ETHNIC UPRISINGS IN THE OTTOMAN BALKANS

(1804-1912)

by

Pınar Şenışık
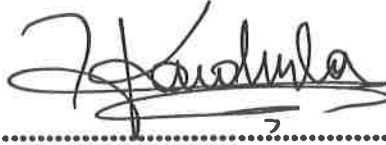
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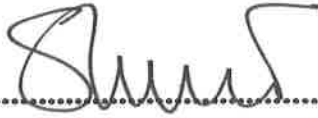
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ABSTRACT

This study is composed of two chapters, strictly interrelated with each other, but, at the same time, they can be interpreted separately.

The first part, which forms the skeleton of this study, I analyzed the major ethnic uprisings that took place between the years of 1804-1912 in the Balkan region of the Ottoman Empire in a chronological order. In this part, I surveyed the uprisings initiated by the ethnic minorities living the Balkans against the Ottoman Empire and its representatives from the beginning of the nineteenth century and until the first decade of the twentieth century. In this chapter, together with the survey of the uprisings, special emphasis is given to the impact of the Enlightenment and French Revolution as an important underlying factor triggering the ethnic uprisings in the Balkans, indicating that the uprisings did not emerge by themselves. Departing from this ideological basis, the study also surveys the weakening of the Ottoman Empire in social, political and economic areas and as a result, its inability to control the distant provinces of the Ottoman Empire. This chapter also gives us clues about the role played by the great powers of Europe, like Britain, France, Russia, and Austria in the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the first part of this study not only narrates the story of the uprisings, but also gives an idea to the reader about how and why the uprisings occurred and how they ended.

In the second part, taking the uprisings surveyed in the first part as a basis, I tried to establish a new uprising model by analyzing the similarities and the differences of these ethnic uprisings. This required devising an analytical approach to the issue. While writing

this part, I analyzed and evaluated the events written in the first chapter, from a different perspective. This chapter explains that the *Tanzimât* reformation was far from satisfying the needs of the minority groups in the Balkans; the reasons of the ethnic uprisings; the similarities and the differences of the uprisings; the importance of geography where the uprisings took place; their duration; whether one uprising can be modeled to the other; how and under the leadership of whom the uprisings were organized; the ideological and philosophical frameworks of the uprisings; which social strata the rebelling people belong to; the rebelling minorities obtaining political and financial aids from the other minorities living in the Balkans and from the great powers of Europe; the reactions and sanctions of the Ottoman Empire against these uprisings; the reasons of Ottoman inability to control most of them; and the final consequences of the uprisings. This part can be seen as a new stage, where the results of the events which were subjected to detailed analysis in the first chapter are redressed to fit the needs of the reader and produce satisfactory answers to analytical questions a in a fashionable manner.

ÖZET

Bu çalışma tamamıyla birbiriyle bağlantılı görünen, ancak kendi içlerinde birbirinden oldukça bağımsız olarak değerlendirebileceğimiz iki bölümden oluşuyor.

Bu çalışmanın iskeleti olarak gördüğüm birinci bölümde 1804-1912 yılları arasında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Balkan Yarımadası bölgesinde meydana gelen belli başlı etnik ayaklanmaları kronolojik sıra ile inceledim. Bu bölümde, Balkanlar'da yaşayan azınlıklar tarafından Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Balkanlar'daki temsilcilerine karşı, ondukuzuncu yüzyılın başlarından yirminci yüzyılın ilk on yılına kadar devam eden ayaklanmaları anlattım. Bu bölümde ayaklanmalar anlatılırken, bunların birdenbire ortaya çıkmadıkları, Aydınlanma ve Fransız Devrimi'nin, Balkanlardaki azınlıkları harekete geçiren önemli faktörler oldukları özellikle vurgulanmıştır. Bu ideolojik temelden yola çıkılarak, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun sosyal, politik ve ekonomik alanlarda güçsüzlüğünün artması ve bunların neticesinde merkezden uzak olan eyaletlerini kontrol edememesi de anlatılıyor. Bu bölüm, İngiltere, Fransa, Rusya ve Avusturya gibi Avrupa'nın önemli devletlerinin Balkanlar'ın parçalanmasında oynadıkları roller hakkında ipuçları da vermektedir. Böylece okuyucuya yalnızca bir ayaklanmayı anlatmakla kalmayıp, ayaklanmaların neden ve nasıl ortaya çıktıkları ve nasıl sonuçlandıkları hakkında bir fikir de veriyor.

İkinci bölümde, birinci bölümde ele alınan ayaklanmaları baz alarak, etnik ayaklanmaların ortak ve birbirinden farklı olan yönlerini analiz ederken yeni bir ayaklanma modeli kurmaya çalıştım. Bu, konuya analitik bir yaklaşımı gerektirdi. Bu bölümü yazarken birinci bölümde yazdığım olayları farklı bir perspektiften değerlendirdim:

Tanzimât'ın Balkanlarda yaşayan azınlıkları tatmin etmekten çok uzak bir yeniden yapılanma hareketi olduğunun anlatılması; etnik ayaklanmaların nedenleri; birbirleriyle olan benzerlik ve farklılıkları; ayaklanmaların meydana geldiği coğrafyanın önemi; süreleri; bir ayaklanmanın diğerine model olup olmadığı; nasıl ve kimler tarafından örgütlendikleri; ideolojik ve felsefi temelleri; ayaklanan insanların toplumun hangi tabakasına mensup oldukları; ayaklanan azınlıkların Balkanlarda yaşayan diğer azınlıklardan ve Avrupa'nın büyük devletlerinden aldıkları politik ve ekonomik yardımlar; Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Balkanlarda meydana gelen bu ayaklanmalara gösterdiği tepkiler ve uyguladığı yaptırımlar; ayaklanmaların büyük bir bölümünü kontrol edememesinin nedenleri ve sonuçları anlatılıyor. Bu bölümü, birinci bölümde temelleri çok sağlam bir biçimde atılmış olan bir çalışmanın yeniden yapılandırıldığı ve okuyucunun beklentileriyle örtüşen ve analitik sorulara tatmin edici cevapların verildiği bir bölüm olarak değerlendirebiliriz.

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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

I. INTRODUCTION

The Ottoman Empire played a key role in the recent history of the Balkan peninsula. The Ottoman Empire had conquered all of the Balkans by the end of the fifteenth century. But, Ottoman rulers did not aim to erase the historical heritage of the Balkan peoples. In fact, they preserved a feeling of common identity among the Christian population. Ironically enough, although there is a Turkish minority in almost all of the Balkan nation-states, today Turkey is somewhat excluded from the political geography of the region.

The rise of Balkan nationalism and developing conflicts between the Balkan nations follows the patriotic wave that came into being after the French Revolution. The French Revolution awakened the ideas of patriotism and nationalism. Moreover, the French Revolution once more reminded ordinary people that they were the actual makers of history. The ideals of *Liberté*, *Égalité*, and *Fraternité*, had an important impact on the all peoples of Europe, including the Balkans. In this way, both the masses and their ideologies were torn so that, the revolutionary ideology of the French Revolution stimulated the national awakening of the Balkan peoples.

Meanwhile, new economic and social conditions had emerged in the West. While commercial and industrial revolutions occurred in Europe, the Ottoman economy remained relatively static. Besides, the Ottoman Empire fell behind the West, not only economically but also politically. The Ottoman Empire also tried to reform and reorganize its socio-political structure. But, the Ottoman administration was not successful due to various

reasons. For instance, the Sublime Porte had serious problems with the *paşalık*s in the Balkan peninsula. The Ottoman governors tried to find an alternative which lay in between the Ottoman *paşalık* system and full independency. However, after many attempts, it was soon understood that this was, actually, a very difficult task. The Ottoman Empire had to reconcile the different national sentiments under the same political slogan. Until the French Revolution, Ottomanism was legitimately accepted by different Christian minorities of the Ottoman Empire.

The economic life in the Balkans was based on agricultural production, and, the population of the Balkan Peninsula was composed mostly of peasants. The peasants, in their own right, were satisfied neither with the high tax rates nor with the Ottoman methods of tax collection. Although the edict of *Gülhane* tried to correct this situation, its attempts failed. As the economic relations changed in Western Europe, a new bourgeois class appeared in the Balkans. In other words, the impetus for this change came from Western Europe, which demanded the agricultural products of the Balkans. This trade, in turn, led to the appearance of a new class, namely the Christian merchant class in the Balkans. This merchant class played a significant role in the national awakening of the Balkan people. Since, new ideas of the French Revolution like liberty, free will, and brotherhood, were transferred into the Balkans by this class. On the other hand, merchants formed some organized groups like the Philike Hetairia to rebel against the Ottoman Empire.

In the meantime, the Napoleonic wars had contributed to the change of political atmosphere in Europe. These wars led to the unification of local communities on the basis of their common cultural, ethnic, and religious identities.

