turkey [was] decaying; it [was] in a minority in its own European Empire, it [was] incorrigible, [...] morally and materially bankrupt” (Laing, 1998: 344) and that “the existence of the Ottoman Empire in

Europe at all [was] an anomaly” (Rutson, 1876: 295). As early as in 1866 and supposedly predicated upon the travellers’ evidence it was stated that “in European Turkey the Osmanli race [was] gradually dying out, and that all the wealth and influence it formerly possessed [was] passing into the hands of the Slavonian and Greek inhabitants” (Gielgud, 1866: 608). The ethnographical map of the country clearly indicated that “Turkish population was small and scattered, a fact which was well-known by the Turks themselves who with their usual predestinarianism resignedly accepted it as their destiny” (Gielgud, 1866: 608). These ideas were symptomatic of and in harmony with the generic attitude of the Great Powers of the time towards the Ottoman Empire. As flatly posited by an article in 1908, “for the better part of a century Europe ha[d] been contemplating the ultimate extinction of the Turk in Europe” and “neither in Vienna nor St. Petersburg, assuredly not in Berlin, nor in any of the minor capitals, ha[d] there been any doubt of the Empire’s inevitable dissolution” (Hamilton, 1908: 381).

Once the alien status of the Muslims, especially Turkish speaking Muslims, is established, the next step that should naturally be taken appears as assigning that population a new position that is commensurate with its alleged incongruous character. Carmichael remarks that “the marginalization and weakening of [Muslim] communities [in the Balkans] was certainly aided and abetted by a discursive radicalization that began to construct these communities as aliens and outsiders, whose existence could never be reconciled with the nation states of Montenegrins, Serbs, Croats, Greeks, Bulgarians and latterly even Macedonians” (Carmichael, 2003: 38). The nineteenth century writers of the journals like the *Contemporary Review* and the *Fortnightly Review* definitely had their share in building and reinforcing that discursive radicalization. Most authors agree that Muslims should be expelled and sent to where they came from, namely Asia. Some writers opine that if Muslims cannot be got rid of by expulsion then they should be allowed to remain as sojourners and stripped off their previous “privileges”, and compelled to admitting that their religion, i.e., Islam can no longer reign over European territories and Christian people. In other words, the distinction of belonging to the State’s religion they enjoyed during the Ottoman period had to be replaced by a sort of second-class citizenship. Majority of the authors do not see or rather opt not to see any difference between the Ottoman administrative stratum and the Muslim and Turkish population living in the region. Those writers asserting that the Ottoman Government was nothing but “a gang of robbers” (Freeman, 1877: 515), carefully abstain from acknowledging that Ottoman existence in the Balkans was not limited to only *Paşas* and

*Zaptiyes*<sup>7</sup> and that even when the Ottoman State had withdrawn its functionaries from the Balkans there still would have remained a large group of inhabitants who lived in European Turkey for centuries and professed a creed that was different from that of their Christian neighbours. As an anonymous article complained in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1880 there was a general impression in European quarters that

“the Turks are few in number, strangers in race and language, hated by every sect and class, wanting in physical power, destitute of moral principle, and yet they are the despots of the land’. All this confusion arises from a loose habit of confounding the Turkish people with their Government, and imputing to them all the vices which the official class represent, and which they have learnt chiefly from their contact with Christians and Western civilization” (Anonymous, 1880: 163).

Apart from the popular tendency of equalling Turks to the Ottoman governing class in the Balkans, there was also another oft-repeated contention that the Turks were the only Muslims residing in the region (Anonymous, 1880: 162). As the writers of these two periodicals gradually began to acknowledge that there were also other groups of Muslims living in the Balkans who differed from the Turks in linguistic and ethnical aspects yet nevertheless mingled as well as intricately connected with them due to religious kinship, the question of “what to do with the Muslims” became complicated and the answers to that question brought about many ramifications. It would, however, become clear more than a century later that indiscriminately referring to all Muslims as Turks was a die-hard inclination constantly nourished by Balkan nationalisms when, for example, “prior to the massacre at Srebrenica in Bosnia, Ratko Mladić appeared on Bosnian Serb television on 11 July 1995, telling viewers that the moment for revenge against the ‘Turks’ had finally come” (Carmichael, 2003: 33).

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<sup>7</sup> The terms *Paşas* and *Zaptiyes* which are used here to refer to the Ottoman administrative and security officials in the Balkans have been chosen in order to remind the reader of W.E. Gladstone’s notorious pamphlet *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East* where he writes “Let the Turks now carry away their abuses in the only possible manner, namely by carrying off themselves. Their Zaptiehs and their Miidirs, their Bimbashis and their Yuzbachis, their Kaimakams and their Pashas, one and all, bag and baggage, shall, I hope, clear out from the province they have desolated and pro-faned.” (Gladstone, 1876: 31)

### **Turks, Muslims or Ottomans? What Difference Does It Make? : The Portrayal of the Ottoman Rule in the Balkans as Orientalism *Par Excellence***

When William E. Gladstone stirred an unprecedented public clamour during the eventful days of Bulgarian Crisis in 1876 by suggesting that “Turks should be sent from Europe bag and baggage to where they came from” (Gladstone, 1876: 31), though inspiring and provocative his rhetoric be, he was by no means laying the foundations of a novel thought and attitude towards the Ottoman Empire in general, and the Turks in particular. On the contrary, he was adding a new link to the long chain of anti-Turkish, anti-Ottoman and anti-Muslim litany which had been in construction for decades and was thoroughly Orientalist in Saidian terms.

