Various kinds of conflicts and clashes arose between religious and ethnic communities in the course of Ottoman history. The emergence of a nationalist elite and the nationalisation of the masses took place only gradually during the long nineteenth century. The 1908 Revolution increased the pace of this development, since the general characteristics of mass politics radically changed and involved broader sections of Ottoman society. The political role played by journalism and civil organisations became pivotal, contributing to the nationalisation of Muslim society and deeply influencing the ethnic and religious tensions ongoing at the grassroots level between different communities of the Empire.\footnote{For the significance of the 1908 Revolution in this regard see Y. D. Çetinkaya, «1908 Devrimi’nde Kamusal Alan ve Kitle Siyasetinde Dönüştüm», in: Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi 38 (2008), 125–140; and Y. D. Çetinkaya, «1908 Devrimi ve Toplumsal Seferberlik», in: F. Ergut (ed.), \textit{II. Meşrutiyet'i Yeniden Düşünmek}, Istanbul 2010, 13–27.}


Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, and Bulgaria, which had gained their independence from the Ottoman Empire in the course of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth century forming the Balkan League, declared war against the Ottoman Empire in 1912. The heterogeneous ethnic and religious composition of the Balkans provoked a power struggle between their states and the Great Powers. Although the Ottoman army was soon defeated and the Empire lost most of its territory in the Balkans, fierce competition among rival nationalisms and nation-states gave rise to a second round of conflict. The Ottoman Empire managed to regain its old capital,
Edirne/Adrianople, in the Second Balkan War in 1913. In the course of the war, ethnic cleansing policies were implemented in the region by the belligerent states. Although the Ottoman Empire regained some areas of territory, it suffered a tremendous loss because the centres of the 1908 Revolution, Macedonia and especially Salonika were left in the hands of the enemy. The victors had previously been subjects of the Empire, and it is for this reason that, as widely highlighted in the literature, the Balkan Wars were a decisive turning point in the history of modern Turkey and were considered a catastrophe and a humiliation particularly among the political elite.

During the Balkan Wars (1912–1913), civilians in the belligerent countries were drawn into the conflict. The civilian population became not only a target but also a resource to be mobilised. The combatting sides sought both to demoralise the enemy population and to promote the active participation of their own people. There was a new front to fight at home, from which new military resources had to be recruited and where a propaganda war had to be won.

Various ethnic and religious groups in the Balkan states started to be considered «aliens» and «internal enemies» at the outset of the twentieth century. At the same time, native non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire figured as «others» and «enemies» detrimental to the interests of the «majority» and of the state. The Balkan Wars exacerbated and radicalised the hostilities and rivalries between different nationalist groups and ideals turned into direct confrontations between communities perceived as monolithic entities.

The misery that the Muslims suffered at the hands of Christians was the most recurrent theme during the Balkan Wars. News reports and stories of Muslims who...
had been tortured by non-Muslims inflamed the passions of the Muslim public in the Ottoman Empire. The atrocities were also portrayed in images and illustrations disseminated through periodicals and pamphlets. These representations of Muslims’ suffering were intended to mobilise the home front for war politics in general. Because the perpetrators of the acts of violence depicted in the atrocity propaganda were the co-religionists of the Ottoman Empire’s native Christians, these images not only inspired the mobilisation of the Muslim population, but also provoked hatred against local Christians, who became aliens and internal enemies in their own country. The political elite was also well aware that such stories would probably provoke hatred and reactions against Christian citizens of the Empire. Furthermore, the flow of Muslim refugees from the lost lands in the Balkans and the search of the nationalist elite for a more «purified» and secure motherland also led to the direct targeting of native Christians as «aliens» in Muslim land.

This article shows that nationalists mobilised their community by using images and illustrations that provoked hatred against «others» as internal enemies, exacerbating the already incendiary tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims. The first part makes clear that the atrocity propaganda was not unique to the Ottoman Empire or to Balkan countries, but rather a universal phenomenon in the early twentieth century. The second part considers the early instances of the atrocity discourse that emerged during the anti-Greek boycott movement before the Balkan Wars, and it discusses how a nationalist social movement against foreign Christians impacted on non-Muslim natives of the Ottoman Empire. The third section deals with the emergence of atrocity propaganda, its institutions and political and social agents in the Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Wars. Finally, the longer fourth section describes the illustrations and images that were used in this atrocity propaganda.

1. Illustrations in War Propaganda

Images and illustrations played a significant role when modern means of communication were still underdeveloped and the level of illiteracy was still high. It was therefore no coincidence that, as the wars started to involve non-combatants, propaganda became an important means of warfare. Images appeared in such propaganda as support for written messages. In the course of the twentieth century, images of war and atrocity became as important as warfare itself since belligerent countries started to mobilise as much sources as they could in order to make use of illustrations about alleged atrocities. These representations were a further battlefield on which to fight.

