

“BULGARIAN HORRORS” REVISITED: THE MANY-LAYERED MANIFESTATIONS OF THE ORIENTALIST DISCOURSE IN VICTORIAN POLITICAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE EXTERNAL, INTIMATE AND INTERNAL OTHER*

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This study largely drawing upon the established conceptual framework of Orientalism shall analyse the British perceptions and representations of the Bulgarian Crisis of 1876, a salient feature of the Eastern Question, as they appeared in British parliamentary debates. It will also make occasional yet instructive references to the coverage of the Crisis as well as the image of the Ottoman Empire and the Balkans which were organic parts of the Crisis, in some influential periodicals of the era such as the *Times*¹ and the *Contemporary Review*² in order to better

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¹ *The Times* was established in 1785 as the *Daily Universal Register*. As Andrew Hobbs asserts, “it was unparalleled at its peak in the second quarter of the nineteenth century – in its management, its technology, its editorial content, volume of advertising, political influence, sales, readership and national distribution. These enabled it to dominate the market and to challenge the power of governments.” The reason why this article chooses to refer to the *Times* instead of numerous other periodicals that the Victorians read is because the *Times* usually published more foreign news than other newspapers and was widely read by powerful politicians and influential groups in Parliamentary politics. It is indisputable that the *Times*, despite its fame and prestige, cannot be treated as the sole authority that represents the historical events and trends in Victorian era. Nevertheless, “it is an obvious and superb source for many topics such as Westminster politics, particularly for studies of parties, politicians and diplomats who were close to the *Times*. It spoke for some sections of society, as ‘an organ of the common, satisfied, well-to-do Englishman’, in Matthew Arnold’s words.” See Andrew Hobbs, “The Deleterious Dominance of The Times in Nineteenth-Century Scholarship”, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 18/4 (2013), pp. 474, 489, 490, 492, 493.

² *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* acquired a Liberal outlook

contextualize the debates in the parliament. The main point this article shall make is that the Bulgarian Crisis worked as a catalyst in reinforcing the hegemony of the Orientalist discourse in the political construction of the Ottoman Empire as an absolute external Other in Britain at the time. It shall also delve into the construction of the Balkans as an “intimate other” whose Oriental and European features were alternately accentuated during the Crisis with a view to enlist the British public in either supporting or denouncing the Bulgarian uprising. All in all, it will suggest that the Orientalist rhetoric was embedded at the very core of the Victorian British elites’ cognitive map, and was also unsparingly employed in negating the domestic political opponents swamping them with negative Orientalist stereotypes. Following after Michal Buchowski, this study stretches the use of Orientalism and employs the term as a medium that reveals the hierarchical structures of the Victorian British society that had been forged around dichotomies and oppositions like “*urban vs rural, educated vs uneducated, and winners vs losers of transition*”.³ This approach, needless to say, runs the risk of causing the term Orientalism to partly lose its analytical strength by blurring the etymological boundaries that worked as a linchpin for the construction of Saidian concept of Orientalism in the first place. Nevertheless, I find it instructive to stretch the use of the term temporarily overlooking its geographical connotations and apply it to my discussion over the politico-rhetorical clashes between British Conservatives and Liberals during the Bulgarian Crisis.

Because the newly emerging Balkan nation states’ idea of nation as well as of state machinery were to some extent inspired and influenced by Western Great Powers and their Orientalist mindset, the perceptions of the region and its inhabitants by the West at the turn of the century had a direct bearing on the future of the Muslim and Turkish populations that would later become the members of minority populations in the Balkans.⁴ Therefore by revisiting the Bulgarian Crisis

without any formal affiliations with the Liberal Party. Because the Bulgarian Crisis enormously revitalized and strengthened the Radical Liberal politics in Britain, the analysis of the opinion forming *Contemporary Review* with its Liberal leaning offers invaluable insights into the political atmosphere that surrounded the debate over the Bulgarian Crisis.

³ Michal Buchowski, “The Spectre of Orientalism in Europe: From Exotic Other to Stigmatized Brother”, *Anthropological Quarterly*, 79/3 (2006), pp. 463-482.

⁴ I do not intend to engage in the well-known debate with respect to Balkanism in which the parties either advocate or oppose to the notion that there was a temporal divide between Balkans and Europe, that Balkan national movements were complete “exports” from the Western world and that the Balkans lacked the prerequisite “organic roots” for ideals like nationalism. For such discussion See Maria Todorova, “The Trap of Backwardness: Modernity, Temporality and the Study of Eastern European Nationalism”, *Slavic Review*, 64/1 (2005), pp. 140-164. I merely point out without further

this study will also attempt to enhance our understanding of the way in which the Muslim/Turkish minorities have been "imagined" and treated by several Balkan nation-states during the late nineteenth and twentieth century.

Introduction

Eastern Question as a product of alteritist discourse that established the East as antithetical to the West was a politically constructed phenomenon which increasingly determined the Ottoman Empire's position *vis-à-vis* the European Powers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It also worked as a site of discursive struggle that produced a Eurocentric hegemonic rhetoric which was dichotomist, reductionist, imperialistically driven and by and large Orientalist in Saidian terms.⁵

Orientalist discourse⁶ that mainly fashioned the Western powers' dealings with the Ottoman Empire throughout the nineteenth century took many forms. It profusely pervaded diplomatic documents, political accounts, public debates, travel writing and newspaper columns produced by Western actors.

When a Christian uprising broke out in Bulgaria in 1876 the Ottoman government, already fully occupied with quelling another revolt in Bosnia-Herzegovina, countered the insurgency by sending paramilitary groups known as *Baybozüks* to the region. Bloody clashes ensued between Muslim paramilitary groups and the Christian inhabitants of Bulgaria rapidly turning into a civil war that wreaked havoc on the Balkans and irrevocably changed the Ottoman Empire's relation-

implications as to the authenticity and so called inherent ability or disability of the Balkan nationalism and nation-states that ideas of nationalism and nation-state epitomized by the Great Powers of the time were a source of inspiration for and had an impact on the newly emerging nationalist movements in the other geographies of the world.

⁵ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, Vintage, New York 1978.

⁶ Orientalism in Saidian terms is an extensively researched and broadly discussed topic which I by no means intend to replicate in this study. I simply limit myself to point out that Orientalism is a discursive construction that operates on the assumption of an ontological and impassable distinction between the East and the West, and that establishes a set of binary oppositions, in which the plenitude of the West is contrasted with the lack of the Orient. Orient is imagined, in the form of mostly negative stereotypical images which portray the Oriental world as irrational, inherently stagnant, despotic, violent, morally corrupt and in need for guidance. Through Orientalist discourse the Eastern world is defined, calculated and regulated by the gaze and imperialistically driven aspirations of the Western world. For further reading on Orientalism see Fred Halliday, "'Orientalism' and Its Critics", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 20/2 (1993), pp. 145-163; Bill Ashcroft and Pal Ahluwalia, *Edward Said*, Routledge, London, 2001; Rana Kabbani, *Imperial Fictions: Europe's Myths of Orient*, Pandora Press, London 1994; Gyan Prakash, "Orientalism Now", *History and Theory*, 34/3 (1995), pp. 199-212; Daniel Martin Varisco, *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid*, University of Washington Press, Seattle 2007.

ships with the region. Bulgarian Crisis or the Bulgarian Atrocities as it was named in European historiography caused an unprecedented sensation in Western world. Especially in Great Britain so-called traditional Palmerstonian policy⁷ that had been dominating the Anglo-Ottoman relations since the early nineteenth century and currently carried out by the Conservative government of Benjamin Disraeli (later First Earl of Beaconsfield) (1804-1881) came under severe attack. The story of Bulgarian Crisis of 1876-1878 which has been already aptly told by many scholars from different perspectives throughout the years will not be replicated here. What this text shall mainly focus on is how Orientalist discourse as well as Balkanism which operates on the same cognitive construction and rhetoric with Orientalism, although as Maria Todorova rightly asserts cannot be reduced to a “*subspecies of Orientalism*”⁸, percolated through and fashioned the perception of the Crisis. In so doing it will examine the image of Turks/Ottomans/Muslims that was filtered through the manifestations of the Bulgarian Agitation in the Parliamentary debates and in some news items as a case study. It shall conclude that the political debate in Europe triggered by the Atrocities Agitation had profound repercussions for the future rights and conditions of Muslim/Turkish populations inhabiting the Balkan region who later became citizens of Christian Balkan nation-states. Those nation-states readily inherited the legacy of Orientalist construction of the image of the “Terrible Turk” as a “race” alien to everything European, and the destiny of Muslim and Turkish minorities in the newly founded Balkan nation-states was decidedly sealed by that assumed “alien” status.

⁷ Palmerstonian policy, named after the British Foreign Secretary (later British Premier) Lord Palmerston (Henry John Temple, 3rd Viscount Palmerston) (1784-1865) aimed to bolster the Ottoman Empire as a buffer zone against the aggrandizements of Russia. The essential motivation of Britain in devising the Palmerstonian policy was to maintain the political independence and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire in order to promote and reinforce the British interests in the Eastern Mediterranean, protect the power of balance in Europe and thwart a possible Russian march towards the Indian colonies. Until it was modified in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and completely abandoned on the eve of the First World War, Palmerstonian policy was employed by a series of Tory and Whig governments and took many forms ranging from militarily supporting the Ottoman State in the Crimean War to constantly interfering in the Ottoman modernization project and acting as protectorate of the non-Muslim subjects of the Sultan. For a detailed analysis on Palmerstonism, see Nazan Çiçek, *The Young Ottomans, Turkish Critics of the Eastern Question in the Late Nineteenth Century*, I.B.Tauris, London and New York 2010. Also See M. S. Anderson, *The Great Powers and the Near East 1772-1923*, Arnold, London 1966; Frank Edgar Bailey, *British Policy and the Turkish Reform Movement*, Oxford University Press, London 1942; Roderic Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ 1963; Inari Rautsi, *The Eastern Question Revisited: Case Studies in Ottoman Balance of Power*, Helsinki Printing House, Helsinki 1993; Frederick Stanley Rodkey, “Lord Palmerston and the Rejuvenation of Turkey, 1830-41; Part II, 1839-41”, *Journal of Modern History*, 2/2 (1930), pp. 193-225.

⁸ Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, New York 1997, p. 8.

Bulgarian Crisis of 1876-1878 as a Laboratory for the Construction of Otherness

When the Ottoman government countered the Bulgarian revolt by arming and employing irregular forces large numbers of Muslim and Christian civilians were caught up in the ensuing clashes. In the first week of May, 1876 Christian Bulgarian casualties reached thousands earning the incident the name of Bulgarian massacres. On June 23, 1876, leading Liberal British newspaper, the *Daily News*, published an article on the issue by its correspondent Edwin Pears entitled "*Moslem Atrocities in Bulgaria*". As Elizabeth W. Shelton correctly points out, "*Pears' article acknowledged that there had been an insurrection against the Turks, which he described as fully justified, but he never described what cruelties the Bulgarian insurgents inflicted upon the Turks, their villages, and police*". Pears merely focused on unfortunate Bulgarians "*whose only fault was being Christians and who were being indiscriminately slaughtered by the Turks*"⁹. Edwin Pears (later Sir Edwin) was a close friend of two pioneer American missionaries at Robert College in Istanbul, namely Dr. George Washburn and Dr. Albert Long who had been known by their anti-Turkish and pro-Bulgarian proclivities. The "information" Pears used in his *Daily News* article had come from Washburn and Long, the president and vice president of the Robert College respectively, the missionary school the majority of students and boarders of which at the time of the Bulgarian Crisis were Bulgarian.¹⁰ Pears' article estimated the number of Bulgarian massacres around 18.000 to 30.000.

