

**Y. Doğan Çetinkaya**

## ATROCITY PROPAGANDA AND THE NATIONALIZATION OF THE MASSES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE DURING THE BALKAN WARS (1912–13)

### Abstract

During the Balkan Wars (1912–13), the mobilization of the home front became significant for the belligerent states, which initiated propaganda activities demonizing their enemies and galvanizing the emotions of their publics. This paper explores one type of such mobilization efforts from above, atrocity propaganda, through which states sought to invoke hatred and mobilize public support for war by focusing on the atrocities (*mezalim*) that their coreligionists had suffered at the hands of enemies. Although the term “atrocity propaganda” has been used exclusively in the context of World War I in the historiography, the practice it describes was effectively utilized during the earlier Balkan Wars. In the Ottoman Empire, both state and civil initiatives played crucial roles in the making of atrocity propaganda, which was disseminated through intense coverage in the Turkish-language press. The imagery it employed shifted with the onset of the wars, becoming increasingly shocking. Atrocity propaganda contributed to the well-known radicalization of nationalism in the late Ottoman Empire.

Over the course of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century, Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, and Bulgaria gained their independence from the Ottoman Empire. The heterogeneous ethnic and religious composition of the Balkans both gave rise to and legitimized ongoing power struggles among the newly independent countries of the region, the empire that had once ruled them, and the “Great Powers” of western Europe. In 1912, the Balkan League, formed by the four countries mentioned above, declared war on the Ottoman Empire, with a view to dividing the remaining Ottoman lands in the Balkans among themselves. The ferocity of the rivalry between these competing nationalisms and nation-states was such that a second war broke out between the countries of the league and the Ottoman Empire immediately after the end of the first in 1913. The empire’s ensuing loss of most of its lands in Europe was viewed by both the Ottoman political elite and the public as a humiliating catastrophe, and the Balkan Wars have come to be

Y. Doğan Çetinkaya is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Political Sciences, Istanbul University, Istanbul, Turkey; e-mail: [yudoce@istanbul.edu.tr](mailto:yudoce@istanbul.edu.tr)

© Cambridge University Press 2014 0020-7438/14 \$15.00

viewed in the literature as a turning point in the history of the late Ottoman and early Turkish Republican eras.<sup>1</sup>

The structure of wars altered drastically over the course of the long 19th century, and the Balkan Wars were a capstone to this transformation. During this process, combatants and civilians became increasingly difficult to differentiate. States at war in the Balkans tried to convince the Great Powers, diplomatic circles, and their own publics that their cause was just and legitimate. This last endeavor was necessitated by the development of mass society and popular politics in both the Balkan countries and the Ottoman Empire. During the Balkan Wars and World War I, competing nationalisms were waged not only on the battlefields but also in the diplomatic and public spheres. Although World War I was not yet a full-fledged “people’s war,” and subsequent wars were to “remain in the hands of armies,” as Hew Strachan argues, different sectors of society were increasingly involved in the mobilization efforts.<sup>2</sup> In other words, mobilization was no longer restricted to the military domain; rather, society was militarized as a result of the mobilization and propaganda campaigns of these wars.<sup>3</sup>

If the Balkan Wars were a prelude to World War I, as Richard C. Hall has argued, they were also a prelude to atrocity propaganda.<sup>4</sup> Twentieth-century techniques of war propaganda were invented and first utilized during the Balkan Wars. Although the term “atrocity propaganda” was coined in the interwar period to explain a phenomenon that appeared in World War I, the practice it described emerged earlier, during the Balkan Wars. Atrocity propaganda is a form of “psychological warfare” employed to stigmatize and demonize the enemy by highlighting its crimes against humanity, thereby inciting public reaction on the home front. Throughout this article, I will highlight the similarities between the “atrocity propaganda” I have uncovered in my research on the Balkan Wars and the phenomenon as it is discussed in the literature on World War I. The article thus expands upon recent scholarship arguing that the Balkan Wars were a prelude to World War I in various respects.

In the 20th century, wars in Europe and the Middle East involved the mobilization of the home front through the agitation and galvanization of people’s emotions by states and nationalist elites.<sup>5</sup> This article focuses on such mobilization efforts, particularly propaganda activities, of the Ottoman state and nationalist elite, viewing them as an aspect of the emergence of mass politics. Propaganda aimed at mobilizing the home front contributed to the nationalization of the masses in the late Ottoman Empire, though this subject has not been widely explored in the historiography.<sup>6</sup>

Nationalisms are not only intellectual currents or political phenomena; they are also social movements that mobilize a wide range of socioeconomic groups and deeply influence the daily lives of people. In turn, social relations influence nationalist ideologies, organizations, and movements. A full understanding of nationalisms would require explorations of both official nationalist policies from above and the mobilization of society from below. This article focuses on the former element of this relationship: the mobilization efforts of the political elite, and specifically its “atrocity propaganda.” It aims to depict how the mobilization for war, and in particular a type of propaganda employed by nationalist elites on the Ottoman home front, was utilized in this process. It does not address questions around “the nationalization of the masses” at the outset of the 20th century, but rather leaves the outcome and the reception of these propaganda activities as areas for future study.

The historical literature on war in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey emphasizes battles and military tactics more than social and cultural aspects.<sup>7</sup> A few scholars have started to address this imbalance in recent years.<sup>8</sup> In Turkey, studies that focus on the social aspects of early 20th-century wars have tended to concentrate on the atrocities (*mezalim*) endured by Muslims at the hands of Christian armies, seeking to prove that it was the Muslims who suffered most.<sup>9</sup> They might thus be considered a continuation of the atrocity propaganda that emerged during the Balkan Wars. Indeed, this trend in the literature intensified with the centenary of these wars in 2012.<sup>10</sup>

This article argues that late Ottoman atrocity propaganda should be contextualized within the framework of the concept of “total war” and as a phenomenon with counterparts in other countries. During the 20th century, such propaganda became its own battlefield, playing a vital role in the demonization of enemies; in the Balkan states, for example, it was efficiently used for the stigmatization and otherization of “local” enemies. In the last years of the Ottoman Empire, atrocity propaganda was utilized to justify the attempted elimination of non-Muslim communities. With the hundredth anniversary of the Balkan Wars, atrocities against Muslims are being reintroduced as a justification or alibi for the destruction of the non-Muslim communities of the empire in the early 20th century, within the framework of 1915 Armenian genocide debates. The atrocity propaganda mobilized during the Balkan Wars is still in use one hundred years later.

As the distinction between combatants and noncombatants started to evaporate in wars across the globe in the early 20th century, brutality and violence directed at civilians reached an unprecedented scale.<sup>11</sup> In this paper, I will concentrate on Ottoman propaganda publications that focused on Greek and Bulgarian atrocities against Muslims who remained in formerly Ottoman lands. I make use of pamphlets published during and after the wars, documents from the Ottoman archives, and news stories from the Ottoman press. My intent is not to establish the veracity of these descriptions of atrocities, massacres, and other forms of suffering, but rather to explore their representation in late Ottoman propaganda literature and nationalist discourse. I will first explain how the concept of atrocity propaganda was coined after World War I and employed in the scholarship on this war. I will then highlight how a nascent kind of atrocity propaganda began to emerge in the Ottoman Empire before the Balkan Wars. And finally, I will explore in detail the atrocity propaganda that emerged during these wars: its mechanisms, content, and personal and institutional agents.

#### ATROCITY PROPAGANDA

Although the term *atrocity propaganda* was coined in the 20th century to refer to a common practice in the fierce rivalry between belligerent countries,<sup>12</sup> David Welch dates the emergence of the practice back to the Crusades, which Pope Urban II legitimized with reference to the purported anti-Christian acts of Muslims, such as the ravaging of churches, forced circumcision of Christian men, violation of women, torture, and killing.<sup>13</sup> James Morgan Reed, meanwhile, dates certain elements and patterns of the atrocity propaganda that emerged in World War I to the Irish Rebellion of the 17th century. He argues that the appearance of such propaganda coincided with the emergence of newspapers; during the rebellion, both sides strove to win popular support, recognized

the value of manipulating public opinion, and tried to make use of what he calls “the vehicles of nascent journalism.”<sup>14</sup> Yet, both scholars consider World War I the first occasion in which atrocity propaganda as we know it today appeared. From then on, it was the goal of any combatant state to “mobilize hatred against the enemy, convince the population of the justness of one’s own cause, enlist the active support and cooperation of neutral countries and strengthen the support of one’s allies.”<sup>15</sup>

At the start of World War I, none of the belligerent states had an organization specializing in propaganda work, which caused confusion in state structures and friction between different ministries. In Great Britain, for example, the War Office, Home Office, and Foreign Office all vied for control over propaganda initiatives, which emerged with the start of the war and continued to evolve until its end in 1918, when the Ministry of Information was established. Civil and semiofficial organizations also played significant roles in propaganda activities and contributed to their complexity.<sup>16</sup> Militaries and state elites had little experience dealing with public opinion, which enabled journalists and publishers to significantly influence the new propaganda activities and institutions. In Britain, the owners of several newspapers, known as the “Press Gang,” deeply shaped war propaganda. Although they were relatively autonomous in their work—compared to state-controlled propaganda activities in Germany, for example—British journalists and publishers had strong ties to government institutions.<sup>17</sup>

Britain and Germany sought systematic and modern ways to mobilize hatred against each other in World War I, vying to portray their enemies as savages and barbarians. The British government knew from its Boer War experience that antiwar sentiments and press campaigns against imperial war policy could jeopardize its position on the home front.<sup>18</sup> It launched a systematic propaganda initiative targeting its own public as well as those of neutral countries such as the United States, with the aim of depicting the Germans as a threat to humanity. Much early propaganda activity was directed not at the masses but rather at the leading personalities of neutral foreign countries, who were considered the opinion makers.<sup>19</sup> Yet elaborate methods were employed to alter domestic public opinion as well.