The other important actors of the Balkan national movements were the great powers of Europe (*düvel-i muazzama*). Although they had conflicting interests with the Ottoman

Empire, the great powers supported the national movements of the Balkan peoples in various ways. In this sense, the role played by Russia should be considered in detail. Since, Russia had strong organic ties with the Balkan peoples, and it openly and legally supported the national movements throughout the Balkan peninsula. Russia regarded itself as a protector of Orthodox Christian minority in the region throughout the nineteenth century. Moreover, Russia used the weaknesses of Ottoman administration as a tool in becoming the predominant leader of the Balkan peoples.

In the nineteenth century, many revolts occurred in the Balkans against the Ottoman administration. Among these revolts, the Greek war of independence had a different and separate place. As the Greeks had strong background and advanced civilization, its place was rather more important than any of the other ethnic Balkan revolts. We see the impact of the ancient Greek culture, the hegemony of the Patriarch in İstanbul and a well-spread Phillhellenic ideology. Phillhellenism of Western intellectuals and the European public provided moral support to the Greek War of Independence. On the other hand, it should be noted that there was a close relationship between the Greek and Cretan revolts because, the main aim of the Cretan revolts were to reach the ideal of "*Enosis.*" In other words, the first impetus came from newly independent Greece.

On the other hand, the Serbian revolts had different characteristics than the Greek revolts. As the *paşalık* of Belgrad was located at the distant outskirts of the Ottoman Empire, the Serbs always had a sort of autonomy within the Ottoman Empire. So, the Serbs were the first ethnic group, who directly and physically confronted the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans.

We should also remember that the geographical position of the Balkan region has a considerable role in the history of the Balkan peoples. The Balkan peninsula has no

protective mountain barriers, and it is shut off from the European continent only by the Danube. As the Balkan peninsula is located between Europe and Asia, it has been a battleground of rival cultures, religions, and ethnic groups throughout its history. In this sense, it is interesting to note that, when the ethnic conflicts of the Balkan peoples are compared with other ethnic conflicts throughout the world, certain specific and peculiar aspects of their cultural identity and togetherness attracts attention. While ethnic conflicts between just two ethnic groups generally result in a decisive war, this was not actually the case in the Balkans. For instance, we can not explicitly observe a direct struggle for the hegemony of one ethnic group over all the others. Rather, there is the game of the balance of power in the Balkans. The geographic position of the Balkan peninsula also reinforces this. The conflicts and tensions between the different ethnic groups are aggravated, when the major regional and international powers interfere in the Balkan region. Occupying the hinterland of Europe, the actors in the Balkan region have to be very careful on their political attitudes. Whenever the balance of power is disrupted, it is restored again by the great powers. So, the Balkans goes back and forth alternatively between tension and non-tension.

This master thesis is a literature review before a more comprehensive doctoral study. Therefore, it does not make the claim of having used all the relevant resources on the subject of ethnic movements. This thesis is composed of two main parts. In the first chapter of this study, ethnic uprisings in the Balkans are analyzed in a chronological order. In this chapter, the emphasis was given to the determining factors leading to the ethnic uprisings. Some of the uprisings were left outside the analysis, since their scope was confined to the local community or the uprising faded away instantly. The major uprisings

that have deeply affected the Balkans and Ottoman geography, diplomacy, social and economic structure were analyzed in the first chapter in a chronological order.

In the second chapter of this study, a compare and contrast of the uprisings was attempted in order to reach an analytical synthesis. Special effort was paid to reveal the similarities and differences of the uprisings, their structural features, and their internal dialectics so that a new model of ethnic uprising could be extracted.

The main aim of this thesis is to find out the underlying reasons and the determinating factors that led the different ethnic Balkan communities to rebel against the rule of the Ottoman Empire. The following questions will also be answered in this thesis: Where did these ethnic groups find the power to rebel against the Ottoman Empire?; Why were they successful in creating an international agenda for the Balkans?; Why and how did the majority of these ethnic groups successfully acquire their independence in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and today come to the verge of disintegration?

Although the Balkans played a crucial role in world history, different than any other part of Europe, the Balkans has been subject to less intensive study. Since, the ethnic differentiation and cultural variation is very high in the Balkans, this specific social and political togetherness creates major difficulties for the scholars.

This study is a preliminary introduction to the ethnic issues in the Balkans and aims to lead to a more encompassing and detailed doctoral dissertation. Most of the research is based on the utilization of secondary sources. This was partly due to various reasons like an inability to make use of primary sources of *Osmanlıca* and other Balkan languages. So, the multiplicity of languages in the Balkans has put scholars into a very difficult position. The multiplicity of languages and lack of overall studies about the history of the Balkans led to the problem of inadequate secondary sources. This is the main

disadvantage of this study. The nature of the available sources has made the method of literature survey the most effective analytical tool for this master thesis.

Dating is the other important problem for the scholars, since Balkan peoples used three different calendars until after the end of the World War I. For instance, the Orthodox used the Julian, or the old style calendar. On the other hand, the Catholics and Protestants used the Gregorian, or the new style. Ottomans used three different and mutually exclusive calendars. In the nineteenth century, the number of calendars in use in the Balkans increased to twelve. However, for unity, the new style (Gregorian) calendar will be used in this study.

Türkologischer Anzeiger and *Index Islamicus* are two important sources helpful in shaping the bibliography of this study. The bibliography mainly consists of articles published in modern periodicals. I also studied Seyfettin Özege's catalogues for sources printed in Ottoman script to find out *Osmanlıca* materials, but these materials would be more appropriate for a doctoral study. In short, the main linguistic disadvantage of this study would be its inability to make use of primary sources, which are mainly based on *Osmanlıca* and other Balkan languages.

I thoroughly browsed various resources including *T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı Yer İsimleri Kılavuzu, Bulgaristan'da Yer Adları Kılavuzu, Dictionnaire Geographique de l'Empire Ottoman*, and *Coğrafya Sözlüğü*. However, I was still unable to locate the Turkish version of some place names.

Although this master thesis belongs to the department of International Relations, the aim of this study is to deal with the underlying factors of the ethnic revolts, which occurred in the Balkans throughout the nineteenth century. Diverse economic, social, cultural, ethnic and political factors necessitated the utilization a historical approach during

the study. In other words, except for its conclusion, this master thesis is more of a historical analysis than a study in international relations. This feature can be seen as the originality of this study.

It is my conviction that the academic environment and specifically İstanbul Bilgi University will benefit from the findings of the study as a reference for further academic studies on the Balkans and on the ethnic issues in the Ottoman Empire.

II. ETHNIC UPRISINGS IN THE OTTOMAN BALKANS :

A CHRONOLOGICAL APPROACH

Introduction

In this chapter, ethnic uprisings in the Ottoman Balkans are analyzed in a chronological order. It should be noted that the primary aim of this chapter is to analyze some of the uprisings that have deeply affected the Ottoman Balkans in the "long" nineteenth century.

On the other hand, some of the ethnic uprisings were left outside the scope of this work, since their influence was confined to the local community and/or faded away quickly. In other words, they had no permanent influence on neither the Balkans nor Ottoman Empire. The major uprisings that were analyzed in this chapter ended with obtaining independence or autonomy. Moreover, some of these ethnic uprisings were the major points or the milestones in the social, political, and economic structure of the Ottoman Empire. In this sense, it is important to note that, the chronological order of this chapter is taken from Enver Ziya Karal, who was a political historian. But, the contents of the uprisings were analyzed relatively different from that of Enver Ziya Karal.

While the major revolts were investigated, special emphasis was paid to the national awakenings of the Balkan peoples. Their struggle for their own mother tongue, alphabets, and independent church were also taken into consideration. All of these factors were very important for establishing new nation-states throughout the Balkan peninsula.

It should be noted that the two Cretan revolts were analyzed separately, since there was a long period between them. In other words, within the thirty year period between the first wave of the Cretan uprisings and the second wave, not only the internal conditions of the Ottoman Empire, but also the international conditions of Europe were changed. Unlike the Cretan uprisings, the Montenegrin uprisings were analyzed together. There was a close relationship between the Montenegrin uprisings, so it was important to examine them together.

This chapter can be defined as a chronological approach to the major ethnic uprisings that affected the history of the Ottoman Balkans.

II. A. The Serbian Revolts (1804-1830)

The very first revolt of the Balkan peoples against the Ottoman administration was the Serbian revolts. Throughout most of the eighteenth century, the *paşalık* of Belgrad witnessed battles between Austria and the Ottoman Empire. Together with the wars and the resulting chaos, many Serbs emigrated in the Austrian territory, where conditions were much more favorable. These political and economic conditions were to have an impact on the Serbian national movement, on the cultural development of the Serbs, and on the foundation of the Serbian nation-state in the nineteenth century.[1]

The Serbs had had a long history in the Balkans, and were one of the first permanent settlers descending from the Slavic tribes. They had, thanks to the advantages brought by sedentary social organization, managed to establish their initial identity formation through a relatively uniform language and common cultural heritage. These

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[1] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), p. 26.

were the basic historical and social factors binding the Serbs together. Therefore, the Serbs had a strong "feeling of togetherness" against outsiders.