Washburn was a missionary who believed that "*the Turks remained unchanged; continued to be as ignorant and uncivilized as when they came from Central Asia in the thirteenth century*."¹¹ He also believed that "*Christianity is essentially progressive while Mohammedanism is unprogressive and stationary, and if progress is to continue to be the watchword of civilization, the faith which is to dominate this civilization must also be progressive*"¹². He was unofficial adviser to the American as well as British diplomatic legations in Istanbul and his views on the region were highly esteemed by Washington and London. Through Pears, Washburn and Long were able to prompt very influential British politicians such as Duke of Argyll and Mr. E. Forster, again well-known

⁹ Elizabeth W. Shelton, *Faith, Freedom, and Flag: The Influence of American Missionaries on Foreign Affairs, 1830-1880*, Unpublished DLS Thesis, Georgetown University, Washington DC 2011, p. 313.

¹⁰ Shelton, *ibid*, pp. 300, 312, 313.

¹¹ George Washburn, *Fifty Years in Constantinople*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co, 1909, p. xvi, quoted in Shelton, *ibid*, p. 228.

¹² George Washburn, "Contemporary Review for November", *Public Opinion*, 7 December 1893, Amherst Archives and Special Collections, George Washburn file, quoted in Shelton, *ibid*, p. 232.

anti-Turkish/anti-Palmerstonian policy figures, to take up the Bulgarian cause and question the Disraeli government in Parliament only four days after the appearance of Pears' article. Disraeli and his Foreign Minister Lord Derby responded to these questions rather dismissively calling the news nothing more than “*coffee house bable*”.¹³ Before long, the government's indifferent attitude provoked a flurry of angry reactions from the Liberal and Radical public.¹⁴ The tone of the news articles in the press regarding the Bulgarian affair completely changed; insurgents became Christians, Turks began to be referred to as Muslim infidels, Parliament demanded more debate and eventually a change in the Palmerstonian policy. The alleged plight of Bulgarian Christians gained an unprecedented grassroots support mostly crossing party lines. Many Conservative MPs joined hands with the Liberals in protesting the “barbarous” Turks although they mostly refrained from condemning the Government's preceding alliance with the Ottoman Empire on account of the British imperial interests.¹⁵

“In late July, the *League in Aid of Christians of Turkey* along with other leading activists initiated a pressure campaign on Parliament that blossomed by the fall into a full-scale public opinion upheaval. On July 27, the League helped organize a meeting in London. 48 MPs and 12 other leading political figures sent out invitations to the event. Lord Shaftesbury oversaw the meeting. E. A. Freeman served as the keynote speaker. By September 6, all cities in the North and half of the major cities and towns across England held large protest meetings against support for Turkey.”¹⁶

¹³ Benjamin Disraeli, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 31 July 1876, vol. 231, cc. 126-225 and c. 203.

¹⁴ Throughout the Crisis *The Times* published many letters to the Editor which either summarized a meeting held for protesting the Bulgarian Atrocities in a particular town or constituency or expressed indignation at the British government's amicable relations with Turkey. There were also many news items informing the readers about protest meetings across the country. See “Letters to the Editor”, *The Times*, 22 August 1876, p. 8, issue 28714, col. C; “Letters to the Editor”, *The Times*, 4 September 1876, p. 10, issue 28725, col. C; “Letters to the Editor”, *The Times*, 6 September 1876, p. 8, issue 28727, col. D; “The Turkish Atrocities”, *The Times*, 13 September 1876, p. 8, issue 28733, col. A; “The Atrocities in Bulgaria”, *The Times*, 15 September 1876, p. 8, issue 28735, col. D; “The Atrocities in Bulgaria”, *The Times*, 19 September 1876, p. 8, issue 28738, col. A; “The Atrocities in Bulgaria”, *The Times*, 20 September 1876, p. 7, issue 28739, col. A; “The Eastern Question”, *The Times*, 28 September 1876, p. 5, issue 28746, col. A.

¹⁵ David Harris, *Britain and the Bulgarian Horrors of 1876*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1939, pp. 224-225; Walter G. Withwein, *Britain and the Balkan Crisis, 1875-1878*, AMS Press, New York, 1966, p. 90.

¹⁶ Charles William Walldorf, Jr, *Democratic Abandonment: Liberalism and Commitment Termination in the United States and British Foreign Policy*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Virginia 2002, pp. 105-106.

Apart from the Liberal Party and its mouthpieces in the press, especially the *Daily News*, several other activist movements, including the Oxford Group spearheaded by Freeman, Farley and Cannon Liddon, and Non-Conformists, mobilized the public in order to pressure the Disraeli Cabinet into withdrawing from traditional Palmerstonian policy commitments.

British Parliament was indeed quite familiar with the manifestations of anti-Turkish rhetoric that demanded the removal of Turkish rule from predominantly Christian lands beginning with the Greek War of Independence and continuing through the Lebanon (1860), Serbian (1862) and Cretan (1866) affairs. As Charles William Waldorff Jr points out during the Greek War, condemnation of the Porte was rampant in British Parliament. "In July 1822, Parliament held an extensive debate on the war. [...] Various speakers talked of the "barbarious ferocity" of the Turks, "Turkish inhumanity" as well as the "tyranny", "wasteful and disgusting empire of the Turks"¹⁷. In other words expelling the Turks, "a nation of barbarians, the ancient and inveterate enemies of Christianity and freedom in Asia"¹⁸ from the Balkans had been loudly demanded by some MPs decades before the Bulgarian agitation. In its coverage of the Bulgarian Crisis, the *Times* revoked the memory of the Greek War of Independence and concluded that both the Muslims and the Ottoman conduct in the Balkans remained unchanged if not deteriorated. "If the popular memory of historical facts were better informed", as the *Times* saw it, "the indignation at the infamous conduct of the Turks in Bulgaria would have been less mingled with surprise".¹⁹ What was different this time was the enormous public support, activist protest and media sensation that joined the members of Parliament composing a very eclectic yet harmonious chorus that cried out to putting an end to the Turkish domination over Christians.

Todd E. Larson suggests that the Agitation camp, starting with Gladstone, largely drew on British travel writers' accounts in creating their Orientalist anti-Turkish arsenal. "It did not take much to influence British opinion against the Turks who had been steadily demonized by some British travel writers since the 18th century."²⁰ One of the travel writers whose extremely venomous book the *Christians in Turkey* found its way into almost every speech made by the Liberal MPs and every newspaper article on the subject of the Bulgarian atrocities was Reverend William Denton. In his book

¹⁷ Waldorff, Jr, *ibid*, p. 78.

¹⁸ Waldorff, Jr, *ibid*, p. 78.

¹⁹ "Editorial", *The Times*, 14 August 1876, p. 9, issue 28707, col. B.

²⁰ Todd E. Larson, *Discovering the Balkans: British Travellers in Southeastern Europe, 1861-1911*, Unpublished Phd Thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 2004, p. 110.

Denton portrayed the Turk as an animal like creature whose favourite pastime activity was to violate Christian girls and women.²¹ Denton's thesis which was repeatedly quoted throughout the Bulgarian Crisis was that "*moral corruption the most horrible, and sensuality the most loathsome, has become universal amongst the Turkish people [...]*".²² The "Atrocitians" were quick in grafting Denton's, as well as other travellers' equally Orientalist views into their agenda of evicting the "horrible" Muslims/Turks from Christian Europe where, it was believed, they had long over stayed their welcome.

Use of negative Oriental stereotypes towards the Ottoman Empire and the Turks was in fact well-established before the Bulgarian Agitation. As Leslie Rogne Schumacher accurately suggests "*the almost universal description of the Ottoman Empire in the [British] press as a place of Muslim fanaticism, misrule and barbaric, uncivilized or stranger races*" had a long history. "*Although in reality most of the Balkans 'were less known than Timbuctu' to Britain as S.G.B. St Clair and Charles Brophy*²³ had observed several years earlier, *the idea that oppressed Eastern Christians were rising up against a tyrannical and fanatical Muslim ruling authority was a legible idea.*"²⁴ With the Bulgarian Atrocities campaign largely nurtured by Gladstone's inflammatory best-selling pamphlet *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East* that called the Turk as the "*one great anti-human specimen of humanity*", employment of the Orientalist discourse in Great Britain towards the Ottoman Empire reached its apogee. Both pro-Agitation and anti-Agitation camps equally exploited the Orientalist rhetoric to the full extent while they attacked the Turks, the Balkan people as well as each other.

As V. G. Kiernan remarks "*the English gentleman's attitudes to his own 'lower orders' was identical with that of Europe to the 'lesser breeds'. Discontented native in the colonies, labour agitator in the mills, were the same serpent in alternate disguises. Much of the talk about the barbarism or darkness of the outer world, which it was Europe's mission to rout, was transmuted fear of the masses at home*".²⁵ The analogy drawn between the "Oriental other" and the "other at home" was rather commonplace in nineteenth century British travel

²¹ Rev. W. E. Denton, *The Christians in Turkey*, Bell & Daldy, London, 1863, p. 60, cited in Larson, *ibid*, p. 110.

²² Rev. W. E. Denton, *The Christians in Turkey*, Bell & Daldy, London, 1863, p. 60, cited in Larson, *ibid*, p. 26.

²³ S.G.B.St.Clair and Charles Brophy, *Twelve Years' Study of the Eastern Question in Bulgaria: Being a Revised Edition of "A Residence in Bulgaria"*, Chapman and Hall, London 1877, p. v.

²⁴ Leslie Rogne Schumacher, *A "Lasting Solution": The Eastern Question and British Imperialism, 1875-1878*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Minnesota, Minnesota 2012, p. 64.

²⁵ Victor Gordon Kiernan, *The Lords of Human Kind: European Attitudes to the Outside World in the Imperial Age* Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London 1969, p. 316.

writing which was epitomized in Arthur John Evans' 1877 book of *Through Bosnia and Herzegovina on Foot During the Insurrection*. “If anyone wishes to find examples of the deepest human degradation”, Evans wrote, “he must search not among the mountain homes of the oppressed rayahs of Bosnia, but rather in the alleys of one of our great cities”.²⁶

In other words, Orientalism was never only about the Orient. It was a particular construction of self that instrumentalised different Others in building, consolidating and legitimising the power and always perpetrating domination and subordination. “Predominantly, what was at stake was not just Europeans' cognitive control of the Orient or the colonial world generally but rather European elite males' cognitive control of all their Others, domestic and foreign, as defined by gender, class, religion, ethnicity, or any combination of traits”.²⁷ Bulgarian Agitation served as a litmus test illustrating that Orientalist perceptions were deep-seated in Victorian British elite males' cognitive map, be they Liberal or Conservative. It also showed that, in power politics, the designation and status of the Oriental were rather fluid. It could easily be extended to the domestic agents or less obvious Others such as the Balkan peoples, hence warranting their lower rank as unenlightened, irrational beings ruled by their uncontrolled primitive emotions.

In this sense, Balkanic people too, as members of a “potentially superior civilization”, had their share of Orientalist stereotyping during the Bulgarian Agitation. 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”.²⁸ 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. In Vesna Goldsworthy's words, “instead of descriptions of ‘exotic’ Other, we encounter perceptions of Balkan identity in an ambivalent oscillation between ‘Europeanness’ and ‘Oriental difference’”.²⁹ Aptly put by Ana Savic, “the Balkan other is represented as ‘an intimate other’, the other within,

²⁶ Arthur John Evans, *Through Bosnia and Herzegovina on Foot During the Insurrection*, Longmans, Greens & Co, London, 1877, p. 296, quoted in Larson, *ibid*, pp. 284-285.

²⁷ Carter Vaughn Findley, “An Ottoman Occidental in Europe: Ahmed Midhat Meets Madame Gülnar”, *The American Historical Review*, 103/ 1 (1998), p. 15.

²⁸ Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe, The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford University Press, California, 1994, p. 7.

²⁹ Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania, The Imperialism of the Imagination*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1998, p. 2.