Apart from exploiting all the clichés of the Orientalist discourse in regard to the Turks and Muslims that were *omni present* in the political rhetoric of the British Radicals and Liberals, and that were equally immanent yet less conspicuous in the cognitive map of the Conservatives, of the Victorian era, Gladstone was also exemplifying “the loose habit of confounding the Turkish people with their Government” and also ignoring that Muslims in the Balkans presented a conglomeration with various linguistic, ethnical and cultural streaks. Contrary to the perceptions and contentions of the Victorian and Edwardian British politicians and columnists, the Muslim populations of the Balkans embodied a notably diverse group of peoples ranging from Slavophone Muslims, Albanophone Muslims, Greek-speaking Muslims and Islamized Jews to Turkish speaking Muslims that moved and settled in the region during the Ottoman rule (Katsikas, 2009a: 436).

The inclination of cramming all the Muslim inhabitants of the region in one big category without recognizing their ethno-cultural and linguistic multifariousness would be readily inherited by the nationalist elites of the South Eastern European countries in following years as they imagined and constructed their nation-states. Peter Mentzel (2000: 199-204) aptly shows that as opposed to the highly nuanced self-perception of Muslims in the Balkan area, the nationalists approached them as an homogenous mass and more often than not called them Turks. The international treaties that established the status of minorities in Balkan States, such as in Greece and Bulgaria, too viewed Bulgarian or Greek Muslims as culturally homogenous groups (Katsikas, 2009b: 194). “Anti-Islam in the Balkans was initially encouraged and reified by the Western European public who were generally very pro-Christian and represented the Greeks during the war of independence as heirs of the classical epoch in a literal sense” (Carmichael, 2003: 22). The perusal of the *Contemporary Review* and the *Fortnightly Review* between the years of 1865 and 1923 reveals many examples



of both the antecedents and followers of the Gladstonian rhetoric with respect to the Ottoman rule as well as the image of Turkish and Muslim populations in the Balkans. Most of the articles in question reproducing and exemplifying the proverbial essentialism of the Orientalist paradigm concurred in the assumption that it was ontologically unattainable for the Ottoman Empire to govern non-Muslim populations under its reign rightfully because the precepts of Islam assigned the non-Muslims as “infidels” an inferior status (MacColl, 1879: 769).

As noted by numerous contemporary scholars, “Ottoman rule in the Balkans was essentially non-assimilative and ‘multi-national’ in spirit; it also lacked the technological and institutional facilities for integrating and unifying subject peoples” (Poulton, 1997: 15). This non-assimilative character of the Ottoman State was also targeted by some of the journal writers. Ottoman State’s “reluctance” to assimilate its non-Muslim subject populations into Islam, which in turn had enabled them to develop their own nationalist agenda, was regarded as a failure that justified the dissolution of the Empire. Too great was the Muslims’ disdain of the non-Muslims that they never brought themselves to mingle and deal with them in a way that could engender an assimilation process.

“There is at this moment, as there has always been in Turkey under the Ottoman rule perfect toleration for all religions; [...]. It should be remembered, however, that this toleration does not arise from liberal religious views, but from a haughty indifference, which to a spirited people is often more galling than actual oppression (Gielgud: 1866: 609-610)”.

Accordingly with its “archaic” policy of religious compartmentalization which it had to observe as an Islamic State the Ottoman Empire failed to appreciate the power of nationalism that not only rendered its Western counterparts more powerful and cohesive but also led its non-Muslim minorities to engage in separatist activities. To sum up, the Ottoman government missed out on the spirit of the age, remained “pre-modern”, became an anachronism and hence met its inevitable destiny (Blennerhassett, 1877: 220). As the journal writers saw it there was no hope of reform in Ottoman state machinery or a radical transformation in predominant Muslim social mentality since every attempt to institute equal citizenship for the non-Muslims had been and would continue to be against the very foundations of the Islamic governmentality. There was an essential impracticability on the part of the Ottoman State to provide good administration, because “it did not merely err but err[ed] on principle, and it made of iniquity a virtue and an article of faith” (MacColl, 1896: 972). Since the disabilities under which the non-Muslims had been labouring were based on the Qur’an rather than on mere legislative enactments or administrative provisions that could be improvised or annulled, even if the Ottoman State wished to adopt some secular measures in the name of reform it could not possibly do so unless

it shed its own Islamic identity (MacColl, 1897: 497). “To talk, therefore, of any reforms under the Sultan’s direct rule which shall alter in any material degree the condition and status of the Christian population”, wrote MacColl, “is in truth to talk non-sense” (MacColl, 1881: 270).

The Ottoman reign over the Balkans as well as the non-Muslims had to cease not only because the Ottoman government was incapable of providing its non-Muslim subjects with equal citizenship rights but also because its very existence was incompatible with the dictates of modern civilization. “The enthusiasm and unanimity with which the people declare[d] for the expulsion of Turks from Europe [was] the result of a conviction that the Ottoman power [was] incapable of being restrained within proper limits, or of yielding to the civilization of the West, and that it [was] a menace to the peace and progress of Europe” (Howell, 1876: 871). “There [was] no hope for the civilization of any people while it remain[ed] under Mussulman rule” (MacColl, 1881: 274). “Since the death of the Prophet, Islam has not been so much a religion as a barbarous code of laws which consigns those who reject them to hopeless political servitude, and, as divine, scornfully rejects the possibility of improvement from within” (Osborne, 1877: 1106). “Like almost every Asiatic polity, [the Ottoman government] [was] the embodiment of a single idea, and [was] wholly unfitted to deal with the various, conflicting, and multiform principles, elements and interests which move and have their being in any modern and European community; there [were] many signs that the Turks [were] unable to bear the contact with Western civilisation and European circumstances” (Earle, 1876: 656). In order to comprehend the sturdiness of this idea over time, one should remember that Fukuyama in his celebrated *The End of History* argued that Islam is anti-modern and that Islam and modern society always correlate negatively due to Islam’s irreconcilability with liberalism. (Fukuyama, 1992)