Studies on the First World War highlight the emergence of propaganda as a crucial terrain of activity. There are estimates that the Allied Forces dropped around one

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hundred thousand leaflets per day on German territory in the summer and autumn of 1918. Yet, according to a German officer, the cartoons of Louis Raemakers (a Dutch painter and cartoonist who became famous with his anti-German cartoons during WWI) were considered much more influential on general public opinion than the thousands of propaganda pamphlets dropped by the planes.\(^\text{11}\) Even Adolf Hitler was amazed by the power of allied propaganda and the force of images in instigating hatred against the enemy through horror stories and drawings.\(^\text{12}\)

At the outset, the propaganda stemmed from the asserted rightfulness of the belligerent countries and their claims to just, national and humanitarian worldviews. However, in later phases of the conflict, their discourse became much more gendered. As Nicoletta F. Gullace has argued, the brutalisation of women and children rapidly replaced the prominent place of the violation of treaties and law in the propaganda literature.\(^\text{13}\) The debates on breaches of international law and the legitimacy of the acts of belligerent states left the stage to be replaced by accounts of war crimes and atrocities. The lead discourse concentrated on the sufferings of weaker humans, such as children, the elderly and above all women. The main body of the propaganda literature was occupied by horrific stories of women who had been raped and terribly mutilated and whose body parts, including breasts, hands and feet, were cut off. The Germans in the British propaganda were represented as «the Huns of Attila» acting contrary to the precepts of civilisation.\(^\text{14}\) For their part, the Germans replied by narrating stories of captured German soldiers whose eyes had been torn out and whose ears, noses, fingers, and sexual organs had been amputated.\(^\text{15}\)

Atrocity stories were not a novelty invented and used for propaganda purposes in the early twentieth century. However, their appearance became systematic from then on, and images started to be used widely. As Jean Bethke Elshtain stated in her seminal study, gendered violence has been one of the most prominent representations of war throughout history,\(^\text{16}\) and the depiction of this violence increased its impact. The stories and accounts of propaganda were written and disseminated by professionals who were much more «concerned with the stereotypes, images and fantasies» and less with the crimes themselves.\(^\text{17}\) The testimonies of women to investigation commissions were very simple, as they were understandably reluctant to recount the details. However, the propagandists wanted to arouse emotions and to convey the message that wives and families were in danger. They consequently used a much more

\(^{12}\) Ibid., 185.
\(^{14}\) Ibid., 714–719.
\(^{15}\) Ibid., 740.
\(^{16}\) J. B. Elshtain, Women and War, Chicago, IL 1995 (first published in 1987); and also see J. S. Goldstein, War and Gender, Cambridge, UK 2001.
\(^{17}\) R. Harris, «The 'Child of the Barbarian': Rape, Race and Nationalism in France during the First World War,» in Past and Present 141 (1993), 170–206, 173, 179.
«vivid and evocative set of images» to invoke public outrage. Many well-known intellectuals in the belligerent countries during the First World War debated atrocities and accused the opposing camp. They tried to convince the public opinion that the enemy’s brutalities were contrary to human progress.

2. Exclusion of Christians from the definition of «Us»

Both propaganda activities and illustrations of atrocities are to a great extent neglected in the historiography of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. They are only referred to in nationalist studies seeking to prove that Muslims and Turks suffered at the hands of Christians and have not been subject to scholarly analysis. The only study that also mentions the Turkish atrocities against Bulgarians is that by Gülay Özgür.

Atrocity propaganda in the Ottoman context, on the other hand, not only aimed at mobilising the society for war needs but also played a pivotal role in the making of «internal» enemies out of native Christian citizens of the empire, and it finally contributed to their elimination. The public demonisation of native Christians was sparked by two main developments in the Second Constitutional Period: the boycott movement and the flow of Muslim immigrants from the lost territories. The immigration of Muslims into Ottoman territory created public hatred against non-Muslims and gave rise to a general thirst for revenge amongst the population. The boycott movement in the Ottoman Empire, on the other hand, started in 1908 against foreign countries including Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria. Owing to the Cretan Question, it then went on to target Greece after 1909 until the Balkan Wars. The Greek citizens of the Ottoman Empire also began to be affected, since many of them had personal, demographic, social, cultural, and economic relationships with Greece. During and after the Balkan Wars the native non-Muslim population was considered the arch-enemy of the Muslims bent on undermining the Ottoman Empire. As a

20 The only exception in this regard is the seminal study by Erol Köroğlu, although he is very much concerned with literary works and omits propaganda literature. E. Köroğlu, Ottoman Propaganda and Turkish Identity: Literature in Turkey during World War I, London 2007.
22 G. Özgür, «Balkan Savaşları ve Sonrasında Bulgaristan ve Osmanlı Devleti Arasından Nüfus Göçü», Dokuz Eylül University, Ataturk Ilkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü, unpublished MA thesis, İzmir 2008. However, her thesis is still a part of the nationalist discourse and abstains from social analysis of atrocity news.
result, native Greeks, Bulgarians and other non-Muslims became the focus of the rising Turkish/Muslim nationalism. The propaganda and agitation against Christians started during the boycott movement against Greece.\textsuperscript{23}

The formal declaration of the boycott by the Boycott Society insisted that it was against the Greeks of Greece (\textit{Yunanlı}), not the Ottoman Greeks (\textit{Rum}).\textsuperscript{24} Nevertheless, the local boycott society of Smyrna complained about Ottoman Greeks who had been brought up to believe in the idea of a «Greater Greece». The organisation criticised not only the \textit{Yunanlı}, but also those who had a Greek mentality.\textsuperscript{25} The Turkish newspaper \textit{Tercüman} accused the Ottoman-Greek newspaper \textit{Proodos} of betraying the country because it wrote against the boycott movement.\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Proodos} was not alone: almost the entire Greek-language press was accused of being an advocate of Greece or the Greek national idea. Both the Turkish press and the declarations of the boycott societies claimed that the Greek-language press incited native Greeks against the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{27}