*an intrinsic though dark aspect of the self.*³⁰ 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. “*The idea of Eastern Europe never attained the definitive otherness of the Orient, but its parts were made to cohere within a system of related characteristics, imitating the principles of the taxonomic tables of Linnaeus.*”³¹ Bulgarian Crisis accentuated the ambivalent and constantly shifting position of the Balkans on the cultural map of Europe largely depending on Western approach towards the absolute, Middle Eastern, external Other and also exposing the constructedness of the concept of Europe.³² “*The Balkan Other’s moment of inclusion in Europe is always marked with a possibility of his/her slippage into otherness, which by extension, brings into question the stability of European identity.*”³³

Although pro-Agitation campaigners found it more serviceable to underscore the Europeaness of Bulgarians, had there been no Bulgarian Crisis that worked as a catalyst in dividing the British political realm into two camps as “humanitarian” versus “imperial”, there seems to be no reason to doubt that all British politicians would have agreed on the “inferiority” and rather Oriental property of the Balkan people as a whole. Vesna Goldsworthy drawing on her work on late Victorian and Edwardian British literature detects in fact a larger pattern that works towards otherization of all Europe vis-a-vis Britain. She points out to a “*particularly British orientalisng rhetoric*” that “*identifies all lands across the English Channel as a corrupt and undisciplined Other*” which “*threatens to swallow the values of Britishness*”. Balkan peninsula in this sense represents “*merely the most exotic yet paradoxically typical instance*” of Europe as an orientalised space.³⁴ Todd E. Larson reminds us that from the vantage point of British travellers whose accounts largely informed the Bulgarian Atrocities rhetoric there was no difference between the Ottoman Turks and the Balkan nationals in terms of being inferior to the British. “*Without doubt, almost every British traveller to the region carried a strong sense of moral superiority, both over the slowly receding Ottoman Turks*

³⁰ Ana Savic, *Intimate Antagonists, British Image of the Balkans, 1853-1914*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of California, Riverside 2008, p. 162.

³¹ Wolff, *ibid*, p. 358.

³² An article in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1930 described Turkey under the Westernizing policy of Mustafa Kemal as “Balkan rather than Oriental” which provided a very telling example of the meaning as well as the status of the Balkans from the vantage point of Europe as a politico-social topography caught between the West and the Orient. See Owen Tweedy, “Turkey in Modern Dress”, *Fortnightly Review*, June 1930, no: 127, p. 813.

³³ Savic, *ibid*, p. 154.

³⁴ Goldsworthy, *ibid*, p. 9.

and the Balkan nationals many of them sought to support. [...] What most writers did not dispute, regardless of political leaning, was the second-class nature of the Balkan peoples"³⁵ Reflecting the primary logic of Saidian Orientalist criticism that the Orient, for the Western world, represented not only geographical but also temporal Other, marking the Orient as Europe's past, famous scholar and travel writer Arthur John Evans claimed in 1878 that entering the Balkans was akin to using a time machine: "To pass indeed, into those almost unknown Illyrian wilds is to find oneself in a younger world."³⁶ Similarly, in a parliamentary debate with respect to the atrocities Conservative MP Hanbury pronounced that there was not much difference among Eastern people in terms of lagging behind the West. He claimed that "the East was not like the West, and that there were other countries in the East of Europe besides Turkey in which the Governments and the people were at least 300 years behind the people of the West".³⁷ This was a part of what Roger A. Pauly called the "imperial consciousness of Britain" which found its expression in a crystallized form in Victorian evolutionary anthropology. "Evolutionary Anthropology [...] created a schema of civilization which placed major cultures of the world on different evolutionary stations, or stages, of development."³⁸ This system perfectly fit existing Victorian notions of civilization, superiority, class, race and gender and legitimated the British imperial/colonial as well as "humanitarian" activities in world politics.

Yet owing to their so-called "racial" affiliations with Europe, namely whiteness as well as their Christian religion, Balkan people were preferable over the "brown" and Muslim people. Arthur J. Evans remarked in 1878 that "blood is thicker than water, and even at the present moment it may be well to remember that, though the Slavs are not so near of kin to us as Germans or the Norsemen, they are yet our cousins. The Turks, on the other hand, are not related to our Aryan family at all."³⁹

Thus, during the Bulgarian Affair, the champions of Agitation focused on the European aspects of the Balkans that largely derived from Christianity. Balkan people in the words of Edward A. Freeman, the celebrated Liberal and anti-Turk historian who played a significant part in the Bulgarian Agitation, were "sharers in the blood, the speech, the historic memories, the common civilization of Europe trodden down by

³⁵ Larson, *ibid*, pp. 272, 379.

³⁶ Arthur J. Evans, *The Slavs of European Civilization: A Lecture Delivered at Sion College*, 23 February 1878, Longmans, Green & Co, London, 1878, p. 28, quoted in Larson, *ibid*, p. 274.

³⁷ Mr. Hanbury, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 31 July 1876 vol 231 cc126-225, c. 140.

³⁸ Roger A. Pauly, *Unnatural Selections: British Evolutionary Anthropology and the Civilizing Mission*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Delaware 2000, p. 28.

³⁹ Arthur J. Evans, *The Slavs of European Civilization...*, pp. 5-6, quoted in Larson, *ibid*, p. 344.

barbarian invaders” and “the lands to be set free” were “old historic seats of Greek intellect and Roman rule”.⁴⁰ Even the *Times* which had been vacillating between the two camps claimed that “the Bulgarian Christians were ‘naturally’ improving while the Turks, hindered by the fatalism of their race, were decaying”:

“The Bulgarians are perhaps the most promising nationality in Turkey. [...] It says much for their powers of steady work and for their capacity in business that they have made themselves the chief agricultural and commercial part of the community in spite of rapacious Pashas, venal Mussulman Courts, exclusion from all high public offices, and the general disdain of the ruling caste. The Mussulmans themselves, on the other hand, are a decaying race, as they are in most other parts of the Empire. Their disdain for the pettier details of trade prevents them from rivalling the less scrupulous Christians. They are also too indolent as well as too dignified to till their ground. Nor are they disposed to profit by the civilizing agencies of Christian Europe. The fatalism of their race also tends to paralyze their energies now that they are fighting against the stream. Thus the Turkish rule is slowly but steadily melting away. Land is passing from Mussulman to Christian hands in spite of the laws, Mussulman villages are becoming Christian [...]. Hence, no doubt, the terrible fury with which they have attacked the Christians. The massacres were the attempt of a dominant race to regain its vanishing influence as well as an outburst of hate.”⁴¹

There was no denying that the Balkans were backward, but as fellow believers they were hailed as progressive and promising in comparison with the “hopeless” “incurable” Turks. The *Contemporary Review* commented that “under the pressure of this alien tyranny [i.e., the Ottoman Empire], which, while defied all reforms, was growing weaker every day, lay young communities belonging by religion and character to a higher civilization”.⁴² As Liberal MP Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice confessed in the House of Commons, “nobody pretended that these insurgent Provinces were prosperous or very civilized communities”, but once free from the Ottoman rule and endowed with the free institutions, they would march fast on the path of civilization.⁴³ It was in fact an oft-repeated argument throughout the Agitation days that once relieved from the Turkish “yoke”,

⁴⁰ Edward A. Freeman, “The English People in Relation to the Eastern Question”, *The Contemporary Review*, February 1877, no: 29, p. 506.

⁴¹ “Editorial”, *The Times*, 26 August 1876, p. 7, issue 28718, col. B.

⁴² Goldwin Smith, “England’s Abandonment of the Protectorate of Turkey”, *The Contemporary Review*, no: 31 February 1878, p. 610.

⁴³ Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 31 July 1876, vol. 231, cc. 126-225, c. 165, 166.

the Balkan people shed their degeneracy and displayed rapid progress. *The Times* definitely believed it to be the case:

“What is also remarkable is that at every stage of this prolonged contest it has appeared doubtful to many careful observers whether the Moslem or the degenerate Christian under him better deserved our moral sympathy. The latter was always mendacious, licentious in his profligacy, treacherous in his cruelty, yet it has come to pass that when a Province has been separated from the Ottoman Empire and allowed forty or fifty years of development, it has advanced in a way affording the most striking contrast to the Provinces retained by the Sultan. Everything that is bad may be said with much truth of the Trans-Balkan Provinces, just as everything that is bad might have been said not long since of Roumania, and much that is bad might have been said of Southern Hungary but if we are watching a great evolution, which will end—perhaps not now, but twenty years hence—in the liberation of the Trans-Balkan Provinces, and their gradual elevation to the rank other Provinces have attained, it becomes a question whether we should not make it a principle of action to try to make their inhabitants friendly to us, and to assist them in standing on their feet, instead of throwing them into the arms of others.”⁴⁴

Gladstone himself repeatedly argued that the Turks and the Slavs were two irreconcilably different races in a hierarchical position, and resorted to an analogy between slavery and the state of the Slavs under the Ottoman reign. “*It is worse in this respect, that in the case of negro slavery, at any rate, it was a race of higher capacities ruling over a race of lower capacities*”; he ventured, “*but in the case of this system [that prevails in Turkey], it is unfortunately a race of lower capacities which rules over a race of higher capacities.*”⁴⁵ Throughout the campaign it was an ordinary practice for numerous writers to call for the eviction of the Turks from European lands on grounds of their racial inferiority. “*An example of how extreme some of these writings were was A Regular Little Turk, or Mrs. Christian’s Troublesome Brat, a vitriolic essay complete with racist illustrations which asked ‘How had that brown-skinned, black-eyed, bandy-legged brat got into Mrs. Christian’s nursery? The nursery though not quite perfect, was on the whole a respectably*

⁴⁴ “Editorial”, *The Times*, 31 July 1876, p. 9, issue 28695, col. A. Also See “Editorial”, *The Times*, 25 August 1876, p. 7, issue 28717, col A where it reads: “*There is abundant evidence that if we could secure the conditions of peace and justice in any part of the Turkish Empire in Europe, the Eastern Question would rapidly tend to settle itself. The Turk is dying out and wherever the Slav or the Bulgarian gets free play he multiplies and his wealth increases. It is not unreasonable to look forward to the natural extinction of the Turk, [...]*”.

⁴⁵ William Gladstone, *The Slavonic Provinces of the Ottoman Empire*, The Eastern Question Association Series, no: 5, Cassell, Peter & Galpin, London 1877, p. 11, quoted in Savic, *ibid*, p. 57

conducted establishment, and not intended for the entertainment of boys resembling young Ali'."⁴⁶

While the Ottoman Empire was depicted as a "brown-skinned brat", an intruder in a respectful nursery, it was also rather common to portray the Balkan nations as children lacking any agency and power which indicates that negative Orientalist stereotypes were amply exploited by both pro- and anti-agitation camps. Through the lenses of Victorian evolutionary anthropology, "*non-Europeans were viewed as the intellectual and social equivalent of the smallest, most powerless, and least intellectually developed members of British society*"⁴⁷, namely children. "*Just as Europe had a childhood from which it evolved, more primitive parts of the world were still wallowing in their infancy. This child-savage comparison clearly offered a convenient and fitting justification for the civilizing mission.*"⁴⁸ Kathryn Rose Bruton, in her analysis of the British satirical journal the *Punch* during the Near East crisis of 1875-1878, concludes that in many illustrations the Great Powers were depicted as "*parents supposedly acting in their best interests of the Balkan Christians as their children*"⁴⁹. In a particular illustration captioned "*Dame Europa's Christmas Pudding*", Great Powers' representatives were pictured standing around a pot of pudding while "*the Balkan Christians appeared as a child who could not cook properly or take care of themselves and whose future needed to be decided by adults, reflecting the Great Powers*"⁵⁰.

As the Liberals, Radicals, Nonconformists, some members of the High Church and Anglo-Catholic parties were marking the Muslim Ottoman Turks as the "absolute other" portraying them as "bloodthirsty tyrants" acting on their "barbaric" instincts and religious "fanaticism", they were also pointing out that the Balkan people, as a child-like population in need of help and guidance, were on a lower civilizational scale than Europe. Negative Orientalist stereotyping, in other words, was at play both for the Ottomans and for the Balkan peoples, yet it did not merely stop there. The Conservative government's implicit approval of the Porte's conduct prompted the pro-Agitation camp to include the British allies of the "cut throat" Turk into the league of Oriental "savages" albeit in the Western attire. According to Edward A. Freeman, Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield, the Prime Minister) and Derby (the Foreign Secretary) were even worse than the Orientals:

⁴⁶ Anonymous, *A Regular Little Turk, or Mrs. Christian's Troublesome Brat*, Gaubard & Son, London, [No dates], p. 4, quoted in Larson, *ibid*, p. 237.