British propaganda depicted German soldiers as beasts and Germany itself as an enemy of civilization. The atrocities that were highlighted were very similar to those portrayed earlier in the Ottoman case. Most of the stories related to the invasion of Belgium, focusing on how the Belgian people suffered at the hands of the Germans. The British government disseminated influential pamphlets on German atrocities such as the rape of women and the slaughter of children. These leaflets were translated into many languages, as in the Ottoman case. For their part, German leaders asserted that their enemies had butchered German women and children and fired dum-dum bullets in battle. They tried to convince neutral countries and their own people that the goal of their military activities was to defend Germany rather than to encroach on others. Well-known intellectuals and academics in Britain, Germany, and France debated accusations of atrocity as each camp blamed the opposing one, representing it as brutal, uncivilized, and “reverting to barbarous practices in an era of moral progress.”<sup>20</sup>

The most spectacular and well-known claim of atrocity propaganda was the story of the *Kadaververwertungsanstalt*, the “corpse-exploitation establishment,” in which Germans were said to boil their own dead soldiers to produce lubricants, fertilizers, soaps, and pig fodder. Although the assertion was repudiated officially by the British government in

1925, the dissemination of such propaganda by the daily press was effective in inciting hatred against Germans during the war. According to Joachim Neander and Randal Marlin, its influence was so profound that the public had a hard time believing the first reports of the Holocaust during World War II.<sup>21</sup> The earlier rivalry gave rise to an interwar conviction that atrocity claims of both sides were mere inventions.<sup>22</sup>

THE CATASTROPHE OF THE BALKAN WARS AND ATROCITY  
PROPAGANDA

It is not difficult to find atrocity propaganda published during the Balkan Wars; all sides sought to establish that their opponents were acting contrary to the standards of international and humanitarian values. These arguments and allegations were put forward in part to generate support among the Great Powers and the publics of the “civilized world” and led to the formation of an international commission to investigate the claims, which published its report in 1914.<sup>23</sup> Although these international debates and struggles are a crucial aspect of atrocity propaganda, this paper focuses on its internal dimensions and consequences, that is, how the belligerent states—and in particular the Ottoman Empire—made use of atrocity propaganda to mobilize and nationalize domestic populations.

Ottoman efforts to publicize the grief and sorrow of Muslims at the hands of “infidels” predates the Balkan Wars. There were initiatives before the 1908 revolution, particularly in the Young Ottoman and Young Turk press, to bring to light the sufferings of Muslims at the hands of Christians in Crete and in the Balkans. However, during the reign of Abdülhamit II (1876–1909) the press was not allowed to refer to the sufferings of the Muslims in the interest of not provoking enmity between the empire’s different communities.<sup>24</sup> Atrocity propaganda was also employed against the Ottoman Empire, particularly during and after the Batak Massacre committed by the Ottoman army against Bulgarians in 1876.<sup>25</sup> This incident found its echo in the famous 1876 pamphlet by the English statesman W.E. Gladstone, *The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*.<sup>26</sup> Nationalist intellectuals and both the Ottoman and independent Balkan states had thus made use of and experienced atrocity propaganda before the Balkan Wars.

The 1908 Young Turk Revolution created a new political and social order that generated new public issues.<sup>27</sup> By the Second Constitutional Period (1908–18), the ongoing influx of Muslims from the Balkans and Crete, and their stories of immigration, deeply influenced the Muslim public through civil society organizations and a flourishing Ottoman press. Vivid journalism increased the effect of atrocity propaganda, as studies on World War I highlight. Ottoman references to the misery of Muslims in the Balkan lands had started during the boycott movements against Austria, Bulgaria, and Greece between 1908 and 1911.<sup>28</sup> The boycott movement undermined the Ottomanist political atmosphere of the 1908 revolution, increasing tensions between rival nationalisms. The Balkan Wars exacerbated this trend, as news, stories, rumors, photographs, and illustrations of acts against Muslims were increasingly published by Ottoman periodicals. A new genre of pamphlets on Muslim afflictions emerged, which was aimed at stirring up the national feelings of Muslims across the empire.

The situation of Muslims in the “lost lands” and the sufferings of immigrants flowing into the empire were significant elements in the construction of an Ottoman Muslim

identity and nationalist discourse during the empire's last years. Reports of atrocities against Muslims in the Ottoman press before the Balkan Wars may also be considered the harbingers of the ethnic and religious clashes to follow after 1912. The constitutional atmosphere slowed the deterioration of intercommunal relationships, but open clashes erupted during the war years.<sup>29</sup>

During and after the Balkan Wars, Ottoman efforts to mobilize the public, largely through the circulation of pamphlets, were directed at Muslims and Turks. The aim of these pamphlets was to bring about an economic and national revival of the Muslim population that, it was hoped, would rescue Muslims and Turks from the "merciless hands" of the non-Muslims who were working against the empire.<sup>30</sup> This idea became prevalent among the Ottoman elite and was echoed in the news reports, articles, and commentaries of Turkish-language newspapers. Thousands of propaganda leaflets were distributed for free, both in Istanbul and in the provinces, in 1913 and 1914, with titles such as *Müslümanlara Mahsus* (Especially for Muslims), *Müslümanlara Mahsus Kurtulmak Yolu* (A Path of Salvation for Muslims), and *Müslüman ve Türklere* (To Muslims and Turks).<sup>31</sup>

*Müslümanlara Mahsus* begins by reminding its readers of the terrifying defeats of the Balkan Wars. Although Edirne and the areas around Kırkkilise were taken back, the pamphlet reports, the general loss of territory was tremendous. The Muslims in these towns and regions were abandoned and destitute. Even the wealthy now led miserable lives. Children were begging in the streets, and some of them were serving *rakı* to enemy soldiers in the taverns.<sup>32</sup> *Müslüman ve Türklere* refers to the "rotten skins" and "carved eyes" of Muslims in the "lost lands," and then goes on to discuss the enemies who killed their brothers with bayonets, raped mothers and sisters, and afterwards drank wine.<sup>33</sup>

The Greek consul in Ayvalık reported in 1914 to the Greek Foreign Ministry that Ottoman government agents throughout the country had tried to sow discontent among Muslims by distributing booklets that provoked them against the Greek population.<sup>34</sup> The Greek newspaper *Embros*, published in Athens, also printed reports of leaflets aimed to stir up Muslims around Smyrna.<sup>35</sup> It was not only these new pamphlets that inflamed Muslims against Greeks, but also booklets written earlier. The metropolitan bishop of Ephesus claimed in *Ekklesiastiki Alitheia* that a book called *Kavm-i Cedid* (The New Nation, written by Ubeydullah Afgani and published in 1913), which supposedly cursed Jesus Christ, was provoking Muslims.<sup>36</sup>

#### THE STATE AND CIVIL INITIATIVES

The Balkan Wars caused a shift in the discourse of Muslim/Turkish nationalism.<sup>37</sup> The stories cited above were basic elements of the atrocity propaganda used during these wars. Besides the pamphlets and publications of the Turkish press on economic revivalism, numerous pamphlets and news reports appeared that focused on the sufferings of Muslim at the hands of Bulgarians during the war years. These publications were the outcome of both official enterprises and civil initiatives of nationalist elites and organizations. The pattern that was to emerge during World War I in Britain and Germany was first experienced in the Balkans.