Owing largely due to Islam and partly to Turkish “barbarity” and “ineptitude” the Ottoman Empire was doomed to be stuck in the Middle Ages, and the Balkan nations as being part of the European civilization deserved to shed the Ottoman subordination and travel in the wagon of civilization. “The existence of an Oriental tyranny on the very highways of European commerce and culture [was] the crudest negation for the European nations animated by humanitarian aims” (Brailsford, 1903:641). “My charge against Islam”, wrote Malcom MacColl (1888: 537), “therefore, is not merely that it is a religion fundamentally and irreconcilably opposed Christianity, but that it can be proved to be essentially and historically incompatible with civilization; that the nation or the tribe that adopts it passes under a blight which arrests its development, and makes it, while it remains loyal to Islam, incapable of progress.” Likewise, “it seems a mockery to ask whether [the Turk] has contributed anything to science, to literature, to art, to manufactures, to the development of commerce, to any department of

civilization” wrote Goldwin Smith (1878: 610). Modern civilization represented by the Western world found its genealogy in and owed its strength to Christianity the social idea of which was mainly industrial. Islam on the other hand was “anti-human”, and its driving force was “not industrial but predatory and military” (Smith, 1878: 615). Unless it embraced the institutions and values of Christendom in a holistic manner the Ottoman Empire could neither recover nor reach the level of civilized States. Therefore the Ottoman rule along with the Muslims in the Balkans should leave this valuable and promising geography and its “native” Christian people that belonged to European civilization alone and put an end to the arrest of its progress (MacColl, 1897: 499).

The journal writers were convinced that although they seemed in possession of some theoretical rights non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire were nevertheless always under oppression, and they never exercised any rights in practice. Their life, property and honour were nowhere safe throughout the Sultan’s dominions. The Ottoman government was usually “corrupt, feeble, barbarous, capricious, and capable of horrible cruelty, [...] and the insurrections its oppression produce[d] [were] periodically crushed by massacre, outrage and terrorism” (Harrison, 1876: 709). Consequently the non-Muslims were not only amply justified in their taking up arms against their Muslim ruler but also indisputably entitled to the support and backing of the European Christian Powers as they fought to “free their country from the Turkish intruder” (Freeman, 1877a: 484). Along with the Balkan territory, Istanbul (Constantinople) too, being a component of the European topography with heavily charged symbolic value, should be purged of all Ottoman existence and restored to its original owners (MacColl, 1895: 745).

The non-Muslims in European Turkey were oppressed to the point that the only medium left to them to voice their grievances was insurrection, and because the European Powers were pursuing the policy of the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire for the sake of the balance of power and for the dictates of political and economic rivalry in the Eastern Mediterranean, namely the Eastern Question, they too were indifferent to the sufferings of the Christians unless they were massacred by the Turks. And in the words of Malcolm MacColl, “the Eastern Question was a thorny problem which nobody was eager to handle without the excuse of some urgent and conspicuous cause”. “The oppressed populations were impotent and voiceless. Their only means of calling the attention of Europe to their intolerable wrongs was by the desperate medium of insurrection” (MacColl, 1879: 771). And when the Ottoman government countered the insurrections by sending armed forces this act should not be regarded as the rightful reaction of a government under attack. Because as the intruder “the Turk [was] not fighting for his own home or his own country”, “he [was] fighting to play the tyrant—to play the Turk—in the country and homes of other men”, “he was nothing but a

robber who [had] thrust himself into the house of another” (Freeman, 1877a: 485, 494).

Thus, when the non-Muslims, be Bulgarians, Serbs or Rumanians, attacked the Muslim population they should be excused, or empathised with, because they had been suffering under the Ottoman “yoke” for centuries and it was only human to retaliate when finally the opportunity presented itself. By making use of the vast imagery and rhetorical repertoire of the Orientalist literature that had been largely provided by the British travel writing throughout the nineteenth century the periodical authors pictured the insurgent non-Muslim subjects as chivalrous freedom fighters whose humanity and dignity had been violated for generations by the Muslims. It was repeatedly argued that not only the Pashas or Zaptiyes, namely the most visible agents of the Ottoman state power, but also ordinary Muslims living in the Balkans systematically abused their non-Muslim neighbours causing an inevitable outburst and a feeling of revenge among them towards their oppressors (*An Eastern Statesman*, 1879: 516).

Some writers increased the dosage of apologetical, self-exculpatory rhetoric on behalf of the Balkan Christians by remarking that even the British people in recent past did terrible things with less provocation, and that after all the “wholesale massacres, rapine, rape, monstrous acts like putting fire under the stomachs of Rayahs and nailing their babies to gates” (Smith, 1878: 608) that the Turks had been carrying out for decades, Balkan nations should not be so harshly blamed “for such reprisals as they took on those from whom they have suffered so much” (Campbell, 1878: 549).