⁴⁷ Pauly, *ibid*, p. 63.

⁴⁸ Pauly, *ibid*, p. 72.

⁴⁹ Kathryn Rose Bruton, *The British and German Presses in the Age of Empire: 1876-1906*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Mississippi State University, Mississippi 2013, p. 120.

⁵⁰ Bruton, *ibid*, p. 121.

“*The Turk I can understand*”, Freeman opined, “*he is simply a bad man, but these wretches are pure fiends*”.⁵¹ He even went so far as to suggest that in the current state of things “*the word Tory came to mean Turk*”.⁵²

On account of his “*attitude of sceptical apathy*”⁵³ during the Bulgarian Crisis and the following months that led to the Congress of Berlin, Disraeli was labelled as “Turkish or more Turkish than the Turks”, “Oriental” and “foreign”. His Jewish origin and “disputable” conversion to Protestantism came to be seen as the reason behind his pro-Ottoman foreign policy that was interpreted as un-patriotic and anti-Christian. Freeman believed that Disraeli was the active friend of the Turk, because he himself being a Jew was an Oriental. “*Throughout the East, the Turk and the Jew are leagued against the Christian. [...] The Jew is the tool of the Turk, and more hated than the Turk. [...] Throughout Europe, the most fiercely Turkish part of the press is in Jewish hands.*”⁵⁴ Freely employing the phrases such as “Tory-Mahometan mind”, or “Hebrew yoke” throughout his criticism of Disraeli’s foreign policy Freeman boldly asserted that “*Lord Beaconsfield has never become an Englishman, he has never become a European, he remains the man of Asian mysteries, with feelings and policy distinctly Asiatic*”.⁵⁵ As Joshua Ness remarks, “*Disraeli’s political efforts for the Ottoman Empire, along with Anglo-Jewish community support, contributed to the outbreak of anti-Semitism that followed.*”⁵⁶ Freeman was convinced that this “*Semitic instinct [was] of itself quite enough to account for the policy of a Cabinet led by Lord Beaconsfield*”.⁵⁷ *Fun Magazine* went even so far as to ridicule Disraeli by naming him as “Bendizzi Pasha”, a despot who sacrificed the interests of Christian masses in both Bulgaria and England.⁵⁸ During and after the Bulgarian agitation “*the medieval conspiracy between Jew and Muslim against Christianity resurfaced. It first was against Islam, but quickly shifted to Anglo-Jewry, because of*

⁵¹ Richard Shannon, *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation 1876*, Archon, Hamden 1975, p. 82.

⁵² Freeman, “The English People in Relation to...”, p. 500.

⁵³ Evelyn Ashley, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 1078-1147, c. 1079.

⁵⁴ Edward A. Freeman, *The Ottoman Power in Europe, Its Nature, Its Growth, and Its Decline*, MacMillan and Co, London 1877, pp. xix-xx, quoted in Joshua Ness, *Disraeli and Orientalism: Identity of Culture, Race, and Religion Through His Romanticism of a “Jewish Race”*, Unpublished MA Thesis, The Graduate School of the College of Charleston the Citadel 2010, p. 135.

⁵⁵ Edward A. Freeman, “The Relation of the English People to the War”, *The Contemporary Review*, no: 30, August 1877, p. 494.

⁵⁶ Ness, *ibid.*, pp. 120-123.

⁵⁷ Freeman, “The Relation of the English People...”, p. 495.

⁵⁸ Ness, *ibid.*, p. 127.

a common conception of Jews as Oriental'.⁵⁹ Goldwin Smith writing in the *Contemporary Review* in 1878 even suggested that "had England been drawn into this conflict [Russo-Ottoman War of 1878] it would have been in some measure a Jewish war, a war waged with British blood to uphold the objects of British sympathy, or to avenge Jewish wrongs".⁶⁰

T.P.O'Connor's biography of Disraeli written in 1905 indicated how deep-seated the Orientalist stereotyping in British public mind had become at the time of the Bulgarian Crisis. Political opponents of the Prime Minister of the country felt at liberty to insult him by employing the term Oriental which had then become to define everything that was against the Britishness and by extension Western civilization and humanity. "*The somewhat commonplace Englishman*", wrote O'Connor, "*with notions of duty to his country, a horror of bloodshed, the fears of avenging conscience, had no chance in time of perilous and fateful resolves against the brilliant, callous, self-adoring Oriental*".⁶¹ Gladstone too came to believe at some point that Disraeli was working for the Jewish cause, and supporting the Ottoman Empire not because he was fond of the Turks but because he simply hated Christians. Bulgarian Crisis, in other words, "*touched deep nerves in the Victorian psyche*"⁶² and increased the visibility of anti-semitic tendencies in British public opinion.

In fact, throughout the Bulgarian Crisis Disraeli and his cabinet did not exhibit any particular fondness for Muslims or Turks. Neither did they attempt to whitewash the massacres. What they did was simply to cling to the traditional Palmerstonian Near East policy which saw the Ottoman Empire as a buffer zone against the Russian encroachments. It was true that Disraeli preferred the Ottoman rule over Russian one, because the latter with a history of anti-Jewish riots and pogroms looked much less civilized and enlightened than the former. Yet this did not turn Lord Beaconsfield into an anti-Christian and pro-Muslim, it simply turned him into an anti-Russian. As Ana Savic opines,

"Disraeli's glorification of the cultural and ethnic diversity of the Ottoman Empire did not remove hierarchial divisions between Britain and the Ottoman Empire. [...] Disraeli's admiration for the Ottoman civilization

⁵⁹ Anthony S. Wohl, "Ben Juju: Representations of Disraeli's Jewishness in the Victorian Political Cartoon", in Todd M. Edelman and Tony Kushner (eds), *Disraeli's Jewishness*, Valentine Mitchell, Portland, 2002, pp. 108-114.

⁶⁰ Smith, *ibid*, p. 617.

⁶¹ T. P. O'Connor, *Lord Beaconsfield, A Biography*, T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1905, p. xviii, quoted in Ness, *ibid*, p. 130.

⁶² Muriel E. Chamberlain, *Pax Britannica? British Foreign Policy 1789-1914*, Longman, London 1988, p. 139.

ennobled and justified British political relations with the Ottoman Empire that were viewed by some as a betrayal of British liberal traditions. Disraeli’s emphasis on the ideas of cultural diversity and racial inclusion helped to promote British imperialist interests.”⁶³

In other words, Conservative support for the Porte did not necessarily mean that anti-Agitation camp exempted the Turks from Orientalist stereotyping. In fact, the Liberals and the Conservatives alike concurred in the common notion that the Ottoman Empire, as the absolute external Other, represented the epitome of all Oriental vices. What they disagreed was what was best for the colonial interests of the British Empire. Conservatives abstained from aiding the uprisings in the Balkans in general and the Bulgarian one in particular not because they thought that the Turks were “civilized” enough to rule over a Christian people but because the maintenance of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire was imperative for the balance of power in Europe which was also intricately connected to the British imperial interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Turcophile British Ambassador Elliot’s words summarized the Conservative stand: “*We have been upholding what we know to be a semi civilized nation, liable under certain circumstances to be carried into fearful excesses; but the fact of this having just now been strikingly brought home to us all cannot be a sufficient reason for abandoning a policy which is the only one that can be followed without due regard to our own interests.*”⁶⁴ Disraeli echoed his ambassador in the Commons during a debate on August 11, 1876 when he remarked that they were not backing Turkey from “*blind superstition and a want of sympathy with the highest aspirations of humanity, but their duty was to Empire*”⁶⁵.

While Gladstone and the public gathered behind him tended to perceive the Christian insurrections in the Sultan’s dominions, including the Bulgarian one, as the harbinger of a progressive revolutionary movement for the liberation from Muslim domination, Disraeli saw them as a proof that the Balkan region, and by implication the Eastern world, was inherently violent and chaotic, hence on a lower civilizational level than the Western world. “*Disraeli in fact was suggesting that the recent events are nothing unusual for that part of the world and he merely sneers at the ‘vague philanthropy’ and ‘wild sentimentalism’ of his opponents.*”⁶⁶

⁶³ Savic, *ibid*, p. 51.

⁶⁴ Cited in R.W.Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, Norton, New York 1972, p. 63.

⁶⁵ Benjamin Disraeli, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, 11 August 1876, col. 1146.

⁶⁶ Benjamin Disraeli, “Speech on Calling Out Reserve Forces”, 8 April 1878, from *Selected Speeches of the Late Right Honourable the Earl Beaconsfield*, ed. T. E. Kebell, Longmans, London, 1882, p. 214, quoted in Savic, *ibid*, p. 34.

During the Agitation days Disraeli left no room for doubt that he had no particular sympathy for either Turks or Bulgarians and saw both of them as inherently barbarous and equally Oriental in their conduct. He believed that “*atrocities [were] inevitable in certain countries and between certain races*” and that although the Turks committed massacres, the Bulgarians were not completely innocent.⁶⁷ In a parliamentary speech that aimed to discredit the sensational reports and the press coverage of the massacres crammed with the stories of extreme torture allegedly carried out by Turks, Disraeli declared that the news could not be accurate. “*I doubt that torture has been practised on a great scale among Oriental people, who seldom, I believe resort to torture*”, he remarked, “*but generally terminate their connection with culprits in a more expeditious manner*”.⁶⁸ In a later sitting Disraeli corrected Sir William Horcourt, the Liberal MP who in attacking the government’s apathy misquoted Disraeli’s sarcastic words as “*among historic people*”. Disraeli repeated that “*he had said Oriental people not historic one*”.⁶⁹ Ostensibly emphasizing the dubious and possibly factitious nature of the reports regarding the atrocities, Disraeli’s several speeches made seemingly in favour of the Ottoman government during the Agitation in fact reveal his ossified Orientalist stance towards the Ottoman people including the Balkanic ones whose similarities, in his eyes, surpassed their differences. On July 31, 1876, for example, during a debate in the Commons, after countering the atrocities reports with the story of the murder of five Turkish travellers, Disraeli remarked that “*this only shows that in those countries there are views and feelings of humanity altogether different from our own, and that on both sides these horrible scenes are occurring*”. The backbone of the Saidian Orientalist criticism that Orientalist paradigm saw the Eastern world comprising both Turks and Balkan people as essentially different and inferior than the Western world is in display par excellence.⁷⁰ “*Embracing racial difference in a grand vision of British supremacy Disraeli, nevertheless, essentializes difference, suggesting that certain races are inherently barbarous and therefore, in need of guidance. Benevolent acknowledgement of racial difference serves in Disraeli’s political program as a justification for colonial domination.*”⁷¹

⁶⁷ Benjamin Disraeli, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 10 July 1876, vol. 230, cc. 1180-1186, c. 1186; also see Benjamin Disraeli, *Selected Speeches of the Late Right Honourable the Earl Beaconsfield*, ed. T. E. Kebell, Longmans, London 1882, p. 155.

⁶⁸ Benjamin Disraeli, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 10 July 1876, vol. 230, cc. 1180-1186, c. 1182.

⁶⁹ Benjamin Disraeli, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 1078-1147, c. 1129.

⁷⁰ Benjamin Disraeli, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 31 July 1876, cc. 126-225, c.204.

⁷¹ Savic, *ibid*, p. 53.