The Ottoman government sought to collect information on Bulgarian and Greek atrocities against local Muslims and to publicize these reports by distributing them to the

Ottoman press and foreign embassies.<sup>38</sup> Ottoman military officers also compiled reports and files on atrocities against Muslims. For instance, the General Gendarmerie Inspector Boman (Baumann) Pasha recruited a Frenchman (probably Gendarmerie Mayor Monsieur Sarrou) to prepare a report on atrocities committed by Bulgarians and Greeks in Dedeğaç (Alexandroupolis) and Kavala. This report was distributed to various ministries and official departments.<sup>39</sup> However, there were problems with its first announcement to the public. Although the Ministry of War banned the publication of the report in the Ottoman press, on 29 December 1912 the newspaper *Alem* printed a version of it that suggested that Boman Pasha himself had compiled it. The Ottoman bureaucracy was alarmed, as it was obvious that Boman Pasha had not visited Dedeğaç or Kavala. The ministry, very sensitive to such details in the propaganda war, noted that this discrepancy might undermine the authenticity of the report.<sup>40</sup> When *Sabah* republished the report the following day, with the same false introduction used by *Alem*,<sup>41</sup> the bureaucrats' involvement increased: because Boman Pasha's personal warning in *Alem* was not considered sufficient, special measures were requested to stop such unpermitted publication of confidential official documents.

The correspondence between various ministries hints that the Ottoman government also possessed a counter-report on Ottoman atrocities against Bulgarians and was worried that the Ottoman press would release it to the public. The government insisted that its own version of the story should be sent to foreign embassies and ministries as well as to leading European newspapers.<sup>42</sup> As this official correspondence reveals, the Ottoman state paid close attention to propaganda warfare, and its way of conducting matters was quite different from civil initiatives. At this point, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) was not in power, and newspapers and organizations close to the CUP were harshly criticizing the government; this power struggle affected the way the government handled the issue. The CUP came to power only in the well-known coup of 23 January 1913, known as the *Babiali Baskını*.

The Command Headquarters of the Ottoman Left Army<sup>43</sup> also sent information and photographs regarding these alleged atrocities to Istanbul. Apart from senior officers such as Boman Pasha, minor officials were involved, including police officer Hasan Neşet in Çorlu, who prepared a report on violence against Muslims in his own district.<sup>44</sup> Meanwhile, the Bulgarian government was collecting material on Turkish atrocities against the local Bulgarian population in Thrace and asked the Ottoman government to investigate these incidents. This collection of material concerning misbehavior, torture, and other atrocities of the combatant armies became a contested field between Balkan countries.<sup>45</sup> The Ottoman government also scanned the foreign press for news of atrocities. For instance, the London ambassador informed Istanbul that the *Times* newspaper had published an article claiming that the properties of non-Muslims were plundered in Gusinje (Gosine). On 24 September 1912, the Foreign Ministry requested that the Interior Ministry investigate the claim in order to repudiate it.<sup>46</sup>

Apart from these official endeavors, nationalist civil organizations, which had relations with state institutions as will be seen in the cases below, also compiled evidence of atrocities against Muslims and sought to bring them to the attention of the national and international publics via their publications. The main civil society organization for Muslim immigrants, which dealt with the problems of immigrants in the Ottoman Empire and of Muslims in the territories lost by the empire, was Rumeli Muhacirin-i

İslamiye Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi (Society for Muslim Immigrants from Roumelia). The society protested against Bulgaria after the military mobilization started and the first news of atrocities began to be heard and published in the Ottoman press. In its press release, the organization condemned the “barbarity and savagery” of the Bulgarian “gangster government,” which it held responsible for the atrocities. It also underlined the fact that European civilization should be ashamed of such acts in the 20th century, and referred to the Bulgarians as “monsters.”<sup>47</sup>

*Tanin* newspaper further announced that the Society for Muslim Immigrants from Bulgaria had lost its confidence in the Ottoman government and had decided to bring the atrocities to the attention of foreign and Ottoman public opinion. The report noted that the society was preparing a memorandum in French and Turkish on Bulgarian atrocities.<sup>48</sup> In 1912, the society published *Alam-ı İslam, Bulgar Vahşetleri İslamiyenin Enzar-ı Basiretine ve İnsaniyet ve Medeniyetin nazar-ı Dikkatine* (The Pains of Muslims, Bulgarian Atrocities, to the Attention of Muslims, Humanity and Civilization), and a second pamphlet with the same title appeared in 1913.<sup>49</sup> The group organized solidarity campaigns, collected money for the immigrants, and published *Bulgar Mezalimi İntikam Levhası* (Bulgarian Atrocities, A Sheet of Vengeance) on 14 August 1913.<sup>50</sup> In 1916 it published *Türk Katilleri ve Yunanlılar* (Greeks and the Murderers of Turks) in Istanbul.

In late 1912, Ahmet Cevad (Emre), Satı al-Husri, Bedii Nuri, İsmail Hakkı (Baltacıoğlu), and Ahmet Ferit (Tek) founded a society called the Balkan Mezalimi Neşr-i Vesaik Cemiyeti (Society for Publication of Documents on Balkan Atrocities).<sup>51</sup> Its mission was to publish booklets on the sufferings of Muslims at the hands of Bulgarians.<sup>52</sup> It also communicated with the Muslim public via its press releases, which appeared in the Ottoman press soon after the society’s establishment.<sup>53</sup> Its first booklet, written in French, was organized into three parts. The information for the first part was based on the society’s own investigation of atrocities against Muslims and on a report compiled by the former governor-general of Salonica, Nazım Paşa. As one of the first propaganda leaflets of this kind targeting an international public, it drew on accounts from European sources, including observations of European statesmen, consuls, and journalists. The Ottoman press also used information from foreign sources on atrocities against Muslims in the Balkans. Those who compiled these news reports must have thought that reference to foreign sources would enhance their arguments.<sup>54</sup>

In its struggle to influence international public opinion, the Society for the Publication of Documents required support from the Ottoman public. It called on Ottomans to contribute to its activities by donating money or providing evidence of suffering at the hands of Bulgarian soldiers, such as photographs or letters from victims. The names of the people who donated to the society were published periodically in the Ottoman press.<sup>55</sup>

Ahmed Cevad published the Turkish version of the booklet in late May 1912 under the title *Kırmızı Siyah Kitab: 1328 Fecayii* (Red-Black Book: The Disaster of 1912).<sup>56</sup> A short announcement of its publication in *Tanin* underlined its utility for the education of children; the booklet was full of material edited to provoke emotions, and was a guide that would lead the nation to the “path of progress, awakening, union, strengthening.”<sup>57</sup> Cevad asserted that Muslims in Bulgaria were ordered to frequent churches whenever the bells tolled and that those who refused to do so would be executed immediately. He also quoted from the report of a French general (Boman Pasha) claiming that native



Greeks guided Bulgarian gangs and komitadjis by identifying Muslim houses. During the massacres, Cevad wrote, Christian houses were marked with white crosses on their doors, indicating that they were to be spared, and Bulgarians not only shot Muslims with machine guns but also threw bombs into mosques.<sup>58</sup>

These publications had their initial impact on intellectuals. Mehmed Ali Tevfik, a well-known Turkish nationalist and one of the founders of *Türk Ocağı* (Turkish Hearth), gave an account of his feelings upon reading the first (French) version of the Red-Black Book in a Turkish daily. He recalls that after learning of the atrocities and crimes against Turks from the booklet, he turned into a wild animal seeking revenge. He condemns Europe as bearing the main responsibility for this ongoing “Turkish catastrophe,” yet he also underlines the “benefits” of the atrocities, which have the potential to “awaken the national soul of the Turks and give them a wolf’s nature.”<sup>59</sup> (The wolf was one of the early symbols of Turkish nationalism.) Nationalists considered atrocity news beneficial for the awakening of “national” public opinion.