As a result, after having been defeated by the non-Muslims, the haughty Ottoman/Turk/Muslim was leaving the lands that he had only held by force. Allegedly expeditious restoration of the Balkan landscape to its pre-Ottoman times<sup>8</sup>, including the absence of large portions of Muslim populations who had also left the scene, was hailed as proof of “how slight a hold the Turkish

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8 This so-called quick restoration in fact was not, as claimed by the journal writers, a natural process but rather a deliberate de-Ottomanisation process carried out by the nationalist founding elites. As pointed out by Höpken in Bulgarian case, “[with the establishment of the national state] following the pattern of ‘Westernisation’, the political elite immediately adopted a policy of ‘wiping out’ visible elements of the Islamic religion and the Ottoman culture wherever possible. Urban planning in accordance with ‘Western’ standards often altered or destroyed the previous character of towns, which was familiar to the Muslim Ottoman population and formed part of their cultural environment. Mosques were put to non-religious purposes and sometimes destroyed; cemeteries were transferred to the outskirts of towns; Turkish geographical names were replaced by Bulgarian ones, and so on” (Höpken, 1997: 59).

supremacy has had on the country, how purely it has been an armed occupation, and how little the two races have really amalgamated” (Arnold-Forster, 1884: 406). According to the narrative of these two periodicals exodus of the Muslims from the Balkans could not and should not be explained by any real or perceived hardship they faced after the Ottoman rule ended and their country became a central Christian nation state. Balkan Muslims preferred to leave the lands where they had been living for generations not because they feared for their lives, property and honour as well as the future of their children but simply because they being Muslims found it against their religion to live in the lands that were no longer under the Islamic rule, the lands that ceased to qualify as *Dar’u-l Islam*<sup>9</sup> and were re-claimed by the “infidel”. “In speaking of the Turks in Europe”, wrote Arnold-Forster in 1884, “it is more true [sic] to regard them as a dominant caste than as the exponents of a religious faith”. “The Mohammedan population must be dominant in the territory which it occupied, or it must cease to exist. And herein lies the natural explanation of the long caravans of emigrants, who by slow stages are to be seen making their way across Roumelia on their way to Constantinople, or even further, to a home among their co-religionists in Asia Minor” (Arnold-Forster, 1884: 406). Muslims and/or Turks were leaving their fatherland voluntarily and on their own accord because they did not wish to be subject of or related to a Christian state. Neither would they consent to remain on equal terms with their neighbours. Although some writers were at pains to distinguish the “honest, orderly and poor” (Arnold-Forster, 1884: 406) Turkish peasant from the official Turks, they too nevertheless believed that all Muslims in the Balkans following the departure of the Ottoman State power from the region felt compelled to emigrate for they could not bear to swap their ruling privileges with ordinary citizenship. Even in cases where they shared the same ethnical and linguistic characteristics with their Christian countrymen their Islamic faith preceded their “national” identity compelling them to head for the territory that was still under Ottoman control.<sup>10</sup> “We read just now of an exodus of Mussulmans from the territory ceded to Greece” wrote MacColl, “it does not follow at all that they fear oppression or injustice under Christian rule. The

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9 The concept of *Dar’u-l Islam* (Abode of Islam) refers to a territory governed by Islamic law.

10 Wolfgang Höpken cites some similar views entertained by members of European public. “Almost no one from the ‘European’ public could envisage a long-term co-existence between Muslims and Christians in the post-Ottoman Balkan states; their religious and cultural differences were thought too antagonistic, and it was generally believed that Muslims would not be willing to submit to non-Muslim rule. According to the Czech historian Constantin Jireček, one of the main Balkans experts of his time, even benevolent treatment by new Christian states could not win the hearts and minds of the Muslims and prevent them from emigrating” (Höpken, 1997: 54).

reason of their leaving is that the ceded territory has ceased to be their country, though they may not have any drop of blood but Greek in their veins.” (MacColl,1881: 271).

Considering that from the vantage point of the nineteenth-century liberalism nation was the unit representing “the highest step on the ladder of evolution of humankind” (Hobsbawm, 1990: 38-39), there is an underlying disparaging implication in these opinions that Muslims as opposed to their Christian fellowmen were yet incapable of reaching and achieving the status of nationhood. They still belonged to the past that Europe long left behind, a past that has not yet benefited from the virtues of modern civilization which was represented by the centrally administered State on national lines. As it was crystallized in MacColl’s words, “the body politic of Islam [...] excludes from its constitution the very idea of national life. It is a cosmopolitan Religious Congregation in as true a sense as the Order of Jesuits, and equality of rights with the members of fraternity is only possible through initiation into the Order. [...] Islam rejects our distinction between the temporal and spiritual functions of Government” (MacColl, 1881: 279).

The idea that Islam excluded and/or rejected ethnic and linguistic nationalism and sought to unify and integrate all its believers into a trans-ethnic, trans-national entity was well-preserved and would find its expression in late twentieth century Western scholarship which contends that Islam can be classified as “a super-state variant of nationalism” (Elgamri, 2008: 52). Fuller and Lesser, for example, argued in 1995 that “in its dealings with the West, Islam in political terms can often be understood as the functional equivalent of nationalism, not necessarily a negative force in itself but potentially subject to the same kinds of extremism and prickly sensitivity to external pressures and slights” (Fuller and Lesser, 1995: 165). According to the journal writers examined here although they were not advanced enough to form national units demarcated by ethno-cultural and linguistic parameters Muslims nevertheless could live together. Turks too “having no nation-making and nation-maintaining qualities” (Fox, 1915: 487) could unite with their co-religionists in an Islamic polity. So long as it shed its claim to govern the Christians and kept to itself periodical writers had no objection to the existence of an Islamic State. Their almost unanimous stipulation was that such an Islamic State should retire to Asia and never set foot again in European soil.