The Liberals on the contrary argued that sacrificing the obligations of morality, humanity and Christianity by letting the Turks “suppress” the Balkan Christians would not benefit the Empire in the long run. Liberals indeed instrumentalized the Bulgarian Crisis as they fought their way into discrediting and dismantling the traditional Palmerstonian policy towards the Near East. Liberal MP W. E. Forster, in the debate of 11 August 1876 in the House of Commons regarding the massacres openly confronted the essential presupposition of the existing policy that “*everything supported by Russia was opposed to the interests of England*”. “*He very much doubted whether there was any ground for all this jealousy of Russia*”.⁷² In Robert Lowe’s, a firebrand Liberal agitator, words, the balance of power theory was a “*narrow and foolish policy*” and “*a wicked dream*”, because the Ottoman Empire was useless as a military buffer against Russia and the British money spent on upholding her was “*as gone as if it was at the bottom of the sea*”⁷³. Likewise John Bright at a meeting sponsored by the Local Liberal Association in Birmingham on 5 December 1876 protested that the government was sacrificing not only the Christian populations of the Provinces but also “*the fair fame and the honour of this country in binding us in perpetual partnership with the worst and foulest Government known upon earth*”⁷⁴, namely the Ottoman Empire. As the pro-Agitation newspaper the *Spectator* saw it, this “*Mohammedan*” tyranny could not be tolerated because “*it was the tyranny of men of an inferior civilization over a potentially superior one*”. Cooperating with the Turks was as if Britain assisted “*the blacks of the South to enslave the white men*”.⁷⁵ As Liddon, one of the man of the cloth spokesmen of the Agitation suggested, they “*could not afford to be dragged as accomplices into the worst barbarism of the past, only to serve some obtuse political theory about the balance of power in the Eastern Mediterranean*.”⁷⁶ All in all, the Liberal view concluded that Britain “*could no longer stand sponsor of a Mahomedan government which had ceased to deserve the respect of civilized nations, and which had done all it could do to call down upon itself the just indignation of humanity and of Heaven*”.⁷⁷ The *Times* too drew a very grim picture of the Ottoman rule in the Balkans and remarked that the hopes invested on Turks at the time of the Crimean War “*read like a satire*”.⁷⁸

⁷² W.E. Forester, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 1078-1147 and c. 110.

⁷³ “Robert Lowe’s Speech at Croydon”, *The Times*, 14 September 1876, p. 10.

⁷⁴ Kaylene Ann Gebert Long, *A Rhetorical Analysis of the 1876 Bulgarian Atrocities Agitation in England: A Study of Victorian Argument*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Indiana University, Indiana 1980, p. 128.

⁷⁵ *The Spectator*, July 1, 1876, p. 820, cited in Long, *ibid*, pp. 70-71.

⁷⁶ H. P. Liddon, *Forty Sermons on Various Subjects*, Charles Higham, London, 1886, pp. 353-360.

⁷⁷ E. Jenkins, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 1078-1147, c.1123.

⁷⁸ “Editorial”, *The Times*, 2 August 1876, p. 9, issue 28697, col. B.

“[...] I defy any intelligent man who has ever lived in a Turkish Province to deny that the general rule was that the condition of the rayah population was, to say the least, as bad as the negro slavery which existed in America; that law had practically no real existence for the Christian; that he was at all times liable to cruel maltreatment, even when unoffending, that, if offending or accused of offending against the person or privilege of the superior classes, he was liable to be treated in the most barbarous way—imprisoned in prisons where existence was torture, often put to actual torture; that his wife and daughters were always the subject of their masters’ lusts, and that if the Bey at any time, carried away by his anger, should kill the rayah, there was never justice against him or security for the relative who dared demand it; and that if, in time of complete peace, a Circassian or other barbarous band passed through a quiet Christian village, there was always a possibility and dread on the part of the villagers that what is now happening in gross would happen in greater or less degree. [...] These people live, and have for hundreds of years lived, in torture.”⁷⁹

Yet both parties acted on the tacit agreement that the Ottoman Empire was the seat of Oriental evil that should be chastised, imposed upon and controlled for the general well-being of “civilized” world and people. “*European civilization was sure in the end to throw off the incubus of intrusive Orientalism*” (namely the deeds of Orientals), “*with its fatalism, its cruelty, its filthiness, its polygamy, its impalements, its slavishness, its tyrant anarchy of satraps under the guise of despotism*”.⁸⁰ The conflict was engendered by the disagreement over the methods to be employed to that end. As Robert Bourke, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs suggested in the House of Commons, “*all classes of community, without distinction of class or Party felt exactly the same sentiments of horror*” over the Ottoman deeds as to Bulgarians but “*they must recollect that although they might have feelings of horror in reference to these outrages and unprecedented acts of barbarity, the interests of our country ought to be the first in the minds of Her Majesty’s Government*”.⁸¹ Thus neither of them actually questioned whether Britain had the right to meddle with a matter that theoretically resided within the realm of Ottoman Empire’s domestic issues and sovereignty. They only disagreed on the amount and kind of interference to be carried out.

Accordingly the Balkans appeared “civilized”, European or at least “promising to become fully European” and hence deserving Western world’s protec-

⁷⁹ “Atrocities in Bulgaria”, *The Times*, 4 August 1876, p. 5, issue 28699, col. C.

⁸⁰ Smith, *ibid*, p. 609.

⁸¹ Robert Bourke, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 1078-1147, c. 1108.

tion and help only if their champions regarded Russia as part of the European civilization as well as of the Western humanitarian cosmos. The perception of the Balkans by the Liberals and pro-Agitation groups in other words cannot be divorced from the way in which Russia, Anglo-Russian relationships as well as the British imperial interests in general were comprehended. Therefore the image of the Balkans as either civilized or savage and Oriental was evidently conditionally dependent on each party's prospective imperial vision. “*Alternate inclusions and exclusions of the Balkans from the idea of Europe were constantly refracted and mediated through the political attitudes to Russia and to the Ottoman Empire.*”⁸² Many Liberal exponents of the Agitation openly lauded Russia as “*the refuge of the afflicted, the protector of the unprotected, and the father of the fatherless*”⁸³. As O'Connor, the notorious nemesis of the Ottoman Empire and Disraeli and fervent spokesman of the Agitation, remarked in 1905 with respect to the Congress of Berlin, Liberals believed that “*under the spell of an Oriental dictator*” [Disraeli], Britain had ceded the rights of Balkan Christians along with libertarian values by bolstering the Ottoman Empire one more time: “*The result of the Berlin Congress is known. The whole aim of our representatives there was to restore to the ruthless grasp of Turkey as many as possible to the unfortunate subjects whom Russia, after tremendous sacrifices of blood and money, had rescued; and everybody knows that, to the everlasting shame of our country, those efforts to a considerable extent, prevailed.*”⁸⁴

While casting Russia as “the protector of fatherless miserable Balkan Christians” in their Agitation meetings, newspaper columns and pamphlets, the Liberals, of course, were mostly opting to ignore how Russia, not long ago, had crushed Polish and Hungarian liberties.

In line with the Conservatives' antagonistic perception of Russia, Anti-Agitation camp tended to distance the Balkans from European/Christian civilization. They either highlighted the Balkanic peoples' so-called Oriental traits and characters and emphasized their kinship with the Ottomans despite their Christianity or alternately associated them with Russians due to their Slavic commonality. The *Pall Mall Gazette* and the *Daily Telegraph*, both supporting the government's stand in the Agitation, for example, systematically disparaged the Eastern brand of Christianity. The Montenegrins “*who collected dried heads and noses with pride*” were

⁸² Savic, *ibid*, p.8.

⁸³ “Robert Lowe's Speech at Croydon”, *The Times*, 14 September 1876, p. 10, issue 28734, col. F.

⁸⁴ T. P. O'Connor, *Lord Beaconsfield, A Biography*, T. Fisher Unwin, London 1905, pp. 662-666, quoted in Ness, *ibid*, p. 145.

described by the *Daily Telegraph* as “*Bashi-Bazouks with a thin lacquer of Christianity over their brigand nature*”.⁸⁵ Besides, as the *Pall Mall Gazette* saw it, there was not much difference between Turks and Russians in terms of cruelty or inhumane, uncivilized characteristics; both had been “*reclaimed quite recently from utter barbarism*”, and the British imperial interests required to prefer the Turkish “barbarian” over the Russian one. Accordingly, Balkan people bolstered up by barbaric Russians could not be aided by civilized Britain. Russia looked more civilized and humanized than Turkey only because of “*the influence of Western European opinion*”. To allow the Russians to rule and control the Ottoman Empire “*would be a blow not only to the British power but to the hopes of civilization*”⁸⁶. All in all, “*positive and and negative attitudes towards the Balkans were informed by domestic debates about the nature of the British Empire, Britain’s relations to its colonies, and Britain’s role in the global order*”.⁸⁷

What is more, just as the pro-Agitation circles readily stigmatized Disraeli and his followers as Oriental, Conservatives too attacked the Liberals by charging them with unmistakable Oriental qualities in Saidian terms. They in this sense were also tapping into the very same Orientalist narrative as they depicted the pro-Agitation British masses as weak-willed, sentimentalist, naive, childish and “hot-headed”⁸⁸ crowds whose lack of refined thinking caused them to misinterpret the “truth”. According to the pro-government and anti-Agitation newspaper the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the Agitation was “*sentimentalism in the stage of acute mania appealing to the popular passions, understandable but illogical*”.⁸⁹ The scathing criticism that Gladstone and his proponents received from the Conservatives during the Agitation days therefore embodies many fine examples of the process of Orientalising the “internal” other to whom negative Orientalist stereotypes were liberally attributed. Gladstone’s indisputable power in moving the largely “un-educated, simple and ignorant” working class British people for the Bulgarian cause mainly addressing their religiously coloured consciousness and emotions enabled Disraeli and his followers to Orientalise the pro-Agitation campaigners. Disraeli and *Pall Mall Gazette* both harshly condemned the Liberal Party’s use of public agitation to inhibit British foreign policy. In particular, they criticized the willingness of these political figures to use “emotional responses” to undermine “rational” political

⁸⁵ *The Daily Telegraph*, 28 July 1876, p.4 and 31 August 1876, p. 4, both cited in Long, *ibid*, pp. 69 and 77 respectively.

⁸⁶ *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 23 September 1876, p. 2.

⁸⁷ Savic, *ibid*, pp.8-9.

⁸⁸ *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 14 September 1876, pp. 1-2.

⁸⁹ Long, *ibid*, pp. 66- 67.

interests in the Near East.⁹⁰ The *Pall Mall Gazette* contended that “*the incidents of the rebellion in Bulgaria have unfortunately afforded the incendiaries of the press and of parliament too many opportunities of stirring up an irregular and passionate movement of the public emotions and the dangerous forces of this moral upheaval have been directed with mischievous skill against the national policy of England.*”⁹¹ Likewise Disraeli himself declared that although the masses’ enthusiasm as to the agitation was very noble and a sign of national vitality, he nevertheless saw the potential danger lurking in the campaign that a demagogue could “*take advantage of such sublime sentiments for sinister ends*”. “*Such person*”, Disraeli continued, undoubtedly alluding to Gladstone, was “*worse than any of those Bulgarian atrocities [...] one whose conduct no language can too strongly condemn.*”⁹²

As might be expected, amidst this systematic yet spontaneous Orientalist stereotyping that was *omni present* in British political realm during the Agitation period and its aftermath, it was the Muslims, Turks or Ottomans who got the lion’s share.

The Image of Muslims and Turks as Appeared in Parliamentary Debates During the Bulgarian Atrocities Agitation

When the Agitation reached its zenith, Foreign Secretary Lord Derby informed Sir Henry Elliot, British Ambassador in Istanbul, that

“any sympathy which was previously felt here towards Turkey has been completely destroyed by the recent lamentable occurrences in Bulgaria. The accounts of outrages and excesses committed by the Turkish troops upon an unhappy and, for the most part unresisting population, has roused an universal feeling of indignation in all classes of English society, and to such a pitch has this risen that in the extreme case of Russia declaring war against Turkey Her Majesty’s Government would find it practically impossible to interfere in defence of the Ottoman Empire.”⁹³

This indicated the unmistakable commitment abandonment by Great Britain towards the Ottoman Empire. “*De-commitment came when illiberal behaviour by commitment partners and interest group pressure converged to lead the British Parliament to directly force the executive to alter policy.*”⁹⁴ As Lord Derby confessed, the Turks became too

⁹⁰ *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 24 June 1876, p. 2 and 12 August 1876, pp. 1-2, cited in Bruton, *ibid*, p. 92.

⁹¹ *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 10 August 1876, pp. 1-2, cited in Bruton, *ibid*, p. 92.