In this way, the line between Hellenes and \textit{Rums}, that is to say between Christians outside the empire and native non-Muslims, was easily crossed. The picketing and besieging of stores owned by Greeks soon achieved their goal and forced the merchants to shut down their businesses. For instance, a Greek leather merchant, Grigor Aleksiyu, closed down his shop in Edremit owing to the pressures of the boycotters.\textsuperscript{28} A coffeehouse belonging to a Greek was damaged in Beirut, and diplomatic correspondence in 1910 and 1911 was full of reports on this kind of offences against non-Muslim properties in various parts of the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{29} The Ottoman government repeatedly sent decrees to the governors of several provinces concerning boycotters who organised pickets in front of shops and forcibly prevented people from working.\textsuperscript{30} Many Ottoman Greek merchants struggled to prove their Ottoman-ness when they were boycotted, and they could only be rescued when the central government intervened. Until such rescue came, they had many difficulties in doing business and conducting financial transactions, as in the case of Yani of Kırkkilise.\textsuperscript{31}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{23} For a general assessment of the boycott movement see Y. D. Çetinkaya, \textit{The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest and Working Classes in the Formation of Modern Turkey}, London 2014.
\item \textsuperscript{24} «Boykotaj», in: \textit{Tanin}, 12 Haziran 1326 [25 June 1910].
\item \textsuperscript{25} «İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyeti'nden», in: \textit{İttihad}, 23 Haziran 1326 [6 July 1910]. The original expression in Turkish is «Yunaniler ve Yunan Kafalılar» meaning those who are in favour of Greece.
\item \textsuperscript{26} «O Apokleismos» (The Boycott), in: \textit{Proodos}, 7 June 1910.
\item \textsuperscript{27} «İzmir Harbi-İktisadi Heyetinin Beyannamesi-dir», in: \textit{İttihad}, 29 Ağustos 1326 [11 September 1910].
\item \textsuperscript{28} BOA (Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives), DH. SYS, 22/1–12, Document No. 5, 22 March 1911.
\item \textsuperscript{29} FO (National Archives-Britain, Foreign Office), 195/2345, No. 55, 17 June 1910; BOA, DH. MÜ, 5–2/15, Document No. 1, 23–24 August 1909; AYE (Greek Foreign Ministry Archives), A–21, 1910–1911, Antalya, 26 March 1911; «To Mpoikataz eis Thessaloniki» (The Boycott in Salonika), in: \textit{Embros}, 22 August 1910.
\item \textsuperscript{30} For an example see, BOA, DH. SYS, 22/1–4, Document No. 4, 30 November 1910.
\item \textsuperscript{31} BOA, DH. MÜ. 104–1/46, Documents No. 1–8, 14–25 June 1910.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
During the boycott movement, pamphlets depicting the sufferings of the Muslims in Crete in 1910 circulated. They were effective in mobilising the sentiments of the Muslim public, and can be regarded as a prelude to the atrocity propaganda that was to emerge during the Balkan Wars. *Girid Kurbanları* (Victims of Crete) was such a pamphlet. It recounted stories about the suffering of the Muslims of the island at the hands of «the savage Greeks» (*vahşi Rumlar*).\(^{32}\) According to *Girid Kurbanları*, Muslim women and children were killed «barbarously» and their murderers, «thirsty for Muslim blood», insulted their honour.\(^{33}\)

Another pamphlet entitled *Girid: Mazisi, Hali, İstikbali* (Crete: Its Past, Present, Future), included illustrations representing the sufferings of Muslim Cretans. One of these pictures, for instance, portrays a Muslim girl aged about ten, whose arm has been cut off by «savage Christians».\(^{34}\) Another photograph shows an eight-year-old child whose head and legs have been wounded by Christian Cretans.\(^{35}\) Newspaper accounts about Crete reproduced similar sufferings on the part of Muslims. It was claimed that Greeks turned mosques into taverns, killed unborn children (*cenin*) in their mothers’ wombs, insulted Islam and humiliated and abused Muslim women.\(^ {36}\) In Mersin, a placard exhorted Muslims not to forget the experiences of Muslim Cretans. According to the poster, Muslim girls were raped and their severed noses and ears were sent to Athens.\(^ {37}\) These depictions and narratives during the Cretan Crisis and the Macedonian Question can be considered as preludes to the much more elaborate atrocity literature that was to be produced during the Balkan Wars.

Within this context, Islam was used as an ethnic and identity marker. It is for this reason that national and Islamic references were used during the boycott movement to justify the ultimate cause. Islamic arguments were also utilised to galvanise the sentiments of the Muslim population and to legitimise the movement in the eyes of the Ottoman Muslim public. As a result, even though the boycott only targeted Greece and its economic presence, the Ottoman Greek community started to suffer as well. The boycott became a crucial weapon in the exclusion of native non-Muslims from the economy in particular and from society in general.

As a consequence, news of atrocities and their illustrations had the effect of stigmatising the native non-Muslims. Although their main targets were the Bulgarian, Greek and Serbian armies, the ordinary people of those countries were also repeatedly mentioned both in the periodicals and the pamphlets. The Islamic and national discourse, of which the boycott made use, and the mobilisation of the Muslim section of Ottoman society turned the movement into a conflict between Muslims

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\(^{32}\) N. Muzaffer, *Girid Kurbanları*, Dersaadet 1326 [1910].