The Serbs were not satisfied with Ottoman rule, but they continued to obey Ottoman rule with the promise of local self-government and a guarantee of tranquility in the countryside. However, the Ottoman administration could not always control the political situation.[2] For that reason, Selim III tried to make the conditions easier and he promulgated three imperial decrees (*fermân*) in 1793, 1794 and 1796. In these *fermân*s, the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and the Serbs was defined properly, and some rights of autonomy were guaranteed to the Serbs.[3] In order to implement this policy, Hacı Mustafa Paşa was appointed as the governor of the *paşalık* of Belgrad by the Sublime Porte.[4]

When the Ottoman armies conquered the Balkans, the land had become the economic base of the land holding timoriots (*sipâhi*). In return for military service an individual received a plot of land (*timâr*) which had a non-hereditary basis. The peasants worked for almost a tenth of the crop and a few additional labour and tax obligations. In the nineteenth century, *timâr* was transformed into the farm (*çiftlik*) system. This transformation led to important social, political, and economic developments in the life of the central Ottoman government, as well as its Balkan provinces. In other words, there was a shift in the balance of power between the central Ottoman government and the provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The changing conditions favored not only the local notables (*âyân*), but also the Christian merchants. On the contrary, the conditions of peasants had

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[2] *ibid*, p. 27.

[3] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, Vol. I, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 195.

[4] Georges Castellan. *History of the Balkans: From Mohammed the Conqueror to Stalin*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 234.

declined since the emergence of the *çiftlik* system. The peasants were reduced to the position of share-croppers. This paved the way for religious hatred between the Muslims and Christians in Serbia because, in most of the cases, the *çiftlik* owner was Muslim, while the peasant was Christian.[5] We can safely say that, together with the shift from the *timâr* system to the *çiftlik* system, the relationship between the Ottoman administrative system and local representatives had changed its content. The *çiftlik* system was a micro formation in the step toward germinating the initial conditions of a proto-state. In the *çiftliks*, the local communities acquired an opportunity for local economic organization, integrating social activities like a feudal manor. It was a rather primitive but effective integrating political system, independent in its internal political organization. This removed the local community from the direct control of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the mistakes of the *çiftlik* system were to be corrected.

On the other hand, it is important to note that during the Ottoman rule, the population of the *paşalık* of Belgrad consisted both of Muslims and Christians. But in the countryside, the population was mostly composed of Christians, who could live with less dependence on Muslim overlords. Also, there was the system of local government. *Knez* (lord) represented the village and *oborknez* (grand *knez*) ruled a group of villages. The *knezes* had the right to collect taxes and to exercise all police and judicial functions.[6] These rights indicate that the Serbs still had local autonomy.

The problems of the Sublime Porte became greater in the following years when the Janissaries in Belgrad began to act irresponsibly, by refusing to obey the orders of the

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[5] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, pp. 12-14.

[6] Ferdinand Schevill. *A History of the Balkans: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, (New York: Dorset Press, 1991), p. 317.

Sublime Porte. This created tensions and conflicts between the Serbs and the Janissaries.[7] The disorderly and irresponsible actions of the Janissaries and their disobedience to the authority of the Sublime Porte was a major turning point in the relationship between the Sublime Porte and the Serbs. From then on, internal problems between the Sublime Porte and different *paşalıks* took a more serious form. This meant that the political authority of the Ottoman Empire over its armed forces had become problematic. The Sublime Porte had simply begun to lose its legitimacy and control over its own army. This was reflected differently in the different local populations in the Balkans but, led to direct confrontation between the Serbs and the Janissaries.

At this time, the other big problem in the Balkans was to control the rebellious *paşa* of Vidin, namely Pasvantoğlu Osman Paşa. Pasvantoğlu declared himself independent from the Ottoman Empire in 1795, and then became a chronic rebel against Ottoman rule. His aim was to establish an independent or autonomous principality for himself in the Balkans. In many respects, the activities of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa during the Greek revolt were similar to the activities of Pasvantoğlu.[8]

Meanwhile, Napoleon had entered Egypt in 1798, and put pressure on the Sublime Porte with regards to the Balkans and İstanbul.[9] The Napoleonic era contributed to the change of the political atmosphere in Europe. The armed conflicts and wars led to the unification of local communities on the basis of their cultural and religious identities. On the other hand, Napoleon's invasion of Egypt was a direct threat to the provinces of the Ottoman Empire and the Ottoman control over its provinces. The French Revolution had

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[7] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 30.

[8] *ibid*, p. 18.

[9] *ibid*, p. 28.

exported ideas of patriotism and nationalism. This also encouraged the Serbs. So, the Ottoman Empire was not an absolute power over the Balkans anymore. For that reason, the Ottoman soldiers in the Balkans were recalled to İstanbul. Selim III bowed to the pressures of the Serbian rebels.[10] Under these heavy conditions, Sultan Selim III was forced to compromise not only with Pasvantoğlu but also with the Janissaries, who had revolted against the authority of Hacı Mustafa Paşa and killed him. Thus, the balance of power shifted to the side of Janissaries and Pasvantoğlu once again.[11]

The underlining factors of the Serbian revolts can be explained by various historical circumstances, which existed at the end of the eighteenth century and at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Ottoman Empire began to lose its authority over its provinces in the Balkans. The developments in economic, social, and political conditions in Europe, and the opposition to the authority of the Janissaries and the central Ottoman administration opened the way for the Serbian uprising.[12]

In mid-February of 1804, Serbian notables and fighters of the region met in the village of Orašac to organize an uprising against the Janissaries. So, the Serbian revolt had begun under the command of Karadjordge in February of 1804. As Karadjordge had joined the Austro-Turkish war (in the eighteenth century) on the side of the Austrians, he had gained enough military experience.[13] Within a short time period, the Serbian revolt became a mass movement against the Janissaries. During this time, the Janissary leaders were in an unsafe position and were opposed not only by the Ottoman state apparatus and *sipâhis*, but

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[10] Georges Castellan. *History of the Balkans: From Mohammed the Conqueror to Stalin*, p. 234.

[11] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 29.

[12] *ibid*, p. 11.

[13] *ibid*, pp. 29-30.

also by the *paşalık*s, with the exception of Pasvantoğlu.[14] The First Serbian Insurrection was located primarily in the northern part of the Belgrad *paşalık* and Şumadiya.[15] In May 1804, the Serbs strengthened their positions in several ways. They took Pasarofça and many experienced Serbian veterans came from Austria in order to help to the Serbian army.[16]

The reasons for the Serbian revolt can be defined as the disintegration of the Ottoman governmental system, which had long become very ineffective. The Ottoman Empire was no longer able to supervise the administration of its distant provinces. The Serbian peasantry had complaints about the *çiftlik* system and the lawlessness (*kanûnsuzluk*) of the Janissaries. In short, we can say that, the initial triggering point of this revolt was to get rid of the oppressive *çiftlik* system and the Janissaries, since a struggle against these would benefit both the Serbian people and the Ottoman Empire in the long run.[17] It should also be noted that the Janissaries and the *çiftlik* system were the two most significant elements of the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire in Serbia.

On the one hand, the fear of the Sublime Porte was the fact that both the Janissary opposition and the Serbian uprising would turn against it. On the other hand, the Sublime Porte was afraid of Austrian intervention into the Serbian uprising. In the peace treaty of Zistovi, the Ottoman Empire was obliged to maintain a peaceful border with Austria.[18] In this sense, the Serbs tried to get the support of the great powers in their struggle towards

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[14] Michael Boro Petrovich. *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1918*, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; 1976), pp. 31-32.

[15] *ibid*, p. 91.

[16] *ibid*, p. 33.

[17] L. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, (Illinois: Dryden Press, 1958), pp. 239, 244 and 245.