### **“Down with the Turk in the name of the Cross” or Asia for the Muslims**

From 1880s onwards there appears an awareness or somewhat reluctant recognition among the periodical writers of the existence of ordinary Muslim or

Turkish inhabitants of the Balkan Peninsula who could not be equalled to the Ottoman ruling elites and hence should not be held responsible for the prevailing misgovernment in the region. As William T. Stead remarked in 1880, by the “unspeakable Turk” should be meant not “the peaceful Mongol inhabitant, but the ruling Sultan or Pasha of Stamboul” (Stead, 1880: 268). James Bryce, in 1878, also had called for a distinction between “the Turkish population and the knot of palace favourites and low-born adventurers who govern them” (Bryce, 1878: 928). Likewise, at the turn of the century, Jas W. Gambier speaking of the Macedonian issue pointed out that “Mohammedans [were] by far the most peace-loving, industrious, and law-abiding people in that part of Europe” (Gambier, 1902: 748). W. Von Herbert, writing in 1905, only seven years before the Balkan Wars that would lead to the massacres and exodus of Muslims from Balkans including Bulgaria, observed that “the Turks who chose to remain in Bulgaria when the principality shook off the Ottoman yoke [in 1878] [were] quiet, well-behaved, and fairly prosperous, keeping clear of politics”, and that “they [were] liked as neighbours and fellow citizens” (Von Herbert, 1905: 1057). Nevertheless, the opinions and observations of these writers do not seem to have set the general tenor of neither the perception of Turks and Muslims in the Balkans nor the prescribed remedies with respect to the predicaments of the region. Majority of the writers assumed that it was only natural for the Muslims and Turks as an “alien race” to evacuate the lands that they had been holding by force and return them to their true possessors. “At best the Turk is a stranger in a Christian population”, wrote Cecile Battine in 1912, “he has held these territories by sword, the final title-deed of every Imperial Power, but in the case of the Balkan States this right was certain to be challenged, for the subject races had never become reconciled to Turkish rule, nor had they been absorbed by the Turkish population” (Battine, 1912: 1032). As suggested by Gladstone in 1876, they should depart bag and baggage for Asia, a geography fit for their “barbarous”, “corrupt” and “Oriental” demeanour.

There were also articles discussing whether the total extirpation of Muslims in the Balkans would be feasible and attainable for the general welfare of Europe as well as of humankind. Implying that the idea of extermination of Muslims in European Turkey, once and for all, was a part of the popular political polemic or a rather favourite topic of table talk in political and intellectual circles in late nineteenth century Europe, these articles conclude that such enterprise was not workable since Muslims were bound to fight back and it would culminate in so much bloodshed and unprecedented chaos clearly unfit for modern civilization. The following two quotations exemplify the terms in which the idea of completely ridding Europe of the Turks was entertained:

“There is no middle course between a war or wars of extermination and the introduction of a new governmental system in Turkey. Even if it were possible that Christian Europe should adopt the former alternative, the barbarity of such a policy would not insure its success, when the men to be exterminated are the believers in a religion, which, whatever the future may have in store for it, still inspires the spirit of martyrdom, and has shown, even in our days, considerable expansive power” (Blennerhassett, 1877: 220).

“But this dominant race is the common oppressor of all Christian races. It is too true; but a war to extirpate a particular religion is an evil even greater than oppression and misgovernment. [...] These are the things we refuse to join in—to extirpate, expel, or crush a race of some millions; to open a new war of religion; to abet a new era of conquest. It needs but little to convince us how near we are to any or all of these projects, in the elastic name of humanity and civilization” (Harrison, 1876: 713-715).

Some writers rather than readily joining the campaign of driving the Turks out of Europe broached the topic of whether the peaceful co-existence of Muslims and non-Muslims in the Balkans under the rule of a Christian power was achievable. Concurrently, they did not dismiss the idea that in principle a majority could be governed by a religiously and ethnically different minority. They summoned the example of European colonizing States, including the British Empire under whose reign Muslims and non-Muslims were living in supposed accord. But the Ottoman Empire and the Turks and Muslims by extension did not seem to acquire the necessary qualities to achieve the task of “white man’s burden” (Holdich, 1917: 787).

Had the Ottoman Empire been competent enough to provide its Christian subjects with justice and security, as the British Empire did with its Muslim subjects, then the latter would not have revolted and become determined to throw out their Muslim countrymen from the Balkans. J. Ellis Barker on the eve of the Balkan Wars commented that in the unlikely event of the Ottoman victory against the Balkan Confederation the tension between the Muslims and non-Muslims would deepen rendering the region even less governable (Barker, 1912: 821).

What is more, owing to the long term clashes, skirmishes and psychological alienation between the Muslims and non-Muslims it would be too difficult, if not impossible, for the latter to forget the painful memories of the past and generate an environment conducive to genuine brotherhood. Some writers argued that due to the horrible deeds the Muslims allegedly inflicted upon their non-Muslim neighbours the possibility of harmony and co-existence of the two populations was irrevocably lost. The Balkan nation-states should start anew and their hands should not be fettered with the Muslims, now an unprivileged



minority, whose probable inconformity and uncooperative stand would aggravate the nation building process. Neither would the Christians, now the real owners of the State would wish to be reminded the days of subordination through the constant encounter with the Muslims (Rutson, 1876: 300; Anonymous, 1886: 413; Campbell, 1878:551).

Thus, following after the retreat of the Ottoman rule from the Balkans the Muslim/Turk too should leave. There was a consensus that his destination would be Asia Minor or Anatolia, namely “the lands of his earliest occupation after he left the steppes of Central Asia” (Holdich, 1917: 792).

While some writers believed that Muslims who had been originally native Christians converted to Islam after the Ottoman power permeated the region would join the Turks and head for the lands reigned over by Islam, the others argued that they would not and/or should not follow suit. George Campbell, for instance, talking about the future of Bulgaria, made a distinction between “the real Turkish people, i.e., Turkish speaking Muslims” and “the other Mahommedans [sic]” suggesting that the former would be much better off in Asia Minor while the latter should stay in the Balkans since as converts they may be expected to return to their original creed. “In Bulgaria, as in some parts of Greece”, he wrote, “I hope that the Mahommedans [sic] of Bulgarian race and language may remain and become good citizens; but I really do believe that the sooner all the true Turkish-speaking Turks, who are not willing to become mere sojourners in an alien land, move to proper Turkish soil, the better. Those who are satisfied to cling to the soil without political power may be protected as Jews are to be protected, but that is all” (Campbell, 1878: 544).