\(^{33}\) Ibid., 12–13.

\(^{34}\) *Girid: Mazisi, Hali, İstikbali*, Kostantiniye 1328 [1912], 76.

\(^{35}\) Ibid., 79.


and non-Muslims. The emerging tensions between different communities alarmed the Ottoman government, prompting it to warn the ministries and all provinces of the empire that a discourse based on Islam or Christianity was contrary to general Ottoman interests.\textsuperscript{38}

### 3. The Balkan Wars and War Propaganda

This trend of stigmatising Christians as the «others» of an imagined Muslim/Turkish nation increased as the atrocity stories proliferated in the printed word. The Ottoman/Turkish newspapers started to be filled with reports on the sufferings and misery of co-religionists left in the lost lands. Of course, this kind of information was not a novelty during the war. However, before the 1908 Revolution any information concerning the grief and sorrow of Muslims was not allowed to appear in mass communication means in order not to damage the relationship between the different communities of the empire.\textsuperscript{39} However, after the revolution atrocity stories were disseminated not only by daily newspapers but also by magazines and pamphlets. During the Balkan Wars, the worsening of the relationship between Muslims and Christians was not among the priorities of the political elite. For instance, the newspaper \textit{Tanin} admitted in October 1912 that Turkish newspapers had abstained from reporting atrocities committed against Muslims in the belief that they might incite Muslims against Christians.\textsuperscript{40} Consequently, the political elite was well aware of the possible internal repercussions of atrocity news even though the perpetrators were external powers.

It is hard to assess the extent to which this material affected those who were reached by it. However, it is quite likely that it provoked aggression and instigated revenge or, as already mentioned, it must have played a role in the clashes between the communities of the empire. Further studies are needed to enable a full evaluation of the emotional impact of illustrated atrocity propaganda. But what we can say at least is that this was the intention of the creators of this literature.\textsuperscript{41} For instance, one of its authors, Tüccarzade İbrahim Hilmi, writes in the preface to his book that he had published his work in order to arouse a desire for revenge by keeping the sufferings of the Muslims alive in the hearts of Muslim/Turkish youth.\textsuperscript{42} Similarly, Dr. Cemil writes under various illustrations included in his book: «My dear children,
look at these pictures and sharpen your emotions of revenge.» Like them, Ahmed Cevad also addressed all Muslim citizens and asserted that revenge for the atrocities described in his book was the duty of all Muslims.

I will not concentrate on the reception of these images, which is a crucial subject to be addressed in future research, but rather examine the semiotics of the illustrations and what their creators envisaged. My intention is not to investigate the veracity and genuineness of the atrocities and sufferings of people on different sides during the war, but to analyse their representation in the contemporary war propaganda. This kind of propaganda, in which the belligerents sought to put the sufferings of their co-religionists and fellow citizens on the agenda, was called «atrocity propaganda» between the First and the Second World War. The term «propaganda» here does not necessarily imply that the information used was false or partly true. However, what is crucial here is the fact that propaganda does not make reference to the facts in order to inform the public but to influence an audience.

Since I have analysed other aspects of this «atrocity propaganda» elsewhere, I will limit myself here to the analysis of illustrations and images. As part of its war propaganda, the Ottoman state as well as civil organisations tried to collect information about atrocities committed against Muslims by Bulgarians, Greeks and Serbs. There were two fundamental purposes behind this endeavour: to mobilise sentiments on the home front and to influence the international public opinion. Because such images dramatically enhanced the influence of accounts of atrocity, many illustrations were drawn when there were not enough photographs available. These depictions accompanied news and publications in a later phase, when the atrocities suffered by Muslims became more and more brutal. There were accusations of spying, maltreatment, insults, inspections, forced labour that turned into massacres, assaults, rapes, and other kinds of savage actions as the war progressed.

The atrocity propaganda was produced on the initiative of different bodies, with state institutions as well as civil organisations taking part. Both the Ottoman army and the Ministry of Internal Affairs sought to collect material proving atrocities against the Muslim population, but the Ottoman state tried to regulate this undertaking during the war. It was not only the belligerent states but also the international community that was interested in compiling atrocity stories because of allegations put forward to win the support of the European states. These allegations and reciprocal accusations of the Balkan states led to the formation of an international commission to investigate these claims, which finally published its report in 1914.

43 Dr. Cemil, Bulgar Vahşetleri, İntikam, Evlad ve Ahıfada Yadigar, Dersaadet 1330 [1914–1915].
47 BOA, BEO., 4124/309292, 1331.M.07.
48 Since I am interested in neither the external and
The main civil organisation involved was the Society of Muslim Refugees from Rumelia (Rumeli Muhacirin-i İslamiye Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi). As the society tried to direct the attention of the Ottoman public opinion to the problems of the refugees and the Muslims who had remained in the lost territories, it gave rise to the first publications. The society provided information about the fate of the refugees to the public and published periodicals. In order to increase the impact of atrocity stories, the society included illustrations in its publications. These depictions of atrocities appeared not only in magazines and pamphlets but also in school textbooks, and they were also disseminated as postcards. Most of the illustrations analysed in this article were included in three pamphlets: those by Dr. Cemil, Ahmet Cevad and Tüccarzade İbrahim Hilmi. They were the most detailed and elaborate atrocity propaganda pieces produced and published during the Balkan Wars.