[18] Micheal Bono Petrovich. *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1912*, p. 32.

their autonomy.[19] Austria advised the Serbs not to hesitate to talk about total separation from the Ottoman Empire. The Serbs could form a new autonomous government, like the Serbian Kingdom that lived from 1718 to 1739. Becoming aware of this threat, Selim III sent Abu Bekir Paşa to the *paşalık* of Belgrad to help the Serbs expel the *dayıs* (the leader of the Janissaries).[20] Although Abu Bekir Paşa was appointed to crush the Janissaries, the fragile situation could not be stabilized.[21] Here, the Serbs demanded Austrian protection, but Austria preferred to remain passive, because its mind was preoccupied by the Napoleonic wars.[22]

Austria had long been preoccupied with the Napoleonic wars, although it wanted to take the Serbs on its side. Yet, it was not ready to do this directly, but preferred to support and provoke an uprising against the Janissaries indirectly. Austria also wanted to direct this uprising at the Ottoman Empire, rather than only at the Janissairies and their representatives. During this time, not only Austria but also other European countries were busy with the Napoleonic wars. The aim of Austria was to direct this revolt against the Ottoman administration, since it knew that the Ottoman Empire was in a weak position. The time was now ripe "to use" the misrule of the Janissaries as a tool against the Ottoman Empire.

Thereafter, the Serbs hoped to get a better answer from Russia. But Russia was also unwilling to give direct help to the Serbs.[23] With these events, the Serbian uprising became an important problem in the Balkans. In a way, the Serbian conflict was internationalized.

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[19] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 32.

[20] Georges Castellan. *History of the Balkans: From Mohammed the Conqueror to Stalin*, p. 237.

[21] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 32.

[22] Michael Bono Petrovich. *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1918*, p. 36.

[23] *ibid*, p. 36.

In 1805, the Serbs submitted a petition to the Sublime Porte. Their list of grievances included the right to elect their own leaders, who would govern them and collect all the tribute and hand it over to the Sublime Porte. Accepting this petition would mean that all Turkish officials had to leave Serbia forever, and the Serbs had to defend their territory by themselves.[24] With this petition, the axis of Serbian uprising changed from demanding a local government into a political appeal for self government. So, this was a serious political threat to the Ottoman Empire, since there were other Christian minorities in the Balkans, like the Greeks and Bulgarians. In this sense, it is important to note that, the chief aim of the Serbian uprising was against the *dayıs*. But it was also true that, from the very beginning of the uprising the Serbs hoped, as Karadjordge put it, "of throwing off the yoke that the Serbs has borne since Kosovo."[25]

As mentioned earlier, the Serbs had a strong feeling of national identity and were not happy with the local representatives of the Ottoman Empire in their region. The petition for the right to elect their own leaders, and other comments of Karadjordge, indicates that the submission of the Serbs to the Ottoman rule was a *de facto* and inevitable situation brought about by the conditions of the period. They were implicitly seeking to find opportunities and looking for excuses to revolt against the Ottoman political rule.

This could be a reason for their asking the help of the Russians. It shows us that claiming national liberation was also on the agenda of the Serbs.[26] In addition, the Serbs made several efforts to get the support of other Balkan Christians, who were living in Bosnia, Montenegro, and Herzegovina.[27]

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[24] *ibid*, p. 36.

[25] *ibid*, p. 37.

[26] *ibid*, p. 37.

[27] Barbara Jelavich. *A History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 197.

These conditions put Selim III into a difficult position and paved the way for him to give consent to the policy of conciliation. Thereafter, Hafiz Paşa was appointed as the new governor of Belgrad "to deal with the Serbs."[28] During the winter of 1805, the Serbs decided on a quick attack, and thought that offense was far better than defense. This meant that, the Serbian uprising was entering a new phase. It was no longer a local insurrection against the Janissaries. It had become a war for independence. In this sense, the Serbian revolts were taken into serious consideration and followed closely by the great powers of Europe.[29] However, we can safely say that, the Serbian uprising initially began with fighting against the disorder of the Janissaries. Later, the target of the uprising changed, and it was channeled into a different direction. It became a fight against the sultan's regime, since the Sublime Porte did not, and perhaps could not, give the guarantee of providing their security. Therefore, the Serbs decided to fill this gap by establishing "their own administration." On the other hand, the Serbs tried to maintain economic ties with the economically advanced parts of the Serbdom, since they needed financial aid for provisions and ammunition for their troops. As Serbia had an important geographical location, uneducated and almost illiterate peasants found themselves on the European agenda. They were recognized as a separate independent actor in the matters of diplomatic relations.[30]

In early 1806, the Serbs began to reap rewards from their strong attack against the Ottoman Empire. Pasvantoğlu was also defeated by the Serbs. In other words, the Serbs won victory after victory. The Ottoman army tried to reply with an attack from Bosnia but

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[28] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 32.

[29] Michael Boro Petrovich. *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1918*, pp. 38-39.

[30] *ibid*, pp. 41-43.

they could not win a victory, since Karadjordge won a significant victory over the Bosnian army at Mišar.[31]

In this respect, it would be an exaggeration to say that the Serbian uprising was directly influenced by the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Although the two leaders of the Serbian intellectuals, Obradovich and Karajich, played a key role in the intellectual awakening, the peasantry oriented Serbian uprising might not have been affected by the Enlightenment and the French Revolution as much as the Greek Revolution. I think that the uprising Serbs wanted to protect their primitive national feelings.

In the meantime, international political atmosphere had changed dramatically. Both Russia and Britain attacked Ottoman lands; for that reason, Selim III wanted to end the Serbian revolt immediately since, the Serbian revolt was a real obstacle for the Ottomans in the wars against Russia and Britain. Selim III was ready to accept the Serbian demands for autonomy, but Russia offered money and arms to keep the Serbs fighting against the Ottoman Empire.[32]

During the First Serbian Insurrection, there were three political tendencies vying among themselves for superiority. These political tendencies were as follows: monarchic centralism, oligarchic regionalism and constitutional centralism. "Each had an objective *raison d'etre* and a strong following."[33] This point is important, since it made the Serbs struggle so violently. This also indicates that the political will of the people was extremely important for such a patriarchal society.[34]

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[31] *ibid*, p. 40.

[32] L. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, p. 247.

[33] Michael Boro Petrovich. *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1918*, p. 45.

[34] *ibid*, p. 45.

Karadjordge did not have strong political rivals, until Rodofinikin, an agent of the Russian army, went to Belgrade in 1807. He acted together with Karadjordge's opponents and used them against Karadjordge. At the same time, the international situation was becoming worse for the Serbs, since the meeting of 1808 between Napoleon and Tsar Alexander I had resulted in a deadlock over the Eastern affairs. In the meantime, the internal atmosphere of the Ottoman Empire became worse for the Serbs, when Mahmud II came to power. As Russia delivered very little military assistance to the Serbs, the Ottoman army safely marched on Belgrad in August 1809. Although the Ottoman troops were not able to reconquer all of Serbia, the Ottoman army reentered Belgrade, in the same year, which can be defined as the turning point of the first Serbian revolution.[35] In 1812, the Treaty of Bucharest was signed between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, since Russia's relations with Napoleon had deteriorated. "Article VIII of the Treaty of Bucharest provided for the full reoccupation of Serbia by the Ottoman authority, but with the promise of amnesty."[36] The reaction of the Serbs was very strong against this treaty, since the Serbs did not receive a guarantee that the Sublime Porte would carry out Article VIII. In 1813, Karadjordge and the other Serbian leaders went to Austria, and thus the first Serbian insurrection ended.[37]

Although the Serbian revolt became an international problem, much to the surprise of the Ottoman officials, it had negative consequences for the Serbs as well. It made the Serbs depend more on the various great powers in Europe. They began to accept support from different and opposing powers. This situation seems to make Serbia a tool of

[35] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 200-201.

[36] *ibid*, p. 201.

[37] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 35.

international diplomacy and, therefore, darkened the vision and the initial *raison d'etre* of the revolt. In that respect, the claims for their rights and lands were overtaken by various opportunistic alliances. That was why the attitude of Russia was very crucial for the Serbian uprising at that time.

Meanwhile, Napoleon was defeated, and France was occupied by Russia. At this time, the Ottoman authorities preferred peace in their own lands and they granted a general amnesty in 1813. But despite this positive attitude by the Ottoman administration, a lack of confidence continued between the Christians and Muslims. In 1814, another local revolt began. Miloš, the *oborknez* of Rudnik and a new leader of the Serbian uprising, gave up his policy of cooperation with the Ottoman Empire, and in this sense, internal and external conditions turned in favor of the Serbs. "Miloš was a much more complex character than Karadjordge. He was an astute and inscrutable man, adept at hiding his feelings, capable of analyzing a situation objectively, willing to wait for developments to mature, and skillful in playing off one party or person against another."[38]

Meanwhile, Miloš raised the flag of the Second Serbian Insurrection on Palm Sunday of 1815. Within a short time period, the rebellion spread through all the districts of the *paşalık* of Belgrad. Miloš' troops had advantage over the Ottoman troops, since Ottoman troops were relatively weak. So, the entire Ottoman military forces were defeated by the Serbs.[39]

The Serbs, on the one hand, enjoyed a definite advantage in comparison with the Ottoman forces. On the other hand, the long period of warfare came to an end in Europe. Both the Sublime Porte and Miloš came to an agreement, since the Sublime Porte was in a

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[38] L. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, p. 248.