⁹² *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 21 September 1876, p. 2.

⁹³ Lord Derby, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 16 February 1877, vol. 232, cc. 450-572, c. 472.

⁹⁴ Walldorf, Jr, *ibid*, p. 15.

unpopular in Britain for the government to retain the commitments of Palmerstonian and Crimean War policy. British attitude that manifested itself in the non-support of Ottoman hegemony in the Balkans with the Constantinople Conference and neutrality in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 epitomized the policy abandonment under liberal and/or humanitarian interest group activity and public clamour. How undefensible the Turks had become in the public eye due to the Agitation campaign reflected itself in the unreserved invective directed at Turks/Muslims or the Ottoman Empire during the parliamentary debates over the Bulgarian atrocities. The most manifest examples of negative Orientalist stereotyping were provided by the Liberal and to a lesser extent Conservative MPs as they severely censured the Ottoman Empire's handling of the Bulgarian Crisis.

By making ample use of travel writing accounts and invariably referring to the newspaper correspondents who claimed to be first-hand witnesses to the plight of the Slavic Christians under the "Ottoman yoke", Liberal MPs launched a full-fledged attack on Turks and Muslims. Mobilizing every Orientalist stereotyping at hand they concluded by demanding a policy change on the British government's part, and by calling out the civilized world to expel the Muslims from the Eastern Europe. Stories of alleged Turkish cruelty only fit for beasts abounded. Even the moderate *Times* published many items replicating horrendous narratives of the alleged Turkish cruelties.

"[...] The Circassians and Bashi-Bazouks have carried on a system of massacre, arson, and plunder, such as has seldom been known in our time, even in the limits of the Turkish Empire. The most atrocious part of the business is that these savages, being once set loose, did not confine themselves to attacks on the places against which a pretence of insurrection might be made, but carried on indiscriminate attacks against every village of the district which invited their cupidity. Places were attacked which had no Insurgents and to which no Insurgents had come; the men were shot or knocked on the head, and the girls and children carried off."⁹⁵

Victorian British public's appetite for scandalous, sensational violence which conspicuously exhibited by the British print media during the Agitation, also pervaded the parliamentary debates. As Roger A. Pauly suggests "*narrations of barbarity helped the morally straight-jacketed Victorians psychologically escape from polite society. [...] Readers could enjoy vicarious participation in such bloodletting and at the same*

⁹⁵ "Editorial", *The Times*, 2 August 1876, p. 9, issue 28697, col B.

time use this material as evidence to define themselves as civilized’.⁹⁶ The demonization of the Turks by the Liberal MPs reached such a degree during the debates that, as Gathorne Hardy in answering Gladstone’s accusations protested, it looked like “*the crime of Turkey extends even to her origin—that she is so anti-human in herself, that she has never been able to be human on any occasion.*”⁹⁷

In their speeches MPs repeatedly used the words Turks, Mussulmans (Muslims) and Ottomans interchangeably. Their censure was outright although the credibility of their references was frequently disputable. Liberal MP Anderson relying on the extracts from some unnamed “Constantinople newspapers” announced that “*Bulgarians were surrounded by Mussulmans, their houses were set on fire, they suffered atrocious torture; they were put fire in their hair, red-irons were thrust into their tongues, some of them were made dance barefooted on a heap of thorns*”. He continued by reading extracts from the *Daily News* that “*at Pavics twelve women were cut to pieces and thrown to the dogs. At Ratklovo sixty children were stoned by the Turks, at Sokelovo a hundred and eighty young girls taken from the neighbouring villages were penned in a field, and after the prettiest had been picked out for the harems of Fechim and Stocsvic, the others were abandoned to the soldiery, and violated and murdered.*” He rejected the allegations that Bulgarians too committed atrocities. There was no proof that innocent Turkish civilians were killed or violated while “*no crime invented by Turkish ferocity was left uncommitted*”.⁹⁸

Mr. P. A Taylor opined that the atrocities Bulgarians had to suffer at the hands of Turks “*were never surpassed either in modern or ancient times*”. Turks were even worse than the savage native Americans. “*Red Indians in the American wilds scalped their victims, but never did what these fiends in Eastern Europe were doing*”⁹⁹ Mr. Evelyn Ashley regretted that they were left in the dark as “*murders, mutilations, rapes, and devastations, which the much-abused Huns and Vandals might have envied for their completeness*” occurred in a district “*not three days’ journey from the place where [they] were sitting*”. He admitted that the British also had had atrocities, “*but these were confined to summary executions and wholesale destruction*”; but such as those of the Bulgarians suffered “*never had been carried on by any civilized nation, and never should be*”. He believed that Turkish Government was acting in order to “*exterminate a peaceful and unarmed yet intelligent and educated people for the purpose*

⁹⁶ Pauly, *ibid*, p.52.

⁹⁷ Gathorne Hardy, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 16 February 1877, vol. 232, cc. 470-572, c.488.

⁹⁸ Mr. Anderson, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 7 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 721-746, c. 723, 726, 727.

⁹⁹ Mr. P. A. Taylor, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 7 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 721-746, c. 732, 733.

of re-adjusting the balance between Christians and Mahomedans” which was not justifiable in any circumstances.¹⁰⁰ Likewise, Sir William Harcourt, emphasizing the “Europeanness” of the Balkans declared that the story of the massacres in Bulgaria would always “remain a dark blot in the history of Europe”. Reiterating the proverbial litany of anti-Turkish/anti-Muslim rhetoric that had been flooding the Liberal print media and mainstream Orientalist travel writing for decades Harcourt ventured that “the Government of Turkey was a Government tempered by assassination and maintained by massacre.” “What a spectacle did these Sultans offer to the world—a dynasty of worn-out and impotent debauchees”, he asked, “who let loose on mankind a horde of uncontrollable wild beasts.” His invective which had a representative quality in that it could actually be extended to the whole Agitation movement, reached its apogee when Harcourt stated that “for four centuries the Turks had been the curse of Europe, Africa, and Asia. They had occupied the fairest portions of the globe, the famous cities of the East—the cradles of genius and of art; but where their hoofs had trodden the grass had never grown. Those famous spots, dear to the memories of mankind, were now the haunts of wild beasts, of which the worst were those who bore a human form.”¹⁰¹

While the Turks remained the same primitive people clinging to their renowned “barbarism” Balkanic people were showing all the signs of a potential to step up the ladders of civilization and become properly European. As Evelyn Ashley cried out in the House of Commons “the ruling Turk had not, in fact, changed since the time when the streets of Alexandria were strewn with the books of the Alexandria library, and when the Caliph Omar exclaimed—“If these books are in favour of the Koran they are unnecessary, and if they are contrary to the Koran they are mischievous, and so burn them all.” “The ordinary Turk”, on the other hand, “was a grave, honest man, but he was as benighted as ever he was.” As a proof of their potentially superior culture as opposed to the Turks’ inherently inferior and un-European one, “the Bulgarian population had during the last 20 years made enormous strides. Schools had been established in almost every village, and it was the jealousy of this on the part of the Turk which had been the cause of half the atrocities that had been committed, and which had been directed principally against the priests and schoolmasters.”¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Mr. Evelyn Ashley, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 1078-1147, c. 1079, 1080, 1084.

¹⁰¹ Sir William Harcourt, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, c. 1078-1147 and c. 1135 and c. 1136. Commenting on Harcourt’s speech the Times noted that “Sir William Harcourt spoke with too much rhetorical emphasis, perhaps, but still with a perfect appreciation of the popular feeling, when he said on Friday that ‘he hoped to God that we had at last done with the Turks’”. See “Editorial”, *The Times*, 14 August 1876, p. 9, issue 28707, col B.

¹⁰² Mr. Evelyn Ashley, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 1078-1147 and c. 1089 and c. 1090.

Ironically enough, Ashley did not find it contradictory to suggest that Bulgarians succeeded to get closer to the European civilization while living under the rule of the greatest enemies of that very civilization.

Thereafter followed the inevitable question of what to do with the Turks. Liberal MPs agreed that the British government should at once stop propping up the Ottoman Empire and withdraw all previous alliance commitments to her. It was clear that the Liberals saw the Ottoman rule in Europe as an anomaly. By implication Balkan people were regarded as part of Europe albeit with reservations. This “*vile nation of Turkey*”¹⁰³ was carrying out “*terrible calamities and cruelties*”¹⁰⁴ and it was “*a scandal to Europe that such atrocities should take place within her borders*”¹⁰⁵. As Mr. Mundella crudely expressed “*they could not maintain these monsters any longer in Europe*”. He invited England to remember “*her sense of responsibility as a great Christian Power, and in the name of humanity*” and tell the Ottoman Empire that you either “*bring these things to an end, or we will point our guns at your palaces.*”¹⁰⁶ Mr. Forsyth asserted that Turks cannot be excused on grounds that they were repressing a revolt and that Bulgarians were also guilty of many outrages on Muslims. He admitted that there were atrocities on both sides but believed that “*the outrages of the Turks outweighed those of the Christians a hundred-fold*”. What is more, “*it was different with the insurgents, who had been downtrodden for centuries, and had perhaps become brutalized by oppression, so that they so far forgot themselves as in some instances to give way to feelings of revenge*”. The Turkish government on the other hand was a government in friendly alliance with England and could not be compared with the insurgents. If the Porte failed to justify its treatment of Christian subjects which it did in the Bulgarian atrocities case then it did not deserve the moral support of England. The best thing that could happen for Turkey would be that “*her Christian provinces, which under the present system formed a gangrened limb, should be entirely separated from her and formed into free and independent States, which would act as a barrier between herself and the rest of Europe*”.¹⁰⁷ Sir H. Drummond Wolff, the Conservative MP for Christchurch concurred with

¹⁰³ Mr. Anderson, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 7 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 721-746 and c. 728.

¹⁰⁴ Mr. Whitwell, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 7 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 721-746 and c. 734.

¹⁰⁵ Mr. Jacob Bright, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 7 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 721-746 and c. 734.

¹⁰⁶ Mr. Mundella, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 7 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 721-746 and c. 729, c. 730.

¹⁰⁷ Mr. Forsyth, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 1078-1147 and c. 1094, c. 1095, c. 1097.

the Liberal MPs that “*Turkey’s Christian Provinces would never be peaceful or contented as long as their Government was of so abnormal a character*”.¹⁰⁸ Throughout the debates all Liberals pressurized the Disraeli government to inform Turkey that they “*could no longer stand sponsor of a Mahomedan Government which had ceased to deserve the respect of civilized Nations, and which had done all it could to call down upon itself the just indignation of humanity and of Heaven*”.¹⁰⁹ As William Harcourt put it England “*could no longer accept complicity with a detested and detestable Government and an abominable and abominated race*” unless she wished to appear as “*abettors of these murderous barbarians*”.¹¹⁰

The clamour of the Liberal benches in the House of Commons as well as the public they represented was evident: Turks/Muslims/Ottomans (all were hailed as the same) had to go returning the Balkans to their “real owners”. These people should become “*so far free that the Porte could not any longer oppress them*”, insurgent provinces should be “*placed in the same position as Servia and Roumania*”.¹¹¹ After all, “*the Turks had played their game in such a manner that they had their day, and that day was gone*”.¹¹² By bolstering up Turkey, England was only “*making for herself enemies of races which would soon become in Eastern countries dominant races*”.¹¹³ The Liberal MP J. Holms even went so far as to suggest that Turkey which had been nothing but a dead body among the nations of Europe should cease to be a Muslim State. “*This country*”, he exhorted, “*should declare clearly and distinctly that it would prefer to see some other Government than a Mahomedan Government ruling in Turkey; and that not in relation to Christians alone, but to the poorer classes of Turks as well*”.¹¹⁴ In that, he echoed Lord Shaftesbury, who addressing a London meeting had asserted that “*the Turks have proved themselves to be wholly unfit to have any authority over any portion of the human race*”.¹¹⁵ These anti-Turkish,

¹⁰⁸ Sir H. Drummond Wolff, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 1078-1147 and c. 1124.

¹⁰⁹ Mr. E. Jenkins, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 1078-1147 and c. 1122, c.1123.