A significant booklet in this vein was Tüccarzade İbrahim Hilmi’s *Türkiye Uyan* (Wake Up Turkey), which claimed that Bulgarian gangs burned thirty-nine men and women alive in a mosque in Debrencik and slaughtered all Turks—men, women, and children—in Kosova.<sup>60</sup> The terms “awakening” and “revenge” were frequently employed in the rising discourse of the *Milli İktisat* (National Economy).<sup>61</sup> As in many accounts of Bulgarian atrocities, İbrahim Hilmi mentions the destroyed Muslim properties in Bulgaria and Macedonia, the mosques converted to churches, the starving Muslim families, and the hundreds of young Muslim girls raped. He takes pains to underline that it was not only vagrants who plundered and sacked Muslim property and raped Muslim women, but also educated notables and prominent Christians.<sup>62</sup> İbrahim Hilmi wrote that some Muslim women were whipped, beaten, and then brought to churches to be converted to Christianity.<sup>63</sup> According to him, not only were mosques destroyed but also tombs were turned into stores for barley and straw, and the graveyards and gravestones of Muslims were devastated and demolished.<sup>64</sup>

Dr. Cemil wrote a propaganda pamphlet entitled *Bulgar Vahşetleri, İntikam, Evlad ve Ahfada Yadigar* (Bulgarian Atrocities: Vengeance, a Memento for Children and Grandchildren), published in 1914/15.<sup>65</sup> He claimed that Muslim women’s clothes were ripped off and they were forced to dance naked before the Bulgarian military officers, after which they were all killed.<sup>66</sup> In Kavala, he continued, Muslim children were killed with bayonets before their mothers’ eyes, and the eyes of Muslim women were gouged out and their breasts cut off after they had been raped;<sup>67</sup> the crescent on top of a minaret in Kırklareli was replaced by a cross and the tomb in the garden of this church was destroyed, with the bones in the graveyard scattered;<sup>68</sup> and 150,000 Pomaks were converted to Christianity and forced to wear hats.<sup>69</sup> The three pamphlets discussed above include vivid illustrations and photographs of some of the atrocities.<sup>70</sup>

#### ATROCITY PROPAGANDA IN THE OTTOMAN PRESS

The civil initiatives to publicize atrocities committed against Muslims in pamphlets were echoed in the Ottoman Turkish press, often in special columns reserved for such news. Such coverage allowed these initiatives to reach ordinary people and must have had a significant impact on Muslim public opinion in the Ottoman Empire. These periodicals

included *Tanin*, *Sebilürreşad*, *Servet-i Fünun*, *Donanma*, *İkdam*, and *Sabah*. *Tanin* was one of the most influential dailies of its time and the semi-official newspaper of the CUP. The reports it published were often reprinted by other periodicals around the empire. During the Balkan Wars, when the CUP was not yet in power, *Tanin* was suspended several times and released under different names, such as *Cenin*, *Senin*, *Renin*, and *Hak*. The other periodicals are also representative of the press in the Second Constitutional Period: *Sebilürreşad* was a significant journal of early political Islam; *Servet-i Fünun* was one of the most popular and prestigious journals of the late Ottoman era; *İkdam* and *Sabah* were two mainstream newspapers; and *Donanma* was the journal of one of the most active nationalist civil societies.

### *Before the War*

Ottoman press coverage of atrocities against Muslims in the Balkans, particularly in Bulgaria, can be classified into three periods or stages. Before the Balkan Wars, the most typical reported harassment against Muslims was the accusation of spying. Ottoman Turkish newspapers and journals published accounts in which Muslims were detained on these grounds by the Bulgarian armed forces. As John Horne and Alan Kramer underline, fear of spying, which they call “spy mania,” was rife in the belligerent countries during World War I.<sup>71</sup> This was another phenomenon that emerged just before the Balkan Wars in the prospective belligerent countries.

The other prevalent trouble Muslims were said to encounter was illegal and humiliating treatment by state officials. Complaints of this kind comprised the main grievances of Muslims before the start of the military mobilization. A merchant from Svishtov (Ziştovi), Hafız Ahmed Efendi, reported going to Levski in Pleven (Plevne), where he was detained by the Bulgarian gendarmerie immediately after he got off the train; they searched his clothes, detained him for hours, accused him of being a spy, and subjected him to many insults. Another Muslim merchant from Svishtov, Ali Rıza Efendi, who also went to Pleven, reported similar treatment on his way home: he was searched in the train station by the gendarmerie, and although he told the soldiers that he was from Svishtov and was in Pleven for business purposes, they refused to listen, beating him and yelling, “You are bastards and barbarous Turks, you are all spies.” The newspaper *Senin* told its readers that such mistreatment at the hands of state officials disregarded the honor and respectability of Muslims, and distressed and worried the Ottoman public.<sup>72</sup> It was also reported that Muslims were fleeing the country, for example to Romania, due to this kind of cruelty. *Tanin* informed its readers that “miserable Muslims” were running away from Bulgaria.<sup>73</sup>

### *After the Military Mobilization*

After the mobilization of the armies of both sides, the stories of Muslim grief shifted. In Ottoman periodicals, there were two main sources for news on Muslims in the Balkans: eyewitness accounts of Muslim immigrants who had fled their homelands and reported their experiences to newspapers, and letters from those who were able to stay despite the atrocities or who had fled to Romania. The accounts published in the newspapers

provoked reaction in state circles. For example, after a report published in *Tanin* on how Bulgarians were torturing Muslims, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was asked to closely investigate the assertions.<sup>74</sup>

After the appearance of the propaganda booklets mentioned earlier, periodicals began to draw on them for information. *Servet-i Fünun*, for example, summarized the information that it gathered from these sources.<sup>75</sup> Before this era newspapers also collected their own information. *Tanin* confessed that Turkish newspapers had abstained from mentioning these kinds of stories in detail before because such accounts, they claimed, might provoke attacks by Muslims against Christians. However, after the mobilization of the armies, news about direct assaults on Muslims began to fill the pages of Ottoman periodicals. Journalists and political elites were well aware of the fact that such news might provoke reaction against local non-Muslims. The news recounted not only atrocities committed by the Christian armies, but also the collaboration of local non-Muslims. A reporter in *Sebilürreşad*, for instance, wrote that when the Bulgarian army entered mixed villages around the border between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire, the Christians welcomed it and directed the soldiers to Muslim houses for plundering.<sup>76</sup>

Three Muslims visited the offices of *Tanin* just after their arrival in Istanbul to inform its journalists that their coreligionists were under attack in Bulgaria. While making pilgrimage, they had apparently witnessed assaults on the Muslim community, including women and children, in Varna. They said that they saw Bulgarian crowds shouting “we will cut [up] all the Muslims” and scraps of fezzes and turbans scattered on the streets. They also claimed that they heard many similar stories from Svishtov, Balchik (Balçık), and Shumen (Şumnu), where Muslims and their properties were under assault.<sup>77</sup>

The most frequently mentioned grievance of Muslims in the Ottoman periodicals at this stage of military mobilization was the activity of inspection teams that searched Muslim properties for hidden weapons. The body searches endured by Muslims accused of spying escalated into searches of houses and shops. News items described how these inspections were carried out, with Muslims, and women in particular, being insulted and humiliated. In a letter from Plovdiv (Filibe), a group of Muslims wrote that the inspection teams turned their lives into a nightmare for three days. Although the Muslims had locked themselves in their homes and endured hunger, Bulgarian soldiers with bayonets and komitadjis (gangs) would not leave them alone. The group claimed that these inspection teams were stealing their property and harassing women and girls in order to force them to confess to the possession of weapons. Furthermore, old and young Muslim men were arrested and put into the barn at the military barracks. The description of the harassment of women did not yet extend to molestation or rape; a group of newcomers from Varna informed the Ottoman press that Bulgarians annoyed women and Muslim imams on the streets. The words that the Ottoman press used at this initial stage (“shameless,” “nasty,” “rude,” “vulgar”) were mild compared to language used in the later phases.<sup>78</sup>

Initially, newspapers published these types of news reports, letters, and interviews under separate headlines. Yet as the coverage became more constant and detailed, devoted columns started to appear under headings such as “Bulgar Vahşeti” (Bulgarian Savagery) and “Bulgar Mezalimi” (Bulgarian Atrocities). Beyond the actions of the inspection teams and humiliation on the streets, the narratives of Muslims in Bulgaria began to feature attacks and assaults. Many accounts came from Varna due to the fact

that it was one of the main port cities from which the emigrants left the country. A group told *Tanin* that in many cases fezzes were taken from the heads of Muslims and torn up. News emerged of injuries and even (though rarely) deaths. In Varna, according to reports of Muslim refugees published in the press, some emigrants were stabbed. Debentures and vouchers belonging to emigrating Muslims were taken by force. The usurpation and seizure of goods and valuables become ordinary news.<sup>79</sup> In the build up to war, reports of extra war taxes and instances of forced labor were heard by Muslims who related them to Ottoman newspapers. Officials forced three wealthy Muslims from Vidin and Plovdiv to give twenty thousand francs each to the army, and ten Muslim merchants to hand over two thousand sacks of flour. Another businessman in Stara Zagora (Eski Zağra), who was trading with Edirne (Adrianople), had to surrender his six horses.<sup>80</sup> In an open letter published in *Sebilürreşad*, the writer mentions an increase in military taxes paid by Muslims, noting that the amount of tax owed varied according to their wealth.<sup>81</sup>

As the flow of emigrants increased, *Tanin* requested the Ottoman government to send warships to the two main ports of Bulgaria, Varna and Burgas, to protect Muslims who congregated there. *Tanin* told its readers that this was necessary because Bulgaria had become a “slaughterhouse” for Muslims.<sup>82</sup> The state of the immigrants flowing into the Ottoman territories was also a frequent subject in the Ottoman press, as Mehmet Salih pointed out in *İkdam*.<sup>83</sup>