[39] Michael Boro Petrovich. *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1918*, p. 94.

weak position in the international arena. Miloš desired to start negotiations. Thus, the Serbian delegates declared that their rebellion had not been against the Sublime Porte itself, but rather against the misrule of Süleyman Paşa of Belgrad.[40]

In this period, the Serbs were very unclear about the scope of their demands of the Ottoman Empire. They vacillated between a totally independent rule and an autonomous province. They were also feeling themselves a part of the Ottoman Empire and were demanding fair and equal relations with the political center. They also knew very well that, the Ottoman Empire was in a weak position and it would accept their legitimacy. Already they showed the Ottoman administration that they had the right to decide who would be the Ottoman representative in their province.

At the same time, the Russians gave their support to the Serbs, and as a result Süleyman was replaced by Maraşlı Ali Paşa. So, Miloš and Maraşlı Ali Paşa reached a final verbal understanding in 1815. It was agreed that, the Sublime Porte would give some privileges to the Serbs like tariff and trading privileges. Most importantly, Janissary families would not be able to own land. And "a full amnesty was also granted."[41] With this agreement, the Ottomans were seen as the safeguarding and protecting external rulers of the Serbs, who were aiming to reach a situation where they would be independent in their internal affairs. At the same time, they were to be acting in line with the Ottoman political decision and submitting to the policy of the Ottomans in the Balkans.

Although the Serbs gained these kinds of autonomous rights, their way of achieving the goal was rather difficult. Because, the fortunes of this revolt were tied to the fall and rise of European politics, Russian and Austrian support had become crucial and necessary

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[40] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of Balkan National States, 1804-1920,* pp. 35-36.

[41] *ibid,* pp. 36-37.

for the Serbs. But, throughout this period, the European states paid little attention to this issue because of their general interests. Although Russia provided some support to the Serbs from time to time, it could easily remove its support when its interests in Europe demanded for such a course of action.[42]

In this respect, the Serbs faced domestic problems such as plague and famine as a result of the three years of oppression, fighting and devastation. But, the restoration of peace and order led the Serbs to collect their own taxes, and this actually led to their economic recovery. Moreover, Miloš and other Serbian leaders gained the authority that the Ottoman Empire had lost. They expanded their powers until August 1818, which was the date of obtaining power from Maraşlı Ali Paşa. By doing this, the status of Miloš was solidified as the *de facto* ruler of the Serbs.[43] After Miloš obtained the right of approving death sentences, his attitude toward his people became extremely severe, and between the years of 1815-1830, many local rebellions occurred in Serbia against Miloš.[44]

The first important revolt took place in the district of Pasarofça in 1821. It was led by Marko Todorović and Stevan Todorović. They received some privileges from the Ottomans, since the Ottomans had devised to break up the unity of the Serbian leadership. As the revolt in the district of Pasarofça was not able to obtain popular support, it failed. Another uprising occurred in the village of Selevac in 1825, against the socio-economic policies of Miloš. Peasants were suffering from political oppressions and high taxes in Serbia.[45] The most significant revolt was Djak's Rebellion, since there was a massive peasant opposition against Miloš' policy. According to the peasants, the rule of Miloš was

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[42] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 204

[43] Michael Boro Petrovich. *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1918*, p. 106.

[44] *ibid*, p. 114.

[45] *ibid*, pp. 116 and 118.

more oppressive than the direct rule of the Ottomans. Djak's Rebellion can not be defined as a political uprising, since there was "a socio-economic conflict between an exploited people and a state bureaucracy that was amassing not only a public treasury but private capital through the abuse of power."[46]

In this sense, the international situation had also changed. For instance, in Russia Tsar Alexander I had died in December 1825. His successor, Nicholos I, thought that the concerns of the Ottoman Empire in Southeastern Europe consisted of two separable categories: Serbia and the Romanian Principalities on the one hand, and on the other hand, the Greek question. Although Russia could not intervene in the Greek question, it had the right to intervene in the rest of the questions like the Serbian question. As a relatively satisfactory result could not be achieved concerning the Serbian question, Nicholas I decided to show Russian force. He gave six weeks to the Ottoman Empire to resolve the questions concerning Serbia.

While the Ottoman Empire was preoccupied with the Serbian problem and the great powers, the Greek uprising occurred in 1821 and this put the Sublime Porte into a more difficult position.[47] Since the Russian threat against the Ottoman Empire in the north began to increase, other European states were now supporting Russia. As a result, the Akkerman Convention was signed with the Ottoman Empire in 1826.[48] With this treaty, Russia received satisfaction on every point, and this meant that the Akkerman Convention was a triumph for the Russians. Thus, the demands of the Serbs were officially explained

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[46] *ibid*, pp. 118-119.

[47] *ibid.*, p. 122.

[48] Ferdinand Schevill. *A History of the Balkans: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, p. 323.

in detail. These included: freedom of religion; election of their own leaders; independence of their domestic administration; freedom of commerce, etc...[49]

As the Sublime Porte was now busy with the Greek uprising, it paid no attention to the Serbian settlement. And when the Ottoman Empire did not accept an armistice with the Greeks in October 1827, British, French and Russian fleets sunk the Ottoman fleet in Navarin. Thereafter, Russia declared war against the Ottoman Empire in April 1828. The Ottoman Empire was defeated, and then the Treaty of Edirne was signed between the Ottomans and the Russians in September 1829. In this treaty, the articles of the Akkerman Treaty were repeated. Serbia soon became an autonomous state and Miloš was recognized as a hereditary prince in 1830.[50]

To sum up, the autonomous Serbian state was established through a long period of revolts. It is important to note that the Serbs used the weakness of the Ottoman administration as a tool, and obtained the active support of the great powers to achieve their goals. The Serbian revolts can be defined as the first step to obtain a right of autonomy and can be seen as a successful example for the other Christian minorities living in the Balkans. From then on, the difficulties of the Sublime Porte with the Balkans would increase.

II. B. The Greek Revolts (1815-1830)

The ancient Greek civilization was one of the oldest, most well-structured and settled social organizations of the Mediterranean basin. With its well organized city-states, intellectual flourishment and engagement in sea trade, Greece had once created a unique

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[49] Michael Boro Petrovich. *A History of Modern Sebia, 1804-1918*, p. 123.

[50] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 55.

political structure to meet the needs of its citizens within the context of monarchical and oligarchical rules. This could only be possible through the existence of a well-functioning sedentary society. However, until the Ottoman conquest, the Greeks were living in different cities on the Aegean islands and in mainland Greece with only loose ties and commercial activities. Ottoman administration consolidated these loose ties and integrated the Greek lands to its system. This process had given pace to the integration and formation of "Greekness" in time. With the French Revolution and the formation of nation-states throughout Europe, the Greeks found themselves within the wave of "nationalism." The Greek civilization did not actually show indications of a nationalistic fervor. Instead, the axis of Greek sentiment was based on its search for the most appropriate political rule and social structure. But, this was not an approach based on a distinction between the Greeks and others, until the impact of various French and British intellectuals.

It was a well known fact that the Greeks played a more crucial role in the Ottoman Empire than any other *reâyâ* people, since they had a strong background and advanced civilization.[51] The Orthodox Church had its historical religious impact on the Slavic and Greek people. This cultural and ideologic hegemony was a motivating force creating the feeling of "belongingness" and "togetherness" for the people. The Orthodox Church was historically controlled by the patriarch of İstanbul.[52] This role was accepted by the Greeks, to a great extent, from the times of the Byzantine Empire and the Ottoman Empire. Through the Orthodox Church, Greeks got the opportunity of expressing themselves as a religious unity, both to the non-Orthodox sects of Christianity and to the Muslim world. This seems to be the first integrative appeal for the Greek togetherness. When this feeling

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[51] Ferdinand Schevill. *A History of the Balkans: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, p. 327.

[52] *ibid*, p. 327.

was fused with the tolerant and encouraging religious policy of the Ottoman Empire, the Greek people integrated themselves into the social structure of the Ottoman Empire.[53] The *Phanariote*s (the patrician Greek families of the Fener district of İstanbul) worked in the significant sections of the Ottoman administration. Besides, the geographical position of Greece paved the way for the Greek people for important economic and strategical advantages on the shores of the Ionian and the Aegean Seas.[54]

On the other hand, it is important to note that, the Greek national awakening was inspired by the French Revolution.[55] As the French Revolution was a combination of various social and economic factors, it was a successful attempt of the newly emerging French bourgeois class. The French Revolution led to the development of petty-bourgeoisie identities in the Balkans and particularly in Greece.[56] Most importantly, the main principles of the French Revolution – *Liberté*, *Égalité*, *Fraternité*, and the rights of the free citizen led to the emergence of contemporary literature, the improvement of the educational system and drastic change in social and economic life. The prominent leader in the Greek War of Independence, Theodoros Kolokotzonis, once mentioned that the French Revolution "had opened up the eyes of the [Greek] people."[57] After the French Revolution, several social revolutions and upheavals were observed throughout Europe during 1848. On the other hand, the Greek revolts took place in the 1820s. Although the Greek revolt

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[53] A. A. Vasiliev. *History of the Byzantine Empire*, Vol. II, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964); pp. 675-676.