The title of Dr. Cemil’s pamphlet already revealed its purpose: Bulgar Vahşetleri, İntikam, Evlad ve Ahfada Yadigar (Bulgarian Atrocities: Vengeance, a Memento for Children and Grandchildren). He repeatedly claims that children reading this booklet should heighten their feelings of hate and revenge by looking at these images again and again. Tüccarzade İbrahim Hilmi, an ambitious publisher, managed to compile what he called a «library of awakening» comprising thirteen booklets in which he sought to analyse and explain the reasons for the Ottoman defeat in the Balkan Wars. The last book of the series, Türkiye Uyan (Turkey Wake Up), was a general evaluation of the previous ones and it was also illustrated. The third book was Ahmed Cevad’s Kırmızı Siyah Kitab: 1328 Fecayii (Red-Black Book: The Disaster of 1912). Ahmed Cevad was a founder member of the Society for Publication of Documents on Balkan Atrocities (Balkan Mezalimi Neşri Vesaik Cemiyeti). His society worked hard from the beginning of 1913 and published booklets in European languages in order to influence the international public opinion as well as to provide the Turkish daily press with documents. These sources were finally published in May 1913 as a separate book. The collectors of documents and evidence related to atrocities also helped each other: the authors and organisations involved in publishing news of atrocities shared their documents with each other and with the Turkish press. It is for this reason that the same illustrations appeared in different newspapers and magazines of the time and during the Republican era.

50 For the atrocity illustrations published in the Ottoman/Turkish textbooks see M. Ö. Alkan, «The First World War, Education and Textbooks during the Second Constitutional Period in the Ottoman Empire», a paper presented at the Turkish Stud-
4. Illustrated Atrocity

I have assembled and classified images according to various types of atrocities. First, the illustrations of bloodshed, the stabbing of Muslims with bayonets and photographs of dead bodies will be analysed. I will then turn to the torture of Muslims, particularly in public places, and atrocities in mosques. Attempts at forced conversion of Muslims to Christianity and the atrocities committed against women and children constitute the third and final set of illustrations.

The Massacres

The most frequently depicted outrage is the massacre of Muslims. In an illustration published in Ahmed Cevad’s booklet, Muslims who have been sent back to their villages from Kavala are being attacked by a gang of irregulars. In this scene, men are being shot down in front of their families. Oxcarts in the convoy of Muslims are set on fire. Children are desperate; one of them falls from the cart, while another looks around just as an irregular is about to kill her with his axe. Old men and women are also being shot and an old Muslim man has just been shot and lies on the ground.

In another illustration, a colour picture (which is rare in the atrocity propaganda produced during the Balkan Wars) published by Tüccarzade İbrahim Hilmi, Ottoman soldiers liberating Thrace from the enemy discover a terrible massacre of Muslims. There are Muslim men and women lying dead in the courtyard of a house. One of them is tied up and has evidently been tortured. Two of the women have no headscarves. The readers would have seen the red of their blood and of the fire raging in the devastated and burning house.

Various kinds of killings were represented in these drawings. The stabbing of Muslims with bayonets was the manner of torturing and killing most often depicted. In the ninth illustration of Dr. Cemil’s booklet, Bulgarian soldiers are bayoneting Süleyman Ağa while his daughter tries in vain to stop them. She has probably been wounded, as she lies on the ground in front of her father. Beside them, Sülayman Ağa’s wife or another daughter is bound to a tree, her hands tied behind her back. Another Bulgarian soldier is just about to cut her with his sword. Her head is not covered and her shirt is wide open, indicating that she has been abused and probably tortured. Behind them is a view of a village already in ruins; the minaret of the mosque is damaged and its walls and door have been destroyed.

Another illustration shows a scene in which Muslims are stabbed with bayonets and thrown into the River Vardar. In the foreground, two Muslim women are impelled by Bulgarian soldiers with their bayonets. They have horror on their faces,
while the soldiers are smiling. One of the soldiers behind them has already run a boy through with his bayonet and hoists him in the air. There are further people in the river or on the ground who have presumably also been bayoneted by the Bulgarians.\footnote{Ibid., illustration No. 11, 122.}

In an illustration in Ahmed Cevad’s book, Muslims are being murdered by Christian irregular bands who pierce them with their bayonets. They are not dressed in military uniforms but as traditional bandits. They have crosses on their hats. A Muslim is tied to a stake, his shirt has been torn away. His comrades around him have all been killed by these irregulars, but he seems to be standing firm and out-facing them.\footnote{Cevad, Kırmızı Siyah Kitab, 107.}

In the thirteenth illustration in Dr. Cemil’s book, Muslims are running away from a burned out village in Salonica. Bulgarian soldiers are chasing them. A Muslim woman is screaming as she runs, and a soldier is about to thrust his bayonet into her back. His comrade runs alongside them with a boy held up on his bayonet. A third Bulgarian, following the other two, has a Muslim head on his rifle. A Muslim is lying on the ground, probably wounded by a bayonet.\footnote{Dr. Cemil, Bulgar Vahşetleri, illustration No. 13, 160.}