Rivalry in atrocity propaganda between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire also revealed itself in the pages of newspapers. The Bulgarian news agencies, particularly the telegraph agency, declared the information regarding atrocities against Muslims to be false.<sup>84</sup> This denial had repercussions on the Ottoman side: the owner of the *Gayret* newspaper in Bulgaria, Rıza—who was also a columnist—published a reply in *Tanin* describing the oppression and cruelty that Muslims suffered at the hands of Bulgarians. He also underlines the significance of atrocity news in the press. For him, such maltreatment of Muslims was ongoing and yet the Turkish newspapers had not reported on it in detail in order not to incite Muslims against Christians within the empire. The outcome, Muslim assaults on Bulgarians, was in his view the main motivation for the original Bulgarian cruelties, which were intended to gain the support of Europe after the Turkish reaction. Yet, he says, over the prior ten days this torture had become unbearable for Muslims, and revenge had to be taken, after a victory of the Ottoman army. He also describes instances of atrocities in his letter, but underlines that he could not bear to mention the abuse that Muslim women were experiencing. Shortly thereafter, the stories of Muslim women’s suffering were to become among the most publicized accounts.<sup>85</sup>

Denials continued to come out in the Bulgarian press during the war, and the Turkish press quoted and referred to them as lies, as in a news item in *İkdam*.<sup>86</sup> The journal *Donanma* also published a reply in Arabic to a book by Lieutenant Hermenegild Wagner, a war correspondent for the Reichspost, claiming that he had contradictory views regarding the atrocities.<sup>87</sup> The journal probably published the article in Arabic in order to address the Arabic-speaking citizens of the empire and convince them that the Ottoman cause was just. *Donanma* stresses that the book was introduced by the prime minister of Bulgaria, I.E. Gueshoff, and therefore had an obvious bias toward Bulgarians. In his introduction to Wagner’s book, Prime Minister Geushoff argues that the situation for

Christians in Turkey had always been unbearable. For this reason, he writes, Bulgaria “declared war for a great cause—for the deliverance of a million miserable men from destruction, and for the extension of the frontiers of freedom and civilization.”<sup>88</sup> The critique ends by citing an article penned by George Raymond, published in the French journal *L’Illustration*, praising the Ottoman soldiers, who, he claimed, refrained from committing atrocities against native Bulgarians as an act of revenge after witnessing their enemies’ atrocities in the land they had recaptured.<sup>89</sup>

This rivalry had echoes in state correspondence. When accusations of atrocities came from the Bulgarian side, the Ottoman grand vizier asked first the Interior Ministry and then the governor of Edirne to investigate them. The governor and the ministry informed the Foreign Ministry that such accusations were baseless; they claimed that some members of the Bulgarian gangs had been wearing black outfits similar to the Ottoman soldiers’ uniform. The governor of Edirne asserted that the Bulgarians may have intended to kill non-Muslims on the Ottoman side and lay the blame for the atrocity on the Ottomans, thereby turning public opinion against them. According to the report, this was deemed to be a possible explanation for the Bulgarian accusations. It is apparent from this correspondence that the top priority of the Ottoman elite was the image of the state in the eyes of the public.<sup>90</sup>

#### *After the Start of the War*

With the beginning of the First Balkan War, news of the acts that Muslims in Bulgaria endured became increasingly explicit in Ottoman periodicals, with the aim of arousing the emotions of the Ottoman public. According to these reports, the molestation and abuse of Muslim women by Bulgarian gangs had escalated into rapes and assaults; women were being wounded or killed, with some suffering mutilation such as having their breasts cut off. Accounts claimed that men, meanwhile, were unable to wander at will on the streets and in public places. They were attacked when they went out, and were arrested and kept in custody without food and water. Shops and stores owned by Muslims were shut down, and trading and business became impossible for them; the looting and plunder of their economic assets and houses became the rule. The inspections that were reported at the beginning of the military mobilization turned into direct assaults. There were accounts of various humiliating acts, such as the cutting off of men’s beards and moustaches. Attacks on mosques were reported. Many Muslims were said to have undergone forced baptisms; stories of efforts to convert Muslims to Christianity became typical of atrocity propaganda. It was reported in *Sebilürreşad* that the Bulgarian crowds not only attacked Muslim property and assaulted Muslim women but also tortured people in the sacred space of a mosque.<sup>91</sup>

According to these accounts, investigations were also a kind of atrocity. Schoolteachers in Plovdiv were searched in their schools by the police and were insulted during the investigations before being detained. Through forced labor, Muslim notables and elites were made to perform tasks that were “normally the work of animals.” They were also forced to serve soldiers. When their work was finished, they were imprisoned without any food or water.<sup>92</sup> News from Vidin of atrocities against teachers in their classrooms and against rich Muslims, whose properties were looted, was similarly reported in *Sebilürreşad*.<sup>93</sup> The only Muslims to react collectively, according to *Tanin*, were the people

of Yeniköy, leading the newspaper to argue that Bulgarians were torturing Muslims who did not even resist. That was to say, Muslims were loyal to their states but were still tortured because they were Muslims.<sup>94</sup>

The reports claimed that while the Muslim men were under custody, their families were unable to find anything to eat for days. Muslim women were brutally attacked in the village of Kuzgunluk near Tutrakan in Silistra. The men of the village had left to herd their animals to Ruse (Ruşçuk) and Tutrakan, and the women were raped and had to leave their village to go to Sarıgöl. Bulgarians then attacked nearby villages, such as Asvak and Hacıoğlu. Three Muslim girls (according to reports, virgins aged only fourteen and fifteen) were kidnapped in Razgrad (Hezargrad) and taken to the mountains, where they were raped. The mother of one of them was killed as her child was taken from her home. Apart from these three, four other girls “lost their virginity” during this assault; two of them were daughters of Tatar Ali, a notable of the town. Six thousand francs belonging to Hacı Osman Ağa were stolen in this raid in Dobrich (Hacıoğlu Pazarcık). *Tanin* reported that public announcements were made in Razgan, Shumen (Şumnu), Ruse (Ruşçuk), Tutrakan, and Silistra ordering Muslims to open their shops, whereupon they were looted and plundered.<sup>95</sup>

A significant aspect of these reports is their class character. Members of the middle and upper classes being forced to work in lower-class jobs is depicted as a particular form of cruelty. In Vidin, for instance, Fehim Efendi, a well-educated and well-mannered man, was condemned to keep pigs. Cumali Beşar Zeynel was forced to work in a barn, carrying dung on his back from morning to evening. It was asserted that other Muslim notables in Vidin worked under the “barbarian command” of Bulgarian shepherds and kneaded dough under foot.<sup>96</sup>

Although most of the news concentrated on Bulgaria, stories of Muslims from Macedonia and other Balkan countries such as Serbia and Greece appeared. A Muslim in Niş, Veysel Ağa, after being taken for a walk with a rope around his throat, was apparently beaten and taken to a church to be converted to Christianity, where he was threatened with having his throat cut if he refused; the man managed to run away just as he was about to be baptized and made his way to Istanbul via Köstence.<sup>97</sup> In an open letter published in both *Tanin* and *Sebilürreşad*, Bekir Bey wrote that the Greek army massacred the Muslims of numerous villages in Grevena (Grebena), leaving only one Muslim in the region, named Hamid Efendi. Bekir Bey then narrates the acts against the Muslims in detail, underlining that the journalist who reported these atrocities to him could not continue and broke down. In Servia (Serfiçe), the Greek commanders spent the nights with Muslim virgins, according to this open letter.<sup>98</sup> In Ruse, a mosque was attacked, its windows were smashed, and its door broken. On the streets, the same crowd tore the clothes off Muslim men and the veils off women. Other instances of atrocities in Ruse were similar to those mentioned above: theft, molestation, looting, rape, kidnapping, and the humiliation of religious clerics.<sup>99</sup>

As the war went on, news of atrocities became more detailed and abundant; reports of attacks against Muslims often appeared as short articles rather than long and detailed accounts. Numerous incidents were summarized in articles in sequence under the headings of the names of the towns in which they occurred. The most emotional stories were selected among these numerous events and were narrated in detail. These incidents were variants on a number of themes: attacks during meetings, bans on Muslim religious

practices, forced labor for military purposes such as sharpening swords, closures of schools and shops, bans on the singing of the *ezan*, and theft of money.<sup>100</sup>