[54] Ferdinand Schevill. *A History of the Balkans: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, p. 327.

[55] L. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, p. 278.

[56] Dimitris Loules. "The French Revolution and its Influence upon Greece", *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol. XV, No. 26, 1991, p. 284.

[57] *ibid*, p. 290.

predates these upheavals in Europe, it seems that the impact of the French Revolution on the Greeks was somewhat ignored.

On the contrary, the leaders of the Orthodox Church were very suspicious about revolutionary ideologies, since they believed that these ideologies would lead to the destruction of the intellectual foundation of Balkan Orthodoxy and therefore to the destruction of the imperial structure of the Ottoman Empire. In contrast to the top clergy, the village priests thought differently. The lesser priest believed that they might identify themselves with local movements.[58] The dissemination of cultural and political values brought by the French Revolution found its spokesmen among the lower classes of the Greek people. The conflicts between the top clergy of the Orthodox Church and local priests began to divide the Greek people. The new ideology of free will, brotherhood, and equality was seen as a threat to the established religious order of the Orthodox Church and the state structure of the Ottoman Empire. The French Revolution sowed the seeds for a decentralized and localized social organization. This brought the Greek subjects closer to each other, under the banner of "Greekness."

Although the Serbian revolts were conducted by the peasantry and were basically organized as guerilla wars under the command of Serbian military leaders, the Greek revolts were much more complicated, since the Greek society was more complex and sophisticated than the Serbian society. Merchants in the cities and trading communities of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, the *Phanariotes* of İstanbul, and the Greeks living in the Danubian Principalities were the main groups, who gave the first impetus of the Greek

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[58] L. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, p. 281.

revolution. Differing from the Serbian revolts, there was not a strong leader to command the revolts, since there was a strong rivalry between the leading individuals.[59]

The Greek merchants had intensified economic relations with mainland Europe from the beginning of the nineteenth century. They were soon exposed to the newly emerging economic, political and social attitudes there. They were an effective factor in bringing these currents of thoughts to the Greek people. However, the diverse geographical settlement of the Greek people hindered the development of interactive engagement towards Greek unification. Besides these factors; the Greek political tradition of policy-making, their understanding of democracy and political power created different leadership styles, conflicting from time to time with each other. This prevented target oriented leadership and played an inhibiting role in the Greek national awakening.

The Greek revolution occurred in two separate worlds: The first one was organized by the *Phanariote*s of İstanbul and the Principalities; the merchants; and the members of the diaspora, who were living outside of mainland Greece. On the other hand, the second world was organized by peasants, fisherman, and local notables, who were the inhabitants of mainland Greece. Although both sides expected Ottoman rule to come to an end, the latter enjoyed some privileges from the Ottoman Empire. But, the former's dream was to reestablish the Byzantine Empire.[60] In the meantime, while the Greek upper class desired Ottoman rule without the Ottomans, the lower segments of Greek society wanted to improve their lot, to own and increase their holdings. So there was a latent conflict within in the Greek society: between the poor and the rich.[61]

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[59] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920,* pp. 38-39.

[60] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,* p. 204.

[61] Dougles Dakin. *The Unification of Greece, 1770-1923,* (London: Benn, 1972), p. 44.

One of the Greek revolts occurred in the Danubian Principalities, and the other one came into existence in mainland Greece. The first one was well-organized with a Western ideology. But, the second one arose spontaneously, precisely because of the reaction of Christian Orthodox peasantry against Ottoman misgovernment and lawlessness (*kanûnsuzluk*).[62] In this sense, the second Greek uprising resembled the former Serbian revolts in terms of its demands, organization and ideology.

The overseas activities of the Greeks centered in the Philike Hetairia (Society of Friends) which was established by three Greek merchants, namely Emmanuel Xanthos, Athanasios Tsakalov, and Nikolaos Skoufos, in Odessa in 1814.[63] This organization had extremely detailed rituals and melodramic practices. To become a member of this organization, the applicants were required to swear the "Great Oath" as follows:

> Finally I swear upon your holy name, oh sacred and wretched fatherland. I swear upon your lengthy sufferings, upon the bitter tears of your imprisoned and persecuted people, shed for so many centuries until this moment by your wretched children. I devote my entire self to you. Henceforth, you will be the cause and the purpose of my thoughts. Your name will be the guide of my actions and your happiness the reward of all my efforts. If ever I should, even for a moment, become oblivious to your sufferings and fail to fulfil my duty to you, my divine justice exhaust upon my head all the thunder of its righteousness; may my name, inherited by my heirs, be detested; may my person become the object of curses and anathema of my compatriots; and my death be the inescapable punishment and reward for my sin, so that I may not infect the purity of the Etairia with my membership.[64]

As the text of this "Great Oath" reflects, the organization required its members to organize their life in line with the ideals of forming the Greek fatherland. The organization also required its members to devote themselves to the cause of revolution. One important

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[62] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 39.

[63] *ibid*, p. 39.

[64] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 205.

element is the reference made to centuries long "oppression" of colonial powers. In case of betrayal of the great cause and "inflicting the purity of Etairia," the person had to accept all kinds of punishment. The Philike Hetairia seems to have provided an ideological and organizational framework for the unity towards a fatherland.

The main aim of the Philike Hetairia was a general uprising against the Ottoman Empire, with the desire of establishing a Greek state, with İstanbul as its capital. Therefore, it can be said that the major aim of the Greek uprising was the revival of the Byzantine Empire, rather than forming a Greek nation-state on strictly national lines.[65]

The Philike Hetairia found a radical leader in Alexander Ypsilantis, who descended from a noble Greek family. He decided that the Danubian Principalities were a convenient place to raise a revolt,[66] since the Ottoman control of the region was rather loose. Thus, the Danubian Principalities were chosen as a center of the general Balkan uprising, although these lands were actually Romanian. The Principalities were the center for Bulgarian and Serbian refugees as well. On the other hand, the administration of Moldovia and Wallachia was controlled by the *Phanariote* regimes, so it easily became suitable ground for a general Balkan uprising. The other reason for choosing those Principalities as a center of the uprising was the weakness and ineffectiveness of the Ottoman forces stationed there.[67] Moreover, the geographical location of the Principalities was strategically crucial as they were near to Russia,[68] and therefore were open to direct Russian impact. When the choice of the Danubian Principalities as the center of general Balkan uprising is considered

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[65] *ibid*, p. 205.

[66] R.W.Seton-Watson. *The Rise of Nationality in the Balkans*, (London: Constable, 1917), p. 50.

[67] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 41.

[68] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 208.

together with the fact that the Philike Hetairia was also established in Odessa, the Russian "secret hand" in the plot becomes more evident.

Meanwhile, the Philike Hetairia was successful in organizing and setting up a network of secret cells from the capital of the Ottoman Empire to Greek territory and the Danubian Principalities. This indicates that there was a link between the *Phanariote* regime and the Philike Hetairia. In addition, money was collected and instructions were dispatched to all the centers and strata of the Greek society.[69]

In the Danubian Principalities, the other faction was the native *boyar*s (local landowners), whose main aim was to reestablish a native rule and become independent in their domestic affairs. But their attitude toward the Sublime Porte was irresolute, since they desired to have political authority in the Principalities and on the other hand, if not, they preferred independence under the protection of Russia or Austria. In this sense, it can be said that a great Hellenic revival was not taken into consideration by them.[70] However, Russia and Austria *de facto* became allies of the rebellion.

The Ottoman forces, in the meantime, dealt with the suppression of the disobedient governor Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, who was living in Yanya. He was actually an Albanian by birth, and during his administration, Yanya had became the most influential and most civilized capital of Southeast Europe.[71] His career can be characterized by complicated intrigues with the Sublime Porte, France, England, Austria, Russia, the Albanian *beys*, and the Christian chiefs. Ali Paşa played one against the other and in this way he gained supremacy over central and southern Albania, Macedonia, Northern Greece and the Ionian

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[69] *ibid*, p. 206.

[70] *ibid*, p. 208.

[71] C. M. Woodhouse. *Modern Greece: A Short History*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1991), p. 122.

islands.[72] While the Sublime Porte was busy with the Greek uprising in the Danubian Principalities, it temporarily ignored the other *paşalık*s. This period was characterized by the internal and external weakness and destabilities of the Ottoman Empire. These unfavorable circumstances led to unavoidable cracks within the Ottoman state structure. This was especially evident on the outskirts of the Ottoman Empire; Yanya was one of these.