¹¹⁰ Sir William Harcourt, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 1078-1147 and c. 1135, c.1136, c.1137.

¹¹¹ Mr. Forsyth, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 31 July 1876, vol. 231, cc. 126-225 and c. 150.

¹¹² Mr. J. Holms, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 31 July 1876, vol. 231, cc. 126-225 and c.169.

¹¹³ Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 31 July 1876, vol. 231, cc. 126-225 and c. 165.

¹¹⁴ Mr. J. Holms, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 31 July 1876, vol. 231, cc. 126-225 and c.169.

¹¹⁵ “The Turkish Question”, *New York Observer* 54, no: 33, 17 August 1876, p. 262, cited in Justin McCarthy, *The Turk in America, The Creation of an Enduring Prejudice*, The University of Utah Press,

anti-Muslim remarks were indisputably Orientalism *par excellence* in Saidian terms and put into use to re-design the fate of the Ottoman Empire, the prospective Balkan nation-states and the Muslims and Turks for generations to come.

But where would the Turks go? Disraeli seemed to have some inkling as to where the Liberals aspired to send the Turks when he explained one more time and in much exasperation that British imperial interests needed the Turkish rule in the Balkans against Russia. In his response to the appeals for the abandonment of the Ottoman Empire and the expulsion of Turks from Europe Disraeli complained that the government were being treated “*as if they were the Turkish government’s peculiar friends, and even as if they were expected to uphold them in any enormity they might commit*”. He reminded the House that England was merely in alliance with Turkey and the government were only complying with the previous commitments and fulfilling the engagements some of which were renovated and repeated only four years ago meaning the Black Sea Conference of 1871. “*And if we are to be told that our political duty is by force to expel the Turks to the other side of the Bosphorus*”, Disraeli continued, “*then politics cease to be an art, statesmanship becomes a mere mockery, and, instead of being a House of Commons faithful to its traditions, we had better at once resolve ourselves into one of those revolutionary clubs [...]*”¹¹⁶ The other side of the Bosphorus, though clear enough a direction, would not be found satisfactory as an address of residence by Gladstone, who in less than a month after the debate in Parliament would publish his notorious pamphlet *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East* in which he suggested to send the Turks “*bag and baggage to where they came from*”, namely Asia, and perhaps even Central Asia.

On 31 July 1876 during the debate in House of Commons regarding the Bulgarian Crisis Gladstone had hinted that Muslims’ future in the Balkans was not looking promising.

“Unfortunately the statistics for the Turkish Empire are very imperfect but I apprehend there is not the smallest doubt that the Mahomedans of these Provinces are a dwindling race and likewise a backward race; that there is no element of progress among them; that industry among them is low; that the old traditions of force and ruling by force tends to depress peaceful pursuits; that arts do not flourish among them; that skilled labour exists to no extent among them; that the difference in these respects is easily traceable

Salt Lake City, 2010, p. 340.

¹¹⁶ Benjamin Disraeli, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 11 August 1876, vol. 231, cc. 1078-1147 and c. 1145, c. 1146.

between a Christian district and a Mahomedan one; and that the advance, such as it is, is a Christian, and not a Mahomedan advance.”¹¹⁷

In the same speech Gladstone also argued that “*the monster structure of the Turkish Empire is dotted all over with instances in which the central Power has been totally unable to discharge the first duties of Government*” and urged for “*a solution which, above all, may afford to a population that has suffered long and suffered much a hope of gaining at length the benefits of rational government and civilized life*”.¹¹⁸

In his pamphlet which was published on 6 September 1876 and sold hundreds of thousands of copies in weeks Gladstone gave full vent to his Turcophobia. Before long the pamphlet became the symbol of Agitation movement. It encapsulated all aspects of Liberal and Radical arguments that severely criticized the traditional Palmerstonian foreign policy and defiantly demanded the expulsion of Turks or Muslims from Europe.¹¹⁹

Although the *Times* agreed with Gladstone that “*Turks were devoid of intelligence, their only refinement was cruelty, they were unwilling and incapable of self-government*” it nevertheless refrained from readily suggesting that Turks should be kicked out of Europe. As the *Times* saw it there was always a possibility that the end of Turkish rule in the Balkans might culminate in absolute anarchy and worse horrors than the Bulgarian one.¹²⁰ The *Pall Mall Gazette* was also concerned about who would govern once the Turks left because anarchy could usher in more unmanageable problems than Turkish misconduct.¹²¹

As a grand rhetoric and commonplace trope in Liberal populist political discourse “sending the Turks to where they came from” looked good on paper yet it posed many challenges in actual political realm. It was again the Conservatives who pointed out the difficulties that might possibly arise if the Balkan provinces were given autonomy or became independent. Conservative MP Bruce was among those who reminded that “*the races were so inextricably mixed up in the disaffected provinces and that in many of them Turkish race had been merged in the Christian population*”.

¹¹⁷ Mr. Gladstone, Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 31 July 1876, vol. 231, cc. 126-225 and c. 181.

¹¹⁸ Mr. Gladstone, Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 31 July 1876, vol. 231, cc. 126-225 and c.199, c. 201.

¹¹⁹ William E. Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*, John Murray, London 1876, p. 31.

¹²⁰ “Editorial”, *The Times*, 8 September 1876, p. 7, issue 28729, col. A.

¹²¹ *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 7 September 1876, p. 1.

He admitted that the Mussulmans were “*an anachronism in Europe*”, and that the solution of turning them out of Europe altogether was simple and complete in its operation yet he believed that such policy could not be acted upon “*except at the cost of an immense amount of bloodshed*”. Not only in the Balkans would blood spill but also in Asia would occur a civil war. In a way of retaliation Muslims expelled from Balkans would take revenge on Christians in Asian dominions of the Sultan. “*Granted there are large Mussulman populations in Europe there are equally large Christian communities in Asia, and if the Mussulmans were driven out of Europe, their fanaticism would rise to such a height that reprisals would be adopted against the Christians in Asia, compared with which the recent atrocities in Bulgaria would be mere trifles.*”¹²²

Likewise, Hanbury, another Conservative MP, questioned the justice of the proposal of expelling the Turk out of Europe and of raising the cry of “Asia for the Turks”. He remarked that “*the people of those provinces, Christian and Mahomedan alike, were all of the same Slavonic race and speaking the same language*”. Expelling the Muslims from Balkans would be unfair because notwithstanding their Islamic creed, they too were Slavs who were entitled to the Balkan territory as much as their Christian fellow countrymen. The dictates of realpolitik was also a grave concern because Turkey was ruling over twenty different nationalities and if she disappeared and those nationalities formed distinct nation-states then Russia would not waste any time to turn them into satellites in order to further her aspirations in the Eastern Mediterranean.¹²³

Gladstone, however, opted to promote the self-determination rights of the Balkan people. As he saw it, the provinces belonged to their inhabitants who were not “savages”, but a “well-conducted and industrious people”. And there was no room for doubt as to whom he referred to as “savages”. Leaving aside the so-called British imperial interests that were largely conditioned by the fear of Russian aspirations, Gladstone advocated the Balkan populations’ right to govern themselves. “*I hold that those Provinces of the Turkish Empire, which have been so cruelly and unjustly ruled, ought to be regarded as existing*”, he said, “*not for the sake of any other Power whatever, but for the sake of populations by whom they are inhabited.*” “*The object of our desire*”, he continued, “*ought to be the development of those populations on their own soil, as its proper masters, and as the persons with a view to whose welfare its destination ought to be determined.*”¹²⁴

¹²² Mr. Bruce, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 31 July 1876, vol. 231, cc. 126-225 and c. 131, c.132.

¹²³ Mr. Hanbury, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, 31 July 1876, vol. 231, cc. 126-225 and c.139, c.140, c.144.

¹²⁴ William Gladstone, *The Eastern Question, Gladstone's Speeches*, ed. Arthur Tilney Bassett, Methuen & Co, London, 1916, p. 512, quoted in Savic, *ibid*, p. 55.

The question of importance for this study is that whether or not the “proper masters” of the Balkan geography included Turks and/or Muslims for Gladstone and the Liberal Radical circles in Europe whose Orientalist ideas would come to dominate the debates over the formation of Balkanic nation-states at the turn of the century. The answer does not seem in the affirmative because Gladstone reiteratedly stated that the Turks and the Slavs were irreconcilably different and that the essential difference between the two races was proven by the fact that they had never mixed. “*There has been no settling down, no amalgamation*”, Gladstone asserted. “*It is with Turkey, not a case of milk put into tea, which amalgamates with the tea; it is the case of oil put into water, which will not mix.*”¹²⁵ What Gladstone and his exponents wanted the European or Western public to believe was that the Muslim or Turkish presence in the Balkans was equal to a small group of people consisting only Ottoman ruling elites. The impression created by the Agitation camp was that Turks did not actually live in Bulgaria. As Justin McCarthy, examining the American newspapers that largely relied on and replicated the British press during the Bulgarian crisis showed newspapers told their readers that “*in Bulgaria, Turkish occupation is simply that of garrison. The Turks are not the people. They have, as a rule, no homes there. They are the rulers, and they have ruled with a fierceness and cruelty unparalleled in national records*”.¹²⁶ This, of course, was a fine example of perception management carried out by the Liberal circles which completely ignored that the Turks of Bulgaria were more than one-third of the population before the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878, and that they did have homes where they pursued rather modest lives not much different from that of their Christian Bulgarian countrymen.

Ramifications of the Orientalist Stereotyping on the Destiny of the Muslim/Turkish Minority in the Balkans

By the mid-nineteenth century the idea that Muslims did not belong to the nascent Balkan nation-states became ossified, which in turn prompted and justified a stream of forced migration of Muslims from Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Crete. “*These expulsions were legitimized by European politicians and scholars who re-called the old anti-Turkish obsession in their scornful censure of brutal Asiatic Turkish rule over the Balkans.*”¹²⁷ Bulgarian Atrocities Agitation of 1876 fraught with almost all manifestations of Orientalist paradigm was a watershed in

¹²⁵ Gladstone, *The Eastern Question...*, pp. 5-6, quoted in Savic, *ibid*, p. 57.

¹²⁶ “No Title”, *Chicago Tribune*, 7 August 1877, p. 4, cited in McCarthy, *ibid*, p. 95.

¹²⁷ Slobadan Drakulic, “Anti-Turkish Obsession and the Exodus of Balkan Muslims”, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 43/3-4 (2009), p. 243.

the perception of the Ottoman Empire and the Balkans along with Muslims, Turks and Balkanic people by the Western world. Its repercussions were widely felt when the Ottoman Empire dissolved and its former subjects gradually became the citizens of several nation-states both in Anatolia and in the Balkans. "*The assertion of self-determination rights was the principal motivating force at the end of World War I and resulted in the recreation of the Balkans based on the Western understanding of Balkan history, politics, and culture. Much of the information the Great Powers utilized when recreating the region came from Western travel literature*"¹²⁸, which atrocities campaigners had already begun to exploit from the mid-1870s onwards. An in-depth analysis of the British Orientalist mentality that manifested itself in the Bulgarian Agitation campaign provides valuable insights into the ways in which the nation-state inheritors of the Ottoman Empire were perceived and treated by the Western world in general and by Britain in particular in later occasions whereby they played an important role in recreating the Balkan map at the peace conferences after the World War I as well as in the formation of a nation state in Anatolia. In the following decades while the Turkish Republic desperately fought its way into refuting the negative Orientalist stereotypes about the Turks and Muslims, the Balkan nation-states exploited the same stereotypes to the full extent in their nation and nation-state building processes. The history textbooks of each nation state in the Balkans and of Turkey who gained its independence circa the collapse of the Ottoman Empire attest to this phenomenon. Essentialist vilification and negative Orientalist stereotyping on the part of the Western world with respect to the Balkans too proved extremely durable. During the dissolution of the Yugoslav State in the late 1980s "*blatantly racist, ahistorical and anachronistic deployment of an 'orientalist' logic and discourse on the Balkans by outside observers*"¹²⁹ reappeared on the stage. Echoing many Conservative and some Liberal Victorian politicians during the Bulgarian Agitation days, "*Balkan people were constructed by Western politicians as violent by nature [...]*"¹³⁰

During the Agitation days British policy makers, opinion leaders and the public that they mobilized regardless of the party affiliations assuredly disclosed their conviction that Turks and/or Islam were an "anachronism" and "alien race" in Europe. As Ana Savic suggests

¹²⁸ Larson, *ibid*, p. 74.