The motto of “Asia for Turks” that had been coined in the last quarter of the nineteenth century proved long lasting. It was to echo in the words of British Prime Minister Lloyd George at the end of the First World War who addressing the Trades’ Union Delegates in 1918 said that “we do not challenge the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homelands of the Turkish race, the rich lands of Asia Minor and Thrace which are predominantly Turkish” (Woods, 1922: 547). Although the British Premier felt compelled to include Istanbul and Eastern Thrace in the definition of the homelands of the Turkish race, many periodical writers under investigation in this work had not thought that Istanbul should remain under Turkish control. Thomas Holdich questioned the Turkishness of the city and concluded that “Armenians, Greeks, Jews, Levantines, and Europeans together outnumber the Turks in their own capital” (Holdich, 1917: 789). George Campbell thought that in order to be strong and independent the Turks in real Turkey should unburden themselves by relinquishing Istanbul. After becoming truly Asiatic again, “a Turkey of the Turks in Asia Minor”, he opined, “would be a very good, stout, highly respectable second-class state” (Campbell, 1878: 552). Forty years later

Valentine Chirol proving the persistency of the idea would agree with Campbell that Istanbul was no use to Turks and that Europe would be much happier with all the Ottoman/Turkish presence was removed from this indisputably European soil.

“So long as the Turks have a foothold in Europe, [...] the bad old school of Ottoman statecraft will have been scotched, not killed. They will continue to pose as a European Power, and they will try to take a hand again in European politics and play the old game which they have too often and too successfully played in the past, of speculating in international jealousies and selling themselves from time to time to the highest bidders. [...] Surely neither in our own interests nor in those of the helpless Turkish population whom their Constantinople rulers have plunged into ruin can we afford to forget the costly lesson of the past. For a small Turkish State within its own natural and ethnical boundaries in Asia Minor there should be a peaceable and prosperous future. Freed from the predatory influence and sinister wire-pulling of the Constantinople official, often himself not a Turk, the people will have a chance of showing the many good qualities they possess—industry, honesty, thrift, and endurance, and when racial and religious passions ceased to be periodically inflamed from Constantinople, a kindly and tolerant disposition” (Chirol, 1919: 40-41).

Although majority pointed to Anatolia as the final destination of Muslims and Turks, De Hennin, for example, writing in 1887 did not believe that Turks even deserved to maintain that rich and fertile part of the world. He as if foreseeing the *Sèvres* Treaty of 1920 as well as the ensuing dismemberment of Anatolia suggested that Greek Kingdom, Bulgaria, Italy and Russia after driving the Turks off should claim Eastern Thrace, Asia Minor and Tripoli. “Syria, Arabia and Egypt”, he remarked, “ought to be formed into an Arab Empire, and those Muslim Ottomans who do not care to live under Christian government might migrate to it” (De Hennin, 1887: 865).

To be fair, it must also be mentioned that a couple of writers opposed the idea of blotting the Muslims and Turks out of Europe albeit with different reasons. George Howell, supposedly placing himself into a philanthropic corner, asserted that an attempt to purge European Turkey from Turks would gravely compromise the Christian population in Asiatic Turkey. In order not to endanger the lives of Christians living in the Asian dominions of the Sultan, another solution other than “bag and baggage” policy of Gladstone should be devised. Repeating Lord Derby, Howell feared that “if they [the Turks] believed all Europe would be in the league against them, if they believed there was to be a combination of all Christian provinces to drive them back to Asia, that would be

exactly the circumstance that would lead them to break out into excesses prompted by revenge and despair (...)" (Howell, 1876: 854).

The true philanthropic attitude, however, was displayed by another writer, Richard Congreve, who utterly denounced the cry of expelling the Turks from Europe "as a contamination of the soil of Christendom, a soil over which none but so-called Europeans should hold sway". "I do not share that feeling", Congreve declared, "quite the contrary; I think it fraught with most evil consequences in the present, and for a long period of the future" (Congreve, 1876: 529). After having explained that each religion had its own merits and reminding that Islam's "backwardness" was not inherent but engendered by the conditions, Congreve blamed the Western world for the alienation of the East which he believed was a result of "the coarse and oppressive intrusion of the Western industrial society, the offensive iteration of its claims to superiority, and its spirit of conquest" (Congreve, 1876: 530). Welcoming the co-habitation of the two creeds in European Turkey as a challenge for Europe through which she could overcome her "instinct of domination" and her latent "contemptuous intolerance of the convictions of others" (Congreve, 1876: 532), Congreve championed the maintenance of Muslims and Turks in Europe. If achieved through a just and skilful statesmanship, harmonious existence of Muslims and Christians in the Balkans would contribute to the progress of humankind (Congreve, 1876: 534).

As we know today, Congreve's ominous prediction in 1876 that expelling Muslims from the Balkans would not only increase the already existing alienation between the Western and the Eastern world but also deepen the chasm between Christianity and Islam was to be borne out in the following century as the Muslim population were substantially reduced through wars and mass emigration, and the remaining Muslim minorities met many layered discriminatory practices which in turn left indelible marks in the way the Muslims perceived and felt about their Christian neighbours.

### **Resilience of the anti-Turkish/ anti-Muslim Discourse**

These mostly negative, resentful and vindictive ideas circulated by the two influential British journals of the nineteenth century and discussed at length in this study with respect to the Muslim and Turkish inhabitants of the Balkans were intricately intertwined with the image of Muslims/Turks/Ottomans as a people who cruelly conquered the Balkan region by forcing the Christians either to convert, to die or to become slaves. Not only majority of the writers quoted above but also the nationalist elites of the Balkan nation-states were conditioned and motivated by that image which in fact negated the actual dynamics of Ottoman

conquests in the region whereby a significant portion of the native ruling class had co-opted into the Ottoman elite (Lowry, 2003: 95-96). As Zhelyazkova puts it, “from the late fourteenth to the mid-seventeenth century, the Ottoman ruling group and military establishment absorbed a variety of ‘outsiders’” (Zhelyazkova, 2002: 226).