The bayoneting of Muslims seems to be a kind of game in the fifteenth illustration of the same book: five Bulgarian soldiers toss a Muslim boy into the air, waiting for him to fall on a bayonet. There is also a wounded Muslim under their feet, and a Muslim woman is begging them to stop.\footnote{Ibid., illustration No. 15, 179.}

Another illustration depicts Bulgarian soldiers decapitating Muslims, nailing their heads to the walls of a mosque and throwing the headless bodies into deep wells. In the background there is a crowd of Muslim women wailing as they watch the scene.\footnote{Ibid., illustration No. 14, 171.}

Beside this drawing Dr. Cemil includes a photograph, which shows dead bodies taken from the River Meriç. This photograph appeared in contemporary periodicals as well.\footnote{Ibid., illustration No. 15, 179.}

Ahmed Cevad also published a similar photograph from Prizren, in which a group of Muslim corpses lie on the ground.\footnote{Ibn-ul-Hasim ve Nureddin Fikri, Dimetoka’da Kanlı Bir Levha: Bulgar Vahşetlerrinden, İstanbul, no date.}

Ibrahim Hilmi also collects eight photographs in order to reinforce his arguments concerning the atrocities committed by Christians, showing Muslim corpses lying on the ground in a row. The photographs in Ibrahim Hilmi’s book are of such good quality that the reader can even see the faces of the dead.\footnote{Dr. Cemil, Bulgar Vahşetleri, illustration No. 14, 171.}

The front cover of another leaflet published on the atrocities in Dimetoka (Didymoteicho) also shows corpses in an open field.\footnote{Hilmi, Türkiye Uyan, 17, 66, 68, 70, 100, 103. One of this illustration also appeared in: L’Illustration, 30 August 1913.}

Ahmed Cevad includes an illustration depicting Bulgarians torturing Muslims in various ways, such as shooting, bayoneting and handcuffing, on a large plain outside a Mus-
Atrocities in Public Places

There are two images in Dr. Cemil’s booklet which exhibit the public punishment of innocent Muslims. In the first one a Muslim youth is tied to a stake in Kavala. He is kneeling and seems to be in pain. Before him stand Bulgarian soldiers, possibly high-ranking officers, who stare at him with a pleased expression. It seems that he is being punished publicly as a warning. There are civilians among the spectators of the torture, for instance a well-dressed woman, who is smiling. The other image is a photograph from Cisr-i Mustafa Paşa (Svilengrad). There are two Muslims whose hands are tied behind their backs in a public square, again surrounded by Bulgarian soldiers, higher officers, and also by civilian spectators. A soldier appears to be engaged in reading a public condemnation. The booklet states that these «poor innocent» Muslims were about to be executed. To the left of the photograph is a wooden structure resembling a gallows.

Illustrations identical with those that appeared in pamphlets and newspapers were also published in school textbooks. One of them, showing the dead bodies of Muslims lying on the ground, is very similar to the photograph of the bodies taken from the River Meriç. Another one portrays again the bayonetting of numerous Muslims, whose bodies are piled into heaps. Illustrations of atrocities against Muslims also appeared as postcards. Such postcards were also in circulation before the Balkan Wars: the massacres of Armenians in 1909 in Adana were represented in this way after the incidents. In similar vein, the illustrations widely used in newspapers, periodicals and pamphlets also appeared as postcards.

Ahmed Cevad published a photograph that he claimed had been taken from an Italian newspaper, showing a Muslim man about to be executed by firing squad, his hands tied behind his back.

These killings were enacted not only on the streets or outdoors but also in the most sacred place, the mosque. In one illustration, a crowed of Muslim women and

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65 Cevad, Kırmızı Siyah Kitab, no page number.
66 Dr. Cemil, Bulgar Vahşetleri, illustration No. 2, 66.
67 Ibid., illustration No. 8, 90.
68 A. Seydi, Mâsahebat-i Ahlakiye (Altı Dershaneli Mekteplerin Devre-i Alişinin Ikinci Sinifına Mahsusdur. Hafıça Bir Ders), İstanbul 1332 [1916]. I am grateful to Mehmet Ö. Alkan who provided me with this information.
70 Postcards are from the personal collection of Mehmet Ö. Alkan.
71 Cevad, Kırmızı Siyah Kitab, 31.
children are depicted in a mosque in Dedeağac (Alexandroupoli). Some of the women are holding their children in their arms. They are locked inside the mosque by the Bulgarians who set it on fire, it illuminates the fearful faces of the crowd. Dr. Cemil claims that before the burning of these women and girls, their men had already been massacred.\textsuperscript{72} In another picture Bulgarians rush into a mosque with their boots still on, killing old people at prayer with their rifles and bayonets.\textsuperscript{73} With these two images, Dr. Cemil intends to emphasise that Bulgarians did not hesitate to massacre Muslims, not even in the house of God.