A story involving roughly eight Muslim girls from Kızılağaç in Kırklareli is a good example of the transformation of atrocity news in the Ottoman press. It was reported that there were a few Muslim families in the village of Paşalar, which was close to the Ottoman-Bulgarian border. According to the account, a certain Captain Stankov ordered his soldiers to pick up any young Muslim girls they were able to find there and advised them not to pay attention to the girls' cries or screams. The soldiers besieged the village and broke into Muslim houses; they began torturing parents when they were unable to find any of the village girls. Once the torture became unbearable, the mothers apparently cried out; their daughters, who were unable to stand it, showed up to end the torment. Eight girls aged between twelve and eighteen were then herded into the gendarme station "as if they were animals." Under the command of the captain, the military officers began to abuse the girls, whose hands were tied. One or two of them attempted to run away without success. Another managed to get hold of one of the officers' swords, but could neither wound any of them nor commit suicide. In the end, these "pure and innocent girls" were raped, "their virginity and honor destroyed." The torture ended before dawn, and the report details how the girls were released in the morning only to be assaulted by soldiers on their way back to the village. They tried to resist the soldiers with all the means they could find, but three of them were mortally wounded by rifle fire. Two soldiers cut off the breasts of a dead girl and exhibited them to Muslim peasants as they were entering the village.<sup>101</sup>

The Ottoman newspapers began to publish news items that were drawn from the reports of the Society for the Publication of Documents rather than directly from interviews with the immigrants or letters from Bulgaria. It was in the reports of this association that incidents such as rapes, the killing of unborn babies in their mothers' wombs, the plundering of Muslim economic assets, the ruin of Muslim economic life, and forced labor in the Bulgarian military mobilization were compiled. These reports appeared in the Ottoman newspapers in a systematic way before they were published together in a book.<sup>102</sup> Finally, the Turkish version of the Red-Black Book, a compilation of many of these atrocity stories, was published at the end of May 1913.

#### CONCLUSION

The Balkan Wars were more than military battles. As early examples of "total war," these wars influenced the home fronts of the belligerent states, which had not experienced war to such an extent before; different sections of their societies became more involved than in previous wars, and were the subjects of mobilization efforts on the part of the political elite. War propaganda, aimed at influencing both international and domestic public opinion, emerged as a crucial weapon. As the wars caused mass forced migrations on both sides, these stories were used in the service of war propaganda. According to such accounts, the misery and sorrow of people who were left behind on enemy soil were compounded by their subjection to various types of atrocities.

In looking at the atrocities of the Balkan Wars within the framework of propaganda, this article does not suggest that they were fiction. However, the war propaganda units did exploit people's suffering and grief, a trend that was to be exacerbated in wars later in the

20th century. Furthermore, atrocity propaganda is still in use when genocide debates flare up around what is called the “Armenian Question” in contemporary Turkey. Particularly in popular publications, even liberal ones, the atrocities endured by Muslims in the lost lands are presented as a justification for the destruction of non-Muslim communities in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>103</sup> The atrocity propaganda that was used in the stigmatization of non-Muslims is again at the disposal of nationalism on the centenary of the Balkan Wars.

As elsewhere, the Ottoman state and civil organizations constituted the two fundamental pillars of such propaganda initiatives. Commanders in the Ottoman units compiled evidence on atrocities perpetrated by their enemies against the noncombatant population. The ministries of internal and foreign affairs also tried to publicize atrocity stories in order to convince public opinion, both national and international, that the Ottoman state was fighting for the well-being of its people and in accordance with universal humanitarian values. The press and civil associations also played crucial roles in the creation and publicizing of atrocity propaganda. The nationalist political elite and Muslim immigrants themselves established organizations and initiatives in order to make the sufferings of their coreligionists heard in the public sphere. They published pamphlets and leaflets, circulating thousands of copies. This activity must have contributed to the social mobilization of the Muslim population and to the heightening of their nationalist emotions: war propaganda was functional in the construction of national identities, and was therefore one force behind the nationalization of the masses, working alongside other economic and political practices of the nation-building process.

Ottoman war propaganda reinforced the “otherization” of local non-Muslims who were the coreligionists of the alleged perpetrators of atrocities; as mentioned above, many accounts highlighted the fact that local Christians collaborated with enemy soldiers and participated in raids on Muslims. The authors of atrocity propaganda were well aware of the fact that such publications had the potential to provoke reactions against native Christians of the Ottoman Empire. Although further study of the reception of this propaganda is needed, it is logical to conclude that these kinds of official and civil endeavors to galvanize the emotions of the Muslim public contributed to ethnic clashes in the first quarter of the 20th century.

Turkish historiography on war is largely limited to battles and other subjects common to traditional military history. Scholars influenced by new trends in war history are still few.<sup>104</sup> The social and cultural impact of warfare, particularly in the 20th century, when wars began to effect and mobilize people from all walks of life, should not be underestimated. This article has aimed to reveal a different battlefield, one on which belligerents fought a propaganda war, and to contextualize atrocity literature within the rising nationalisms of the early 20th century.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Tank Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye’de Siyasal Partiler İttihat ve Terakki, Bir Çağın, Bir Kuşağın, Bir Partinin Tarihi*, vol. 3 (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2000), 583; Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004), 108–9; Zafer Toprak, *Milli İktisat-Milli Burjuvazi* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1995), 107–8; Erol Köroğlu, *Ottoman Propaganda and Turkish Identity* (London: I. B. Tauris, D), 30; Sanem Yamak Ateş, *Asker Evlatlar Yetiştirmek: II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi’nde Beden Terbiyesi, Askeri Talim ve Paramiliter Gençlik Örgütleri* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012), 173–78.



<sup>2</sup>Hew Strachan, "From Cabinet War to Total War: The Perspective of Military Doctrine, 1861–1918," in *Great War, Total War: Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front 1914–1918*, ed. Roger Chickering and Stig Förster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 32. Although many scholars have reservations about the use of broad concepts such as "total war," it is evident that the total mobilization of societies during these wars involved the exploitation of as many sources as possible. See Stig Förster and Myrian Gessler, "The Ultimate Horror: Reflections on Total War and Genocide," in *A World at Total War: Global Conflict and the Politics of Destruction*, ed. Roger Chickering, Stig Förster, and Bernd Greiner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 55–56.

<sup>3</sup>Tammy M. Proctor, *Civilians in a World at War 1914–1918* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 23.

<sup>4</sup>Richard C. Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>5</sup>John Horne, "Introduction: Mobilizing for 'Total War,' 1914–1918," in *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War*, ed. John Horne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 2–3.

<sup>6</sup>In a previous study, I analyzed Muslim/Turkish nationalism in the Ottoman Empire as a social phenomenon, exploring how different sections of society had a role in this process. See Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest and the Working Classes in the Formation of Modern Turkey* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2014). In this article, I focus on the activities of the political elite but do not search for the outcomes of these policies in society.

<sup>7</sup>For an alternative view on this approach, see Erik J. Zürcher, ed., *Arming the State: Military Conscription in the Middle East and Central Asia, 1775–1925* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1999); and Zeki Arkan, "Balkan Savaşı ve Kamuoyu," in *Dördüncü Askeri Tarih Semineri Bildiriler* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1989), 168–88.

<sup>8</sup>Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Eyal Ginio, "Mobilizing the Ottoman Nation during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913): Awakening from the Ottoman Dream," *War in History* 12 (2005): 156–77.

<sup>9</sup>For example, see Ahmet Halaçoğlu, *Balkan Harbi Srasında Rumeli'den Türk Göçleri* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1995); and İlker Alp, *Belge ve Fotoğraflarla Bulgar Mezalimi (1877–1989)* (Ankara: Trakya Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1990).

<sup>10</sup>See n. 103.

<sup>11</sup>James E. Kitchen, Alisa Miller, and Laura Rowe, "Introduction," in *Other Combatants, Other Fronts: Competing Histories of the First World War*, ed., James E. Kitchen, Alisa Miller, and Laura Rowe (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), xxiv, xxviii.

<sup>12</sup>James Morgan Reed, *Atrocity Propaganda 1914–1919* (New York: Arno Press, 1972 [1941]); James Morgan Reed, "Atrocity Propaganda and the Irish Rebellion," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2 (1938): 229–44.

<sup>13</sup>David Welch, "Atrocity Propaganda," in *Propaganda and Mass Persuasion: A Historical Encyclopedia, 1500 to the Present*, ed. Nicholas J. Cull, David Culbert, and David Welch (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2003), 24.

<sup>14</sup>Reed, "Atrocity Propaganda and the Irish Rebellion," 229.

<sup>15</sup>Welch, "Atrocity Propaganda," 24.

<sup>16</sup>M. L. Sanders, "Wellington House and British Propaganda during the First World War," *Historical Journal* 18 (1975): 119–46.

<sup>17</sup>Alice Goldfarb Marquis, "Words as Weapons: Propaganda in Britain and Germany during the First World War," *Journal of Contemporary History* 13 (1978): 467–98.

<sup>18</sup>Gary S. Messinger, *British Propaganda and the State in the First World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 150–51.

<sup>19</sup>Philip M. Taylor, "The Foreign Office and British Propaganda during the First World War," *Historical Journal* 23 (1980): 896.