It is striking to see that the rhetoric on the “alien” status of Muslims in the Balkans that was repeatedly articulated throughout the nineteenth century by the British journal writers reached the twentieth century nationalist founding-and ruling-elites of the Balkan States virtually intact, continued to be effectively instrumentalised, and became ossified. “[T]he [Ottoman] past was vividly constructed as an aberration; a dark age of collective suffering, imprisonment and martyrdom imposed on Balkan Christians by the ‘Infidel’” (Carmichael, 2003: 15). The main thrust of the program devised by the Central Committee of Bulgarian Communist Party in 1958, for example, was the idea that “Islam [was] an alien religion in [the country] that had been forced on the indigenous population against its will” (Eminoy, 1987: 293).

Due to the repressive policies of Bulgarian Communist regime which mostly took the form of a systematic propaganda attack on Islam that denounced many Islamic practices ranging from circumcision to fasting “as barbaric and wasteful” (Eminoy, 1987: 294-295; Höpken, 1997: 54-81) and forced name changing campaigns which was carried out first on Bulgarian-speaking Muslims (Pomaks) in 1971<sup>11</sup> and then extended to Turkish-speaking Muslims in 1984-1985, between June and August 1989, 350,000 Muslim Bulgarian citizens flocked into Turkey, “a phenomenon characterized by international humanitarian organizations as the largest group migration of people after the Second World War” (Zhelyazkova, 2001: 63). Large-scale as it was, this nevertheless was not the first exodus of Muslims from either Bulgaria in particular or Balkan region in general. As Katsikas points out, in the post-imperial era in the South Eastern Europe, “Christian nationalists were faced with the problem of determining how Muslims, who were often numerous, fitted to their plans for constructing their own nation-states. On many occasions, these nationalists regarded Muslims as foreigners who had to be expelled” (Katsikas, 2009a: 438). In Greece, for example, “as the new state expanded with the contraction of the Ottoman Empire its Muslim inhabitants were seen as foreign and effectively ineligible for citizenship” (Poulton, 1997a: 83) and as a result in order to construct an ethnically and religiously homogenous nation-state, the nation-builders opted to subject majority of Muslims to a population exchange with Turkish Republic in 1923. In Bulgarian case, after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the

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11 For further information on the discrimination directed at the Pomak minority see (Konstantinov, 1997: 33-53).

establishment of autonomous Bulgarian Principality a steady stream of Muslim immigration took place. “Between 1880-81 and 1910 the Turkish population experienced more than 50 percent decline (from 24.9 percent in 1880-81 to 11.6 percent in 1910). The ebb and flow of Turkish and other Muslim emigration from Bulgaria between 1878 and 1944 was greatly influenced by changing political conditions in Bulgaria. During and after the Balkan Wars and World War I, as the situation of Muslims worsened, Muslim emigration picked up” (Eminoy, 1987: 290). In cases where the Muslims were not expelled but “regarded as renegade members of the dominant national group who needed to be brought back into the fold” (Katsikas, 2009a: 438), the echoes of the nineteenth century journal writers’ convictions and opinions were also clearly audible. Adam Gielgud writing in 1866 described the Bosnian land-owners who had turned Muslims as “renegades” and asserted that they still had “a hankering for the religion of their forefathers and sent on their death-bed for Roman Catholic priests to administer to them the last sacraments of their Church” (Gielgud, 1866: 612). Likewise W. von Herbert in 1905 portrayed the Pomaks as renegades who “partake of the characteristics of all renegades, in as much as they are more fanatical than the wildest Mahommedans” (Von Herbert, 1905: 1057). “Religion, indeed, the most powerful influence which affects the destinies of nations, united the Pomaks with the Turks”, wrote Bouchier, “but in blood, language and tradition they were separate from the Ottoman race, with which they never manifested any tendency to assimilate. The Pomaks are of purer Bulgarian blood than the Bulgarians themselves, because their adoption of Mahometanism preserved their women against the licence of the Ottoman conqueror” (Bouchier, 1893: 510, 517). The implication was clear that Pomaks as renegades kept their national purity and could be restored to Christianity without much hardship. Once they were perceived as renegades who had embraced Islam due to either fear or expectations of material gain, the strategies and policies employed to remind these renegades their original creed and make them shed their extrinsic Islamic religious identity became legitimate and rightful. If they insisted on keeping their “alien” Islamic faith, there would be consequences. The destiny that was believed befitting the Muslims, renegades or otherwise, by the nineteenth century journal writers would be repeated in the words of Serbian nationalist Vojislav Åeaelj in 1980s “when he told the German newspaper *Der Spiegel* that Muslims were Islamicized Serbs, whom he would drive out of Bosnia to Anatolia, if they opposed any attempt to take away their status as a nation” (Carmichael, 2003: 32). Likewise, what lied behind the *vuzroditelen protses* (revival process) of the period between 1985 and 1989 in Bulgaria when there was an attempt to assimilate the Turkish minority by means of a forcible change of names and subsequent mass expulsions was the emotional and absolute rejection of any possible colonization from Anatolia which assumed that the

existing Muslim community was entirely result of violent mass campaigns for Islamization of the native population (Zhelyazkova, 2002: 229). As Katsikas succinctly argues in regard to the Muslim minorities in Greece and Bulgaria in the post-imperial era, “those Muslims who survived and remained in [these countries] now became citizens of states whose political establishments were not followers of Islam and where, although nominally regarded as equal to non-Muslims, they were in reality seen and treated as second-class citizens”. (Katsikas, 2009b: 117)