In all these illustrations Muslim towns and villages are portrayed as flaming ruins. Ahmed Cevad also published several photographs of these devastated neighbourhoods showing that the building stock had been totally destroyed.\textsuperscript{74} Images of mosques taken by enemy armies were also used as means to agitate the religious emotions of the masses. Ahmed Cevad published an illustration of the interior of the Selimiye Mosque in Edirne, in which Bulgarian soldiers are shown as they invade with «savage» expression on their faces. They walk into the mosque wearing their boots and military clothes. The illustration plainly sends the message that a monumental Muslim mosque was under the feet of infidels. Beneath this image Ahmed Cevad writes that the sacred mosque of the Muslims, one of the finest artworks of the world, was now in hands of these «savages».\textsuperscript{75}

\textit{Forced Conversions to Christianity}

Massacres were not the only atrocities carried out by Bulgarians. It was also widely claimed that Muslims were forced to convert to Christianity. Reports on this matter appeared in newspapers and pamphlets, which also included illustrations. One of them portrays two priests and a table covered by a blanket with a cross on it. There is a long queue of Muslims who have been taken to the place by force. Dr. Cemil describes this scene as a savage ceremony of conversion.\textsuperscript{76} Most of the conversion stories in the periodicals concerned the Bulgarian-speaking Muslim Pomaks. However, this is not apparent in the illustrations. In one of them, Muslim women are shown nailed to crosses because of their refusal to convert to Christianity. In this illustration, the breasts of the crucified woman in the foreground are exposed; two priests stand in front of her. Behind her are other women nailed and other priests, who are shown as having participated in this act of violence.\textsuperscript{77} Ahmed Cevad also published the same illustration, claiming that he had taken it from a German newspaper.\textsuperscript{78} In another illustration, Ahmed Cevad depicts a Muslim seized by soldiers in

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
  \item Dr. Cemil, \textit{Bulgar Vahşetleri}, illustration No. 1, 59.
  \item Ibid., illustration No. 16, no page number.
  \item Cevad, \textit{Kırmızı Siyah Kitab}, no page number.
  \item Ibid., no page number. The illustration was first published in \textit{L'Illustration} on 16 April 1913.
  \item Dr. Cemil, \textit{Bulgar Vahşetleri}, illustration No. 5, 79.
  \item Ibid., illustration No. 7, 85.
  \item Cevad, \textit{Kırmızı Siyah Kitab}, no page number.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Salonika and forced to cross himself. In the image, soldiers are shown chalking a cross on the fez of a Muslim on the street. In a different picture, three Muslim girls have been taken to a church. Two of them, not wearing headscarves, seem to have accepted conversion to Christianity and appear distressed. The third girl, whose hair remains covered, is sitting while a priest shows her a cross. She cannot look at it, turns her head away and resists. Behind the priest one can see soldiers, one of whom is smiling.

**Gendered Atrocity**

Atrocities against women and children have always had a central place in propaganda literature because their image is likely to have a great impact on public emotion and sentiments. For this reason, it was no coincidence that those who compiled leaflets during and after the Balkan Wars described the agony suffered by Muslim women and children at the hands of Christians. An image published by Ahmed Cevad depicts a child in the arms of her father or grandfather, probably wounded by the soldiers in Dedeağaç (Alexandroupoli). Behind them, three soldiers are chasing a Muslim away, while another takes a Muslim woman out of her house.

These propaganda pamphlets and news items describe in detail how Muslim women were stripped of their clothes, how they were sexually abused and raped. Such accounts were also accompanied by related illustrations. In one of them, for instance, a half-naked woman is running away from Bulgarian soldiers, while officers take pleasure in watching the scene from a chair in Paşalar village. The comment above the picture states that the Bulgarians forced Muslim women to dance naked before them. In the background, the houses are burning and there is a corpse on the ground. There are also stories in which is claimed that Muslim women were taken to military quarters or encampments to be raped or assaulted. Ahmed Cevad published an illustration in his book in which enemy soldiers drive out Muslims, declaring that they were about to be raped and claiming that most of those women were killed after being molested. An illustration shows Greek soldiers dragging away Muslim women, old and young, to their camps after they had barbarously raped them. In another drawing a soldier is cutting off the breasts of a Muslim woman, who is surrounded by a violent crowd of irregulars and soldiers in Kavala. In the lower left corner two women lie dead on the ground and there is a terrified older woman between them.

In the booklet written by Ahmed Cevad, a woman is depicted being set on fire. Cevad calls the place «the Boulevard of Gallows»; beside her four men are hanging,
one of them with a bag covering his head. A soldier is also firing at them. While he shoots, another soldier starts a fire under the feet of a half-naked woman whose hair is down. One of her breasts is clearly exposed and can easily be recognised by the reader. Her hands are tied behind her back and she screams with a horrified expression on her face. Beneath the illustration, Ahmed Cevad claims that the picture was drawn according to information gathered from the reports of the Austria-Hungarian consulates.⁸⁶

In the course of time, the atrocity stories and news reports became much more disturbing and harrowing. Later accounts portray even more shocking atrocities, together with their images. The most lurid and oft-mentioned atrocity carried out on Muslims was the extraction of the foetus from its mother’s body while still alive. One illustration depicts Bulgarian soldiers who have just broken into a Muslim house in Drama. There is a half-naked pregnant Muslim woman lying on the ground. Her breasts are exposed and a soldier is pushing her down. She seems to have tried to resist by using an axe, but was unable to do so since it broke and only its haft is left in her hand. A standing soldier is taking the unborn child out of her body with his bayonet. A third soldier is watching from the door of the building and there are numerous soldiers outside.⁸⁷ Acts of violence of this kind repeatedly took place during the conflict, and accounts appeared in different forms in the propaganda. In one of them, Dr. Cemil writes that after a foetus had been removed from its mother’s body, its hands were cut off and threaded onto a string to be used as an ornament by enemy soldiers.⁸⁸

5. Conclusion

The portrayal of atrocities, both in propaganda publications and in the Ottoman press, was part and parcel of war propaganda during the Balkan Wars. This kind of propaganda continued to develop in the world wars of the twentieth century. In this regard, the Balkan Wars were a prelude to the World Wars, as in other spheres of war history. Atrocity propaganda in the Ottoman Empire displayed features of the genre that was to develop in the course of the twentieth century. To call these initiatives «propaganda» does not necessarily mean that atrocities never took place and were a mere invention of nationalist elites. It is apparent that during the Balkan wars, both belligerent soldiers and the civilian population suffered immensely and experienced war crimes of various kinds. The nationalist elite on both sides during the wars therefore had little difficulty in finding material for their purposes.