A similar tension was created in the *paşalık* of Egypt by Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Paşa in the 1830s. In this sense, the disobedient attitude of Mehmed Ali Paşa was the sign of the upcoming unrest and uprisings in provinces against the Ottoman rule. At this point, the most important mistake of the Ottoman Empire was to appoint Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, an Albanian by birth, to Yanya. This act paved the way towards the unification of Albanian subjects with the local authority, and increased their political awakening. This situation was noticed by the European powers and they took advantage of conflict between the Ottoman central administration and the *paşalık* of Yanya, in order to destabilize the Ottoman Empire.

That is why, from the Western European point of view, Ali Paşa's rule seemed successful and efficient. From the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards, Western governments began to see him as an independent sovereign.[73] According to many Western scholars, Tepedelenli Ali Paşa has been the most romantic monster in history.[74] One of the important Albanian historians, Chekrezi, argued that "his main characteristics were:

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[72] Edwin E. Jacques. *The Albanians: An Ethnic History from Prehistoric Times to the Present*, (North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 1995), p. 250.

[73] David Howarth. *The Greek Adventure: Lord Byron and Other Eccentrics in the War of Independence*, (New York: Atheneum, 1976), pp. 24-25.

[74] William Plomer. *The Diamond of Jannina, Ali Pasha*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1970), p. 11.

hypocrisy, unscrupulousness, cruelty and unprincipled as well as unlimited ambition."[75] Therefore, Ali Paşa's chief aim was to establish an autonomous state for himself. To reach his goal, he maintained relations with the Philike Hetairia, since he wanted to obtain the Greek support for his own plans.[76] In 1820, Ali Paşa was outlawed with an imperial *fermân* issued by Mahmud II, and two Ottoman armies were sent to besiege his forces at Yanya.[77]

Meanwhile, Ypsilantis quickly reorganized the Philike Hetairia. He focused on enrolling Greeks and began to increase the number of local treasures. On the other hand, as he planned to use Serbian territory, he wrote a letter to Obrenovich and said that the Greek revolt would begin on 27 November 1820, in İstanbul and in Greece simultaneously. But, his plan became evident to the Ottomans. So no revolt occurred in İstanbul nor in Greece. As the Ottomans were busy with Ali Paşa, Ypsilantis wanted to act rapidly. Therefore, he issued proclamations to the *eterists* on 21 October 1820 that it was time to overthrow Ottoman rule. At first, Ypsilantis decided that the revolt should begin in Mani on 20 December 1820. But after that he changed his mind and decided to begin the revolt in the Danubian Principalities, since the preparations for the uprising in the Peloponnesus (Mora) were very loose. In the Danubian Principalities, Ypsilantis' army was composed of 4,500 men, including the Serbs, Bulgarians, Montenegrins, and 700 Greek students.[78] Thus, in the spring of 1821, militants of Philike Hetairia started a revolt under the control and command of Ypsilantis.[79] But, at the same time, *eterists* had been engaged with Vladimiriscu, a wealthy peasant, since he had rebelled already against the *Phanariote*

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[75] Edwin E. Jacques. *The Albanians: An Ethnic History from Prehistoric Times to Present*, p. 251.

[76] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 216.

[77] Edwin E. Jacques. *The Albanians: An Ethnic History from Prehistoric Times to Present*, p. 251.

[78] Douglas Dakin. *The Unification of Greece, 1770-1923*, pp. 36-37.

[79] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 41.

administration and the local landowners. Towards the end of May, Vladimirescu was seized and executed by the *eterists*. As Ypsilantis could not carry out the battle plan, he crossed the Austrian frontier, but was seized by the Austrian authorities.[80] So, the revolt ended with the defeat of the Greek forces, and the Ottoman army soon achieved full control of the Principalities.[81] As the revolutionary movement faced strict opponents within the Danubian Principalities, the revolt failed. Russian intervention did not occur at all. The majority of Romanians did not like the rule of the *Phanariotes*, either.[82]

On the other hand, as the Philike Hetairia was basically a Greek nationalistic organization, the Greek victory was not of much help to Romanian interests. When Vladimirescu realized that the Greek revolt could not be very successful, he tried to save himself by negotiating with the Ottoman authorities. As mentioned above, becoming aware of his attempts to betray them, the Philike Hetairia kidnapped Vladimirescu. Ypsilantis soon had him executed. With the death of Vladimirescu, the already weak Romanian support behind the Philike Hetairia totally ceased.[83] The failure of this uprising clearly showed that, the revolting forces were not mature enough to create a common cause against the Ottoman Empire. It is also evident that the rebels were easily be divided when faced with a serious external threat. Here, Romanians played a crucial role. But the suppression of the revolt was in favor of the Ottoman Empire only in the short run, since revolts continued in the following years.

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[80] Dougles Dakin. *The Unification of Greece, 1770-1923*, pp. 38-39.

[81] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 213.

[82] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 42.

[83] *ibid*, p. 42.

Another revolt soon came into existence in the Peloponnesus. Thus, mainland Greece became a new active center for the Greek rebellion. Different than the uprising in the Danubian Principalities, the revolt in the Peloponnesus was characterized by more mass support. The uprising population was composed mainly of peasants, and their nationalistic feelings were quite strong. Apart from this, at this time, there was a certain level of political autonomy in the region and each local community was strictly controlled by the Greek officials. In addition, there were executive and legislative bodies for the entire region. Each community had the right to elect its representatives to the provincial body, and the Greeks also had the right to choose two representatives.[84]

It should be noted that the movement in mainland Greece was different from that of the Danubian Principalities, since the revolt in the Peloponnesus arose from local events[85] resembling the Serbian uprising. The revolt began in Mani in April 1821 and on 6 April 1821 Bishop Germanos raised the flag of revolution at the monastery of Agia Lavra. The Christian Albanian chiefs of Dervoenchoria (villages in eastern Greece) rebelled against the local Ottomans on 16 April 1821. They held Salona, Livadya, and Talanti. Within a short time period, the islands of Spetsai, İpsara, and Hydra joined in the revolution.[86] Thus, the partial success of the rebellion created a motivating atmosphere for the Greek independence.

The uprising in Chalkidiki, Teselya, and Macedonia was delayed. Leader Emmanuil Papas sent out orders to the *eterists* of northern Greece to rise as soon as possible. In June 1821, the Ottomans were defeated in Ierissos. In the Peloponnesus,

[84] *ibid*, p. 43.

[85] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 216.

[86] Douglas Dakin. *The Unification of Greece, 1770-1923*, p. 40.

military operations were mainly centered around important towns and fortresses. Meanwhile, the Ottomans declared a Holy War, since they tried to prevent cooperation between the partisans of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa and the Christian *klefts*. When Ali Paşa heard of the revolt in the Peloponnesus, he sent his personal counselor, Alexis Noutsos, to mainland Greece. The primary goal of Noutsos was to establish a Greek - Albanian state under the sovereignty of Ali Paşa. As the Greeks had other ideas, Noutsos became a counselor of Mavrokordatos. In September 1821, a Greek - Albanian alliance was signed at Peta. The Greeks wanted to save Ali Paşa, since their aim was to free to the Greek villages, which were under the control of Ali Paşa.[87]

The Greek national movement can be defined as a complex movement. Since the Greeks not only fought against the Ottomans, but also among themselves. There were sectional differences between the continentals and islanders; between the cosmopolitan *Phanariotes* and guerilla chieftains; between the high prelates and village priests.[88] However, the conflicts between the Muslims and the Christians were far more severe. For instance, the ruin of the Muslim population of Tripolitsa in October 1821 was really bloody. Later, Ottoman forces also acted in a similar way. Shortly, both sides were committing ethnic atrocities throughout the Greek revolution.[89] The rebellion in the Peloponnesus was the first direct confrontation for the Ottoman Empire with the Greek people. The mutual atrocities paved the way for the irreversible separation of the "togetherness" of the Ottoman Empire and the Greek people. This rebellion was the major turning point or the first milestone in the Greek struggle for independence.

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[87] *ibid*, pp. 41-42.

[88] L. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, p. 284.

[89] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National Statetes, 1804-1920*, p. 44.

Meanwhile, in December 1821, regional assemblies planned to form a central government at Epidor. The delegates, who had come from the various parts of Greece, drew up a constitution in January 1822. According to the articles of this constitution, "the primates and respectable citizens were to elect for one year *ephor*s for each village or township, the numbers varying from one to five according to the size of the population. These *ephor*s were to elect representatives."[90] This constitution, although another Slavish model did not exist at all, resembled closely the French Constitution of 1795. It united the functions of the legislative and executive bodies, although it gave the judiciary an independent function. The executive and legislative bodies were to be served by eight ministers, who did not have independent power.[91] The formation of the regional assembly in the Peloponnesus with full legislative, executive, and judiciary powers created the necessary and basic framework for the proto-Greek state; as in the later case of formation of the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1920, and the following proclamation of Turkish Republic in 1923. Although the Ottoman Empire did not accept, approve or recognize this Greek proto-state, there was a *de facto* independent political authority in the Peloponnesus.