Despite the fact that the rights of minorities within the newly established Balkan nation states were always established by the international treaties and incorporated into each State’s constitution, (The Treaty of Athens of 1913 for Greece, Neuilly Peace Treaty of 1919 for Bulgaria etc.) which provided that racial, religious or linguistic minorities shall enjoy the same rights and treatments as equal citizens, for years to come Muslims became subjected to “discriminatory policies, persecution and assimilation” not only because they “did not fit the national plans of Christian nationalists of the region but also because they were often approached by Christian national elites as ‘left-overs’ of an ‘uncivilized’, ‘pre-modern’ imperial Ottoman past” (Katsikas, 2009a: 438). Likewise, Carmichael asserted that “ethnic cleansing accompanied the spread of nationalism and state formation in the Balkans after the Ottoman Empire and its mentalities began to lose their grip in the eighteenth century” (Carmichael, 2003: 12). In the words of Livanios “the ethnological situation in many part of the Balkans was hopelessly mixed, and consequently the delimitation of ethnic frontiers had to be decided by the sword and the rifle” (Livanios, 2008: 192-193).

Almost all the articles under investigation in this study appear as precursors of the upcoming discriminatory policies that were to be devised and resorted to by the Balkan nationalist elites in the post-imperial era. With a few rare exceptions, British journal writers discussed here set out to theorise and warrant the prospective forced migration, assimilation or discrimination of Muslim minorities. As a rule, “the plight of Muslims in the Balkans was rarely covered with much sympathy in the liberal press in Europe and the Americas [...] even though their rights were flagrantly denied. This was in distinct contrast to the attitude towards the plight of Jews in Imperial Russia, or that of Ottoman Christians” (Carmichael, 2009: 8). The efforts of these armchair experts on the Eastern matters proved successful as the methods, tactics and rhetoric they suggested to be adopted with respect to the Muslims were enthusiastically seized upon by British policy makers and eagerly inherited and embraced by nationalist founding or ruling elites of many Balkan States.

While the British Prime Minister Lloyd George declared in 1918 that the Allied Powers would not deny the Turkish Empire “the lands that were homelands of Turkish race”, he in fact had ordered the British Propaganda

Bureau during the First World War to produce material “that pays special attention to the Turk’s incapacity for good Government; his mis-rule, and above all, his massacres of all the industrious population”. When the British Premier asked the Propaganda Bureau to depict the Turks as “a blight on the whole territory which they have occupied” and the Ottoman Empire as “one of the worst empires that have ever lived because it has retained its unity only at the price of blotting out two or three ancient civilizations and of repressing its subject races with quite exceptional ferocity” (McCarthy, 2010: 219) he was attempting to set a so-called historical precedent that would justify the extinction of the Ottoman rule in and expulsion of Muslims and Turks from Europe as well as from Asia Minor. In so doing, it was clearly discernible that he was making ample use of “the myth of the terrible Turk” that had been repeatedly articulated by the British journal writers whose work has been analysed in this study. On receiving Lloyd George’s directions John Buchan expounded the Bureau that the points that they wished to be emphasized were, inter alia, “the incapacity of the Turk for absorbing conquered peoples or for administering equitably subject races”, for which they wanted “a historical argument and an account of the recent treatment of Jews, Armenians, Syrians and Balkan races”; “the impossibility of reforming the Turkish State”; “the danger of allowing a reactionary and incompetent state to control the avenue between Europe and Asia”; and “the fact that religious toleration in the modern sense is alien to her theory of government” (McCarthy, 2010: 220). All these assertions, without a single exception, had been previously brought about and extensively expounded on by the articles that have been referred to in this study.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Needless to say, this study by no means seeks to imply that Muslim people were the only ones who suffered some sort of injustice and oppression in the Balkans. Yet, it merely hopes to address the alleged asymmetry and imbalance in the way the sufferings of non-Muslims and Muslims were narrated in the nineteenth and early twentieth century Western polemical writing at the expense of the latter. The rhetoric that cast the Muslims and Turks in the Balkan region as alien of which the journal articles examined in this work provide many examples laid the ground for the excuse of not telling the story of 5 million Turks and other Ottoman Muslims that died and another 5 million who were displaced and exiled from their homelands between the 1820s and 1920s (McCarthy, 2010: 291). Hundreds of thousands of Muslims were also massacred during the Second World War and the wars in Yugoslavian state at the time of its dissolution. “It has been variously calculated that about 150,000 Muslims left Bosnia-Herzegovina for the Ottoman realm between 1878 and 1918, and that during the

Second World War 86,000 Bosnian Muslims, about 6.8 per cent of the Muslim population were killed at the Serbian Chetnik attacks” (Adanır, 2002: 273, 280). In the twentieth century Turks in Greece continuously immigrated to Turkey, “a process facilitated by Article 19 of the Greek Nationality Law (1959-1998) which the Greek state used to deny re-entry of Turks and to deprive ethnic Turks who left the country, even for temporary periods, of their Greek citizenship” (Poulton, 1997b: 19). All in all, stigmatization and marginalization of Islam in pan-European discourses was used throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as justification to persecute Muslims alongside Jews (Sells, 1998: 119; Carmichael, 2003:21). As “cruel barbarians” and “aliens” encamped in foreign lands Turks and Muslims were believed to have deserved the expulsion, persecution or assimilation at best. As they became the victims of a terrible banishment, it was either ignored or the myth of the terrible Turk was ushered in so that they appeared as though they atoned for the centuries long misdeeds they had allegedly been carrying out on Christians. The journal articles under examination in this study played a profound role in creating such perception.

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