As the war between the Balkan states continued, the nationalist elite began to use the sufferings of civilians as material because propaganda also emerged as a further

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⁸⁶ Cevad, Kırmızı Siyah Kitab, no page number.
⁸⁷ Dr. Cemil, Bulgar Vahşetleri, illustration No. 4, 76.
⁸⁸ Ibid., 170.
war front. The illustrations and images used in this political endeavour during the war years had also reverberations at social level. As mentioned at the beginning of this article, the Balkan Wars also represented a turning point in the history of early Turkish nationalism. The ultimate defeat and humiliation that the Ottoman Turks faced in the Balkan Wars radicalised the political elite's nationalist project, which paved the way for brutal clashes between different religious communities, whose already heightened tensions worsened after the wars. Atrocity propaganda contributed greatly to the stigmatisation and demonisation of non-Muslim populations. The stories of shocking acts of violence endured by Muslims at the hands of the Balkan states and the sorrow and misery experienced by the refugees heightened hatred towards the perpetrators' co-religionists living in the Ottoman Empire. This radicalisation was a secondary aim of the writers of atrocity propaganda. The ultimate purpose of the authors who compiled the illustrations analysed here was to take revenge.

Therefore, the call for revenge was the continuation of a trend that the boycott movement had initiated. During the boycott movement before the Balkan Wars, native non-Muslims were not targeted directly but suffered greatly from the actions of the anti-Greece movements. However, the call for revenge was a fundamental phase in the «othering» of Christians and the creation of an «internal enemy» by native non-Muslims of the Ottoman Empire. As a result of this social and political process, the non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire became aliens as a whole in the Balkan Wars and in World War I. The atrocity propaganda that has been analysed in this article was only a part of this general process of elimination of non-Muslims because it played a crucial role in the stigmatisation of Christians. Therefore, during and after the Balkan Wars, the call for solidarity was no longer based on Ottoman identity but on Muslim identity. Shortly thereafter, the rising tide of nationalism began to exclude non-Muslims openly.89

The most significant purpose of the atrocity propaganda in the Ottoman Empire was to mobilise sentiments on the home front. Illustrations and images increased the impact of atrocity reports. This endeavour was carried forward by various actors, such as civil organisations and official state institutions. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, officers of different ranks in the Ottoman Army and civil organisations such as the Society of Muslim Refugees from Rumelia and the Society for Publication of Documents on Balkan Atrocities played significant roles in this propaganda.

The images and illustrations described were collected in order to galvanise the emotions of the Muslim public in the Ottoman Empire by showing the stabbing of Muslims with bayonets, the torture of co-religionists, desecration of mosques, forced conversions of Muslims to Christianity, and the acts of violence committed against Muslim women. The most influential and frequently reported atrocity was the abuse

89 For a social history of the process see Y. D. Çetinkaya, The Young Turks and the Boycott Movement: Nationalism, Protest and Social Class in the Formation of Modern Turkey, London 2014.
of women. As the literature on the relationship between nationalism and the female body highlights: the motherland is regarded as a woman’s body. That is why the woman’s body becomes a terrain of battle and an «arena of violent struggle».

As Peterson argues, «motherland is a woman’s body and as such is ever danger of violation by «foreign» males. To defend her frontiers and her honour requires relentless vigilance and the sacrifice of countless citizen warriors.» Therefore, the abuse and rape of women and the defence of the nation and of the motherland were directly linked to each other, and the nationalist political elite made use of these illustrations in this manner.

The mobilisation of different sections of society during the Balkan Wars left its imprint on the formation of the modern Turkey. For this reason, the mobilisation efforts of the political elite and the active mobilisation of social groups at the grassroots level remain a significant research area to be explored.


Illustrated Atrocity: the Stigmatisation of Non-Muslims through Images in the Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Wars

This article shows that native non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire were seen as «internal» enemies in the course of the Second Constitutional Period after the Young Turk revolution in 1908. It is argued that the Balkan Wars were a watershed in the creation of native non-Muslims as «others». The influx of Muslims from the Balkans and Crete populated the Ottoman Empire with people who were full of resentment against the Ottoman Empire’s native Christians, whose co-religionists had expelled them from their homeland. Their accounts of immigration and sufferings deeply influenced Muslim public opinion. This is demonstrated by referring to the spreading of sentiments of Muslims through various print media such as periodicals, pamphlets, leaflets, flyers and, above all, illustrations showing how Muslims suffered in the hands of Greeks and Bulgarians in the lost lands.

Illustrierte Gräuel: die Stigmatisierung von Nichtmuslimen durch Bilder im Osmanischen Reich während der Balkankriege


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