<sup>20</sup>John Horne and Alan Kramer, "German 'Atrocities' and Franco-German Opinion, 1914: The Evidence of German Soldiers' Diaries," *The Journal of Modern History* 66 (1994): 10.

<sup>21</sup>Joachim Neander and Randal Marlin, "Media and Propaganda: The Northcliffe Press and the Corpse Factory Story of World War I," *Global Media Journal* (Canadian edition) 3, no. 2 (2010): 67–82.

<sup>22</sup>James Morgan Reed is the best example of this conviction. See Horne and Kramer, "German 'Atrocities' and Franco-German Opinion, 1914," for a critique.

<sup>23</sup>Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1914). The Balkan Commission of Inquiry was composed of independent members from Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Russia, and the United States.

<sup>24</sup>Ayşe Nühket Adıyeke, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Girit Bunalımı (1896–1908)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000), 244–50.

<sup>25</sup>Martina Baleva, “İmparatorluğun Misillemesi: 1877–1878 Osmanlı-Rus Savaşı’nda Resim Savaşları ve Resim Cepheleri,” *Toplumsal Tarih* 228 (December 2012): 32–41. Along with her colleague Ulf Brunnbauer, Baleva provoked a public controversy in Bulgaria in 2007 by questioning the myths and truths of atrocity literature.

<sup>26</sup>W.E. Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East* (New York: 1876).

<sup>27</sup>See a recent article of mine that views the 1908 Revolution as a crucial break in mobilization patterns in the Ottoman Empire: Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, “Patterns of Social Mobilisation and Collective Action in the Elimination of the Greek Orthodox Population in the Ottoman Empire,” *The Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History / Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis* 10, no. 4 (2013): 46–65.

<sup>28</sup>For the details of these boycott movements, see Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, *1908 Osmanlı Boykotu* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004); for the anti-Greek boycotts after 1910, see Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement*.

<sup>29</sup>Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement*, 89.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>31</sup>There are several variations of these leaflets. A short version is *Müslümanlara Mahsus* (n.p., 1329 [1913/1914]). *Müslümanlara Mahsus* (n.p., 1329), with a red cover page, is the longest version, and includes a list of Muslim merchants. This is probably also the last version, published at the very beginning of 1914. *Müslümanlara Mahsus Kurtulmak Yolu* (n.p., 1329) is a similar pamphlet. *Müslüman ve Türklere* (n.p., 1329) is the shortest of the four.

<sup>32</sup>*Müslümanlara Mahsus*, 3–4; *Müslümanlara Mahsus Kurtulmak Yolu*, 4.

<sup>33</sup>*Müslüman ve Türklere*, 2–4.

<sup>34</sup>AYE (Arheio Ypourgeiou Exoterikon/Greek Foreign Ministry Archives), A21a, 1914, Ayvalık, no. 6251, 23 February 1914.

<sup>35</sup>“Anthellinikos Diogmon eis tin Mikran Asian,” *Embros*, 14 March 1914.

<sup>36</sup>“Ta Pathimata ton Omogenon” (Atrocities Incurred by the Nation), *Ekklesiastiki Alitheia*, 8 March 1914.

<sup>37</sup>See Çetinkaya, *The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement* for more on Turkish/Muslim nationalism.

<sup>38</sup>Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, hereafter BOA), BEO, 4199/314867, 1331.Ş.20 and BOA, BEO, 4130/309707, 1331.M.24.

<sup>39</sup>BOA, BEO, 4124/309292, 1331.M.07.

<sup>40</sup>BOA, BEO, 4130/309709, 1331.M.25. This particular issue of *Alem* newspaper is not available in the libraries of Turkey, but the probably identical re-publication of it in *Sabah* is; see the next footnote.

<sup>41</sup>“Boman Paşa’nın Raporu,” *Sabah*, no. 8363, 30 December 1912, 2.

<sup>42</sup>BOA, BEO, 4130/309709, 1331.M.25.

<sup>43</sup>In the Balkan Wars, the Ottoman army was divided into two sections.

<sup>44</sup>BOA, DH. EUM.THR., 107/52, 1331.Ra.17.

<sup>45</sup>See Bulgarian accusations related to the Kırkkilise region in BOA, DH. KMS, 1/22, 1331.Za.20.

<sup>46</sup>BOA, DH-SYS., 19/59, 1330.Za.13.

<sup>47</sup>“Rumeli Muhacirin-i İslamiye Cemiyeti’nden,” *Tanin*, no. 1462, 6 October 1912, 3.

<sup>48</sup>“Bulgaristan İslam Muhacirinin Muhtırası,” *Tanin*, no. 1470, 14 October 1912, 4. (Society for Muslim Immigrants from Bulgaria is apparently either an alternative name for the Roumelia organization or a special commission that concentrated on the plight of Bulgarian Muslims. I did not come across a society with this name again in the Ottoman periodicals or documents.)

<sup>49</sup>*Alam-ı İslam, Bulgar Vahşetleri İslamiyenin Enzar-ı Basiretine ve İnsaniyet ve Medeniyetin nazar-ı Dikkatine* (Istanbul: 1328 [1912/1913]); *Alam-ı İslam, Bulgar Vahşetleri İslamiyenin Enzar-ı Basiretine ve İnsaniyet ve Medeniyetin nazar-ı Dikkatin* (Istanbul: 1329 [1913/1914]).

<sup>50</sup>H. Yıldırım Ağanoğlu, *Göç* (Istanbul: Kum Saati Yayınları, 2001).

<sup>51</sup>“Kırmızı Siyah Kitab,” *Tanin*, no. 1498, 1 February 1913, 5. According to this article, the society was established at the outset of 1913. However, the report of the society, which was published in *İkdam* on 26 December 1912, confirms that it was constituted in the last days of 1912. Neşr-i Vesaik Cemiyeti, “Balkan

Müttefiklerinin Mezalimi,” *İkdam*, no. 5694, 26 December 1912, 3. (The names in brackets are surnames taken after the 1934 Surname Law.)

<sup>52</sup>Le Comité de Publication D.A.C.B., *Les Atrocités des Coalisés Balkaniques*, nos. 1 and 2 (Constantinople: Journal Ifham, 1913). For a similar publication by Bulgarians against Greeks, see Liubomir Miletich, *Atrocités Grecques en Macédoine Pendant la Guerre Grecobulgare* (Sophia: Imprimerie de L’État, 1913).

<sup>53</sup>Neşr-i Vesaik Cemiyeti, “Balkan Müttefiklerinin Mezalimi,” *İkdam*, no. 5694, 26 December 1912, 3.

<sup>54</sup>*İkdam* published numerous articles from foreign sources. Fossiche Zeitung, “Balkan Hükümet-i Müttefikasının Mezalimi,” *İkdam*, no. 5674, 6 December 1912, 3; Anetid Otto, “Balkan İtisafatı, Sırpların Mezalimi Hakkında,” *İkdam*, no. 5711, 12 January 1913, 3–4; Piyer Loti, “Bulgar Mezalimi Hakkında Piyer Loti’nin Telgrafi,” *İkdam*, no. 5937, 31 August 1913, 3.

<sup>55</sup>“Kırmızı Siyah Kitab,” *Tanin*, no. 1498, 1 February 1913, 5.

<sup>56</sup>For basic information on this pamphlet, see Yavuz Selim Karakışla, “Balkan Savaşı’nda Yayınlanmış Osmanlı Propaganda Kitabı,” *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 104 (2002): 60–63.

<sup>57</sup>“Kırmızı Siyah Kitab,” *Tanin*, no. 1606, 20 May 1913, 5. The announcement informs the readers that the Turkish version is to be published on 23 May 1913. Another announcement appeared in *İkdam* on 18 March: “Balkan Mezalimi: Kırmızı-Siyah Kitab,” *İkdam*, no. 5772, 18 March 1913, 3.

<sup>58</sup>Ahmed Cevad, *Kırmızı Siyah Kitab: 1328 Fecayii* (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Hayriye ve Şürekası, 1329), 120.

<sup>59</sup>Mehmed Ali Tevfik [Yükselen], “Rumeli Mezalimi,” *Tanin*, no. 1499, 2 February 1913, 3. For introductory information on Mehmed Ali Tevfik and his poems about the notion of “revenge,” see Ali Birinci, “Portre: Mehmed Ali Tefvik Yükselen,” *Türk Yurdu*, no. 243 (November 2007).

<sup>60</sup>Tüccarzade İbrahim Hilmi, *Türkiye Uyan* (Dersaadet, Kütübhanesi-i İslam ve Askeri, 1329 [1913/1914]), 19.

<sup>61</sup>In 1908, “the national economy” referred to the project of developing the Ottoman economy as a whole. After the Balkan Wars, it became more of a program to replace the non-Muslim bourgeoisie with a Muslim one, and non-Muslim capital with Muslim capital, reflecting the economic aspect of eliminating non-Muslims from the Ottoman Empire.