¹²⁹ Thanasis D. Sfikas, "National Movements and Nation Building in the Balkans, 1804-1922, Historic Origins, Contemporary Misunderstandings" in Thanasis D. Sfikas and Christopher Williams (eds), *Ethnicity and Nationalism in East Central Europe and the Balkans*, Ashgate, Aldershot 1999, p. 14 quoted in Cathie Carmichael, *Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans, Nationalism and the Destruction of Tradition*, Routledge, London and New York 2003, p. 103.

¹³⁰ Carmichael, *ibid*, p. 103.

“the perception of Turkish rule in the Balkans as an intrusion into European territory is encapsulated in the name Turkey-in-Europe by which this region was most commonly referred to in British political debates and in the larger cultural discourse. The appellation Turkey-in-Europe embodies the ambiguities that pervade the British representations of the Balkans; while through the qualification ‘in Europe’, this designation hints at the perceived illegitimacy of the Turkish claims on the Balkans, it also shows that the emerging Christian states in this region are imagined as European.”¹³¹

Once the Ottoman claims to the region was assumed “illegitimate” and the Turkish and Muslim communities were regarded as either “alien” or “ethnically Slavic” people who had forgotten their true European and Christian self it was not difficult to imagine what the newly founded Balkanic nation state would have in store for their Muslim Turkish minorities. “*Every emerging Christian state in the Balkans eventually coerced at least part of their Muslim populations to flee the country.*”¹³² The remaining population faced many-layered discriminatory actions. Frederick Anscombe aptly reminds us in his latest work that “*every country of the Balkans was created by the greatest powers of Europe*”¹³³ and that “*it is the political choices made in the early post-Ottoman period by newly independent regimes that still influence contemporary politics and problems*”¹³⁴ in the region. “*Every state had two immediate goals: to become strong enough to compel the obedience of the population, and to transform that population into a nation to legitimate the existence of the country and the state*”.¹³⁵ In their nation- and nation-state-building efforts Balkan nationalist founding elites emulated the Western model and made ample use of the anti-Turkish/anti-Ottoman Orientalist discursive arsenal that had been assembled and utilized by the Western politicians, travel writers, journalists and “scientists” throughout the nineteenth century. The result was many national historiographies manufactured by Balkan states which in İsa Blumi’s words, highlighted that “*the quintessential antimodern evil, the Ottoman (Oriental) Empire, had to collapse for each of “our” [Balkan] peoples to enter into the modern world*”, and that *living under the Ottoman Empire was a tragic story of Oriental ‘enslavement’ of essentially ‘white’ European Christians whose*

¹³¹ Savic, *ibid*, p.1.

¹³² Kerem Öktem, “Between Emigration, de-Islamization and the Nation-State: Muslim Communities in the Balkans Today”, *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 11/2 (2011), p. 157.

¹³³ Frederick F. Anscombe, *State, Faith, and Nation in Ottoman and Post-Ottoman Lands*, Cambridge University Press, New York 2014, p. 6.

¹³⁴ Anscombe, *ibid*, p. 12.

¹³⁵ Anscombe, *ibid*, p. 12.

national ambitions could only be served when they lived in distinctive enclaves from ‘others’ not of their denomination.”¹³⁶.

Conclusion

As Gergana Georgieva suggests in her analysis on the Bulgarian historiography during communist era, “*the manipulation of the historical narrative is clearly evident and strong*” in Bulgarian history textbooks’ treatment of the Ottoman rule. She points out that “*the inhabitants are diminished to the Bulgarian ethnic group*”. “*The terms ‘raya’ and ‘local population’ used in the texts are definitely used as synonyms for Bulgarians. The Turkish population in the towns and villages is referred to only rarely.*”¹³⁷ In other words, according to the texts in question, “*the Ottomans were the leaders and were connected with a certain stratum—the governing class. Very rarely they are viewed as part of a common people. The texts do not emphasize such an entity because the main aim is to further develop the ‘Bulgarians-Turks’ dichotomy.*”¹³⁸

Echoing Gladstone’s reasoning for and justification of evicting the Turks from Balkans, namely the assertion that Turks/Muslims did not form an integral part of the native population in Bulgaria (and in the Balkans in general) and only belonged to the class of oppressors/rulers, communist era history textbooks of Bulgarian nation state readily replicates and exploits the contentions of the Bulgarian Agitation campaign. Bulgarian historians also emphasize the notion that Bulgarian society existed with its own autonomous specifics which were shaped by European ideas and life style rather than the interactions with the Ottoman social and political structure.¹³⁹ By doing so, they in fact not only reproduce the Orientalist arguments employed by the pro-Agitation Victorian British politicians but also vindicate the repressive political measures of the Communist regime towards the Muslim and Turkish minorities in Bulgaria during the so-called Revival Process in the 1980s. As it was stated at the eventful days of forced name-changing campaign in “*Sofia News, Muslim Bulgarians were the descendants of Bulgarians who had been forced to convert to Islam during the Ottoman period and forgot their original identity over time*”.¹⁴⁰ Ali Eminov reminds

¹³⁶ İsa Blumi, *Ottoman Refugees, 1878-1939, Migration in a Post-Imperial World*, Bloomsbury, London and New York 2013, p. 12.

¹³⁷ Gergana Georgieva, “The Kircali Time as Metonymy: History as Emotion”, in Eyal Ginio and Karl Kaser (eds), *Ottoman Legacies in the Contemporary Mediterranean, the Balkans and the Middle East Compared*, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 2013, p. 323.

¹³⁸ Georgieva, *ibid*, p. 324.

¹³⁹ Georgieva, *ibid*, p.325.

¹⁴⁰ Ali Eminov, “Are Turkish-Speakers in Bulgaria of Ethnic Bulgarian Origin?”, *Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs Journal*, 7:2, 1986, p. 504. For the so-called revival/rebirth process of the Zhivkov regime between 1984-1989 also See Rossen Vasilev, “Bulgaria’s Ethnic Problems”, *East Eu-*

us that “*Sopov, Chief of the Balkan Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during a press conference for foreign journalists in late April 1985 went even further and suggested that there is no connection between Turkey and Bulgarian Muslims, that 'Turkey has no historical rights and no other grounds whatsoever to claim some Turkish national minority' or 'compatriots' in Bulgaria.*”¹⁴¹

As can be inferred from this rhetoric, in their effort of achieving ethnic homogeneity in their nation-state consolidation process Bulgarian officials were exploiting the very same Orientalist stereotypical image of the Ottomans as a class of Eastern/Muslim oppressors whose existence in the Balkans did not go beyond ruling, and that the people who professed Islam were in fact ethnic Bulgarians that should return to their true religion. At the turn of the century if any distinction between the Muslim ruling class and the Muslim Turkish peasant was ever made, and the existence of the latter was ever acknowledged in the vast literature on the issue, the hope of the Victorian British Liberal politicians was that “*once the Balkans were delivered from the Ottomans, it was not unlikely that in course of time the Turkish peasant would pass, or return, from Islam to Christianity*”.¹⁴² The fact that post-1989 Bulgarian history textbooks extensively refer to foreign (European) Christian sources and the “testimony” of European observers of the time in counting the Bulgarian virtues as opposed to Turkish vices and in narrating the atrocities done by the Ottoman army speaks volumes as to the long-lasting and multi-dimensional effects of the negative stereotyping carried out in Europe in the nineteenth century.¹⁴³ Nadege Ragaru points out how deep-seated Orientalist perceptions still occludes the possibility of complete harmony between Muslims and Christians in Bulgaria in the twenty-first century when she opines that “*As long as anti-Turkish and anti-Muslim stereotypes persist in Bulgarian society, the issue of ethnic tensions cannot be dismissed. As long as people are brought up in the memory of the 'Turkish yoke' and told about the 'barbarous' Turks who savagely raped and killed their ancestors, they will react emotionally when it comes to discussing minority rights.*”¹⁴⁴

ropean Quarterly, 36/1 (2002), pp. 103-125. For an analysis of the persistence of ethnic tensions in Bulgaria which became discernible with the rise of ATAKA, “the self-avowed, ultra-nationalist organization” that employs offensive language towards Turks to public prominence in 2005, See Emilian Kavalski, “Do Not Play With Fire’: The End of the Bulgarian Ethnic Model or the Persistence of Inter-Ethnic Tension in Bulgaria?”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 27/1 (2007), pp. 25-36.

¹⁴¹ Eminov, *ibid*, pp. 507-508.

¹⁴² Smith, *ibid*, p. 611.

¹⁴³ Evguenia Davidova, “Re-Packaging Identities: History Textbooks, European Travel and the Untarnished Bulgarian ‘Europeanness’”, *East European Quarterly*, 40/4 (2006), pp. 429-441.

¹⁴⁴ Nadege Ragaru, “Islam in Post-Communist Bulgaria: An Aborted ‘Clash of Civilizations?’”, Nationalities Papers, *The Journal of Nationalities and Ethnicity*, 29/2 (2001), p. 319.

Many cases of discrimination and persecution directed at the Muslims and observed across the Balkans¹⁴⁵ throughout the twentieth century attest to the fact that Orientalist constructions of Victorian British politics were also at play in Balkan nation-states’ dealings with their Muslim minorities. This, of course, does not necessarily mean that the founders and decision-makers of the Balkan nation-states learnt and transferred their anti-Turkish/anti-Muslim stance from the British Liberals and Orientalists. Yet it is clear that the process of “*imaginative and textual colonisation of the Balkans*”¹⁴⁶ by Britain in the nineteenth century produced a vast stockpile of imagery and stereotypes that would later become available to the nation-makers across the region. When they put their anti-Turkish/anti-Muslim policies into operation they comfortably leaned on a ready-made discursive repertoire that accommodates and even legitimizes their actions.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ For the perception of the Muslim/Turkish minority in Western Thrace as well as the discriminatory treatment they suffered since the foundation of the Greek nation-state See Christina Borou, “The Muslim Minority of Western Thrace in Greece: An Internal Positive or An Internal Negative “Other”?”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 29/1 (2009), pp. 5-26 where she states that “in the case of Muslim minority, historically stereotypical negative representations of the Ottoman domination and subsequently the Islamism as a possible national threat have remained alive both in reality and in popular imagination and state ideology until the present day”. Also See Tozun Bahçeli, “The Muslim-Turkish Community in Greece: Problems and Prospects”, *Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs Journal*, 8/1 (1987), pp. 109-120 where he lists the complaints of Thracian Muslims from Greek authorities ranging from reduction in their land holdings, difficulties in obtaining licence to operate motor vehicles or permission to repair mosques to several obstacles in educational and employment practices. For the devastating effects of the Bosnian War of 1992-1995 on Muslim community See Aydın Babuna, “National Identity, Islam and Politics in Post-Communist Bosnia-Herzegovina”, *East European Quarterly*, 39/4 (2005), pp. 405-447. For the case of Torbeshes (Macedonian Muslims) who were exposed to the “forcible assimilation” during the Balkan War and after the Second World War see Ali Dikici, “The Torbeshes of Macedonia: Religion and National Identity Questions of Macedonian-Speaking Muslims”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 28/1 (2008), pp. 27-43.

¹⁴⁶ Vesna Goldsworthy, *ibid*, p. 211.

¹⁴⁷ Needless to say, in this study I by no means imply that the Turkish nation-state, which was founded on the discursively much-rejected heritage of the Ottoman Empire was completely free from discriminatory policies towards its non-Muslim minorities. Delving into the persecutions, expulsions and discriminations the Muslim minorities faced in the Balkan nation-states in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries does not turn this study into a material of antagonism whereby the image of Turkish Republic appears whitewashed as opposed to the tarnished Balkan nation-states.

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