<sup>62</sup>Tüccarzade İbrahim Hilmi, *Türkiye Uyan*, 21.

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>65</sup>Dr. Cemil, *Bulgar Vahşetleri, İntikam, Evlad ve Ahfada Yadigar* (Dersaadet: 1330 [1914/1915]).

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*, 216.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, 81.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, 85, 170. This is an irony of history: in the republican era, the Turkish state would force its male citizens by law to wear hats.

<sup>70</sup>See Y. Doğan Çetinkaya, “Illustrated Atrocity: Stigmatization of Non-Muslims through Images in the Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Wars,” *Journal of Modern European History* 12, no. 4 (2014).

<sup>71</sup>Horne and Kramer, “German ‘Atrocities’ and Franco-German Opinion, 1914,” 24.

<sup>72</sup>“Bulgaristan Müslümanlarına Edilen Hakaretler,” *Senin*, no. 1435–42, 7 September 1912, 5.

<sup>73</sup>“Zavallı Müslümanlar,” *Tanin*, no. 1459, 3 October 1912, 2.

<sup>74</sup>BOA, BEO, 4097/307208, 1331.Za.01 (the original date on the document is 29 Eylül 1328/12 October 1912).

<sup>75</sup>“Bulgarların Mezalim-i Hunharanesi ve Tahribat-ı Vahşiyanesi,” *Servet-i Fünun*, no. 1158, 14 August 1913, 325.

<sup>76</sup>“Mezalim-i Salibiye Bulgar Zulüm ve Vahşeti, Hududlarda,” *Sebilürreşad*, no. 35–215, 21 Teşrinievvel 1328 [3 November 1912], 179.

<sup>77</sup>“Kudurmuş Bir Düşman İslamları Parçalıyor!” *Tanin*, no. 1460, 4 October 1912, 5.

<sup>78</sup>“Filibe’de Vahşet,” *Tanin*, no. 1460, 4 October 1912, 5; “Varna’da,” *Tanin*, no. 1460, 4 October 1912, 5. “Filibe’de,” *Sebilürreşad*, no. 35–215, 21 Teşrinievvel 1328 (3 November 1912), 179.

<sup>79</sup>“Bulgar Vahşeti: Yeni Tafsilat,” *Tanin*, no. 1461, 5 October 1912, 4.

<sup>80</sup>“Bulgar Vahşeti: Vidin’den ve Filibe’den . . .,” *Tanin*, no. 1461, 5 October 1912, 4.

<sup>81</sup>“Sebilürreşad Ceride-i İslamisi İdaresine,” *Sebilürreşad*, no. 41–223, 6 Kanunuevvel 1328 (19 December 1912), 274.

<sup>82</sup>“Bulgar Vahşeti: Osmanlı Donanması ve Bir Vazife-i Mühime,” *Tanin*, no. 1462, 6 October 1912, 3.

<sup>83</sup> Mehmed Salih, "Muhacirinin Hal ve İstikbali," *İkdam*, no. 5682, 14 December 1912, 5; see also "Muhacirler," *İkdam*, no. 5673, 5 December 1912, 1.

<sup>84</sup> "Tekzib Ediyorlar!," *Tanin*, no. 1461, 5 October 1912, 4.

<sup>85</sup> Gayret Gazetesi Sahibi ve Muharriri Rıza, "Bulgaristan Mezalimi," *Tanin*, no. 1464, 8 October 1912, 5.

<sup>86</sup> "Bulgar Gazetelerinin Yalanları," *İkdam*, no. 5775, 21 March 1913, 1.

<sup>87</sup> Lieutenant Hermenegild Wagner, *With the Victorious Bulgarians* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913). Each state found a European writer who supported its national cause or rightfulness. Wagner seemed to be pro-Bulgarian, while Henry Nivet and Pierre Loti wrote of how Muslims suffered at the hands of Christian armies. See Henry Nivet, *La Croisade Balkanique* (Paris: 1913). This book was translated and published in Istanbul in the same year; see Henri Nivet, *Balkan Ehl-i Salib Seferinde Avrupa Siyaseti ve Türklerin Felaketi* (Istanbul: Şems Matbaası, 1913). Leo Freundlich wrote about the Serbian atrocities committed against Albanians in *Albanians Golgotha: Anklageakten gegen die Vernichter des Albanervolkes* (Vienna: 1913).

<sup>88</sup> I. E. Gueshoff, "Introduction," in Lieutenant Hermenegild Wagner, *With the Victorious Bulgarians* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913), xii.

<sup>89</sup> "Tab'-ı Mezalim-ü'l-Balkan," *Donanma*, no. 38 (April 1913): 669–72.

<sup>90</sup> BOA, BEO, 4100/307478, 1330.Za.08 (the original date on the document is 14 October 1912). Diplomatic correspondence about the civilian population and the accusations of the Bulgarian state regarding the Bulgarians in Eastern Thrace continued even after the war ended; the Ottoman army was accused of wiping out the Bulgarian peasantry. BOA, KMS, 1/22, 1331.Za.20 (October 1913).

<sup>91</sup> "Bulgar Vahşeti," *Sebilürreşad*, no. 41–223, 6 Kanunuevvel 1328 (19 December 1912), 275.

<sup>92</sup> "Bulgar Vahşeti: Acıklı Hikayeler, Bulgar Muhacirlerinin İhtisası," *Tanin*, no. 1465, 9 October 1912, 3.

<sup>93</sup> "Vidin'de," *Sebilürreşad*, no. 35–215, 21 Teşrinievvel 1328 (3 November 1912), 179.

<sup>94</sup> "Bulgar Vahşeti: Acıklı Hikayeler, Bulgar Muhacirlerinin İhtisası," *Tanin*, no. 1465, 9 October 1912, 3.

<sup>95</sup> "Bulgar Vahşeti," *Tanin*, no. 1466, 10 October 1912, 4. Similar incidents also emerged in Balchik (Balçık); see "Bulgar Vahşeti," *Cenin*, no. 1469, 13 October 1912, 2.

<sup>96</sup> "Bulgar Vahşeti," *Cenin*, no. 1472, 16 October 1912, 4.

<sup>97</sup> "Sırp Vahşetlerinde, İslamlar İrtidada Mecbur Ediliyor," *Tanin*, no. 1467, 11 October 1912, 3. For an account from Montenegro, see "Muharebeden Evvel Karadağlıların Vahşiyane Bir Tecavüzü," *Tanin*, no. 1469, 13 October 1912, 2.

<sup>98</sup> "Ehl-i Salibin Mezalimi," *Sebilürreşad*, no. 248, 30 Mayıs 1329 (12 June 1913), 236.

<sup>99</sup> "Bulgar Vahşeti," *Tanin*, no. 1467, 11 October 1912, 4. For a similar report from other places, see "Bulgar Mezalimi," *Cenin*, no. 1475, 19 October 1912, 3.

<sup>100</sup> "Bulgar Vahşeti, Razgrad'da," *Cenin*, no. 1476, 20 October 1912, 4. For events in Nikopol (Niğbolu), see "Bulgar Vahşeti, Niğbolu'da," *Cenin*, no. 1476, 20 October 1912, 4. For incidents in Targovishte (Eskicuma), see "Bulgar Vahşeti," *Senin*, no. 1481–52, 25 October 1912, 3.

<sup>101</sup> "Bulgar Vahşeti," *Senin*, no. 1477, 21 October 1912, 4.

<sup>102</sup> "Bulgaristan'da İslamlar," *Tanin*, no. 1499, 2 February 1913, 4; "Dedağaç Mezalimi," *Tanin*, 3 February 1913, 5.

<sup>103</sup> For example, see *NTV Tarih*, no. 45 (October 2012), a special issue to mark the 100-year anniversary of the Balkan Wars. This is a popular history journal that might be considered liberal in the context of nationalist publications. For a nationalist handling of the Balkan Wars, see the site of the Turkish Coalition of America: <http://www.tc-america.org/issues-information/turkish-history/1912-1913-balkan-wars-death-and-forced-exile-of-ottoman-muslims-an-annotated-map-755.htm> (accessed 30 June 2014).

<sup>104</sup> Scholars such as Kahraman Şakul and Mehmet Beşikçi are pioneering a new way of writing Turkish military history. See Kahraman Şakul, "Osmanlı Harbiyesi Üzerine Bir Literatür Değerlendirmesi," *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* 1 (2003): 529–71; Kahraman Şakul, "Yeni Askeri Tarihçilik," *Toplumsal Tarih* 198 (2010): 31–36; Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); and Mehmet Beşikçi, "Son Dönem Osmanlı Harp Tarihi ve 'Topyekun Savaş' Kavramı," *Toplumsal Tarih* 198 (2010): 62–69.