It is evident that, at the beginning of the revolt, Ottoman military performance against the Greek rebels was not massive, since the Ottoman Empire gave much emphasis to dealing with the revolt of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa. As the Ottoman army had to deal with not only the Danubian Principalities but also with Ali Paşa, the rebels in the Peloponnesus had the opportunity to become stronger. But, in January 1822, Tepedelenli Ali Paşa was captured and executed, so the Ottomans could finally solve this problem. Now, it was time

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[90] Dougles Dakin. *The Unification of Greece, 1770-1923*, p. 46.

[91] *ibid*, p. 47.

to deal with the Greeks. The Ottomans attempted to relieve the fortresses of Methoni, Koroni, Patras, Rio, Rumeli, Naplion, Egripo, Chalkida, Karistos, Vonitsa, Lamya, and Athens during the campaigns of 1822 and 1823. In this sense, it should be noted that all of these fortresses were near the sea. As the Ottoman Navy was not large enough, it could not undertake this task alone. In the meantime, Ottoman forces lost time in bringing together the unruly Albanian forces in the west. In 1823, the Ottomans sent their forces against western Greece, but the naval and military preparations were delayed by a great fire, and because of the undisciplined attitudes of the Janissaries. In the following year, in 1824, the Ottoman effort took place on a smaller scale.[92]

In order to change this situation, in 1825, Mahmud II decided to get help from Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Paşa, who was the *paşa* of Egypt at that time. But, in return for his services, Mehmed Ali Paşa demanded Crete for himself and the Peloponnesus for his son İbrahim. When the Sultan unwillingly accepted his demands, the Egyptian troops joined the Ottoman army against the rebelling Greek forces. Egyptian troops were better trained and equipped with more modern arms than the Ottoman forces, therefore, the undisciplined Greek soldiers could not cope with them. So, in April 1826, Misolonki fell and in June the Ottomans occupied the Acropolis of Athens. At the same time, an internal disagreement arose among the Greek revolutionary leaders. This put them in a really difficult position.[93]

The political outcomes of this revolt can be outlined as follows: *First*, the great powers of Europe began to focus on this issue, and this paved the way for Greek independence. *Second*, European states began to oppose the Ottomans directly and

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[92] *ibid*, pp. 48-49.

[93] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 217, 219.

completely.[94] From then on, the intervention of the great powers became significant, since contrary to the Serbian revolution, the Greek revolution had an important impact on the international atmosphere. The role of the great powers became crucial in determining the final outcome of the revolution rather than the role of the Greek leaders.[95]

In the international arena, the role played by Russia should be considered firstly, since it had strong organic ties with the Greeks. There are various dimensions which explain this relationship. As the Greeks controlled the Patriarchate of İstanbul, Russian relations with this institution passed through the hands of the Greeks. Apart from that, economic relations between the two were also significant. After the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, Greek ships were given the right to sail under the Russian flag, when they were trading Russian grain to Europe. As mentioned earlier, Odessa was a chief center for the Philike Hetairia, this situation put Russia further into an important position for the Greek revolution.[96] The relationship between Russia and the Balkans became very important after the decline of Ottoman power in the Balkans. Russia used the weakness of the Ottoman administration as a tool in becoming the predominant leader for the Balkan people. Russia gave its support for this kind of independence movement, both openly and secretly. Moreover, Russia declared a number of wars against the Ottoman Empire throughout the centuries. In each of these wars, Russia tried to assume the "protection" of another Slavic and/or Orthodox Ottoman minority.

During the first years of the revolts, neither Russia nor the other great powers of Europe supported a war in the Balkans. The British prime minister Castlereagh, and his

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[94] Seyfi Fahrettin. *1820-1827 Mora İsyanı*, (İstanbul: Askeri Matbaa, 1931), pp. 28-29.

[95] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 38.

[96] Barbara Jelavich. *Russia's Balkan Entanglements,1806-1914*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 50.

successor Robert Canning, preferred protecting Ottoman territorial integrity as a balance against Russia, since Britain wished to avoid establishing an autonomous or independent Greece under Russian control. Russia had a dual attitude toward the Greek national movement. On the one hand, Tsar Alexander I was very conservative in demanding the repression of all revolutionary activity. On the other hand, he had some responsibilities toward the Orthodox Christians as the tsar of his country. As mentioned above, Greek shipping in the Black Sea and in the Mediterranean played a very important role in Russian economic interests.[97] This shows us that the religious factor was an indispensable agent in the economic and political relationship between two Orthodox Christian societies: the Russian and the Greek.

Meanwhile, public pressure increased on the British government to support the revolutionary movement in the Peloponnesus. In Britain, the romantic movement of Philhellenism affected the distant attitude of the British government. Thus, the British public began to see the uprising Greek captains and peasants as the descendants of the mythological heroes of the ancient world. Meanwhile, the Ottomans were seen as the symbol of brutal barbarism.[98] Besides, many intellectuals like Lord Byron supported the Greeks through their speeches and writings. This strong Philhellenic movement led the great powers to reach a compromise on the subject of Greek independence.[99]

With the internationalization of the Greek rebellion, the political atmosphere became extremely unfavorable for the Ottoman Empire. Up to the last rebellious movement in the Peloponnesus, various European powers and even the Russians

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[97] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establisment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 38.

[98] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 224.

[99] Şerif Baştav. "Greeks under the Ottoman Rule (1453-1831)", *Dış Politika*, No. 6, 1977, pp. 26-27.

themselves were not openly and legally fighting for the Greek cause. They fought mainly for their own national interests. The Greek rebellion fit into this picture in a different context. But, hereafter, the Greek War of Independence acquired a separate character. It became a direct threat for the interests of Ottoman Empire. Now the Ottoman Empire had to counter threats from all the other European powers. It was even labeled as an oppressive barbaric power. On the other hand, basing their historical and cultural roots in the old Greek civilization, the European public shaped its old and enduring Philhellenic nostalgia. The Philhellenism of European public provided the long-needed moral support to the "Greek cause."

When Alexander I died in 1825, Nicholas I came to power in Russia and he favored a better cooperation with the other European powers on the Greek issue. For that reason, in 1826, the Convention of St. Petersburg was signed between Russia and Britain. According to the articles of this convention, the two powers agreed to mediate between the conflicting sides, namely the Greek rebels and the Ottoman government. The main aim of the St. Petersburg Convention was to establish an autonomous Greek state. In the following year, in 1827, France joined in the convention, since the French monarch, Charles X, was a Philhellene and France, too, had some interests in the Mediterranean.[100]

Thereafter, in July 1827 the Treaty of London was signed by Russia, Britain, and France:

> The first article stated that the three powers would demand the consent of both Greeks and Turks to an armistice, whereupon the powers would negotiate a settlement on the basis of the establishment of Greece as an autonomous, through tributary, state under Turkish suzerainty. A secret article stated that if the Turks did not accept the proffered mediation, the allies would send consuls to Greece, and

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[100] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 226.

that if one or other party should refuse the armistice, the powers would jointly prevent collisions, without, however, taking part in hostilities.[101]

Moreover, the allies cooperated to establish a naval blockade to prevent communication between Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Paşa and Egyptian troops in the Peloponnesus. And, in October 1827, the Ottoman - Egyptian fleet was sunk by the allies in the Bay of Navarin. This action further led to direct Russian military intervention in the Balkans. After this, Russia declared war against the Ottoman Empire in April 1828. Russia got a decisive victory in the war, and then the Treaty of Edirne was signed between Russia and the Ottoman Empire in September 1829.[102] In this sense, the Ottoman Empire lost its power in the struggle against the Greek rebels, since it also had to struggle with Russia. It can also be said that the Greek revolt lost its relative importance for the Ottoman Empire. The Sublime Porte was in a difficult position, since the great powers of Europe had begun to take control of the Balkans. This situation put the Ottoman Empire into a more difficult position, both in its international and internal affairs.

According to the Treaty of Edirne, Russia took control of the Danube Delta and gained some territory in the Caucasus. In Article X of this treaty, the Sublime Porte accepted an autonomous status for Greece. In addition, the Straits were now open for the passage of Russian commercial vessels. Apart from this, it should be noted that no Greek participants became a party in the negotiations, since there was no stable government in Greece.[103]

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[101] Dougles Dakin. *The Unification of Greece,1770-1923*, p. 55.

[102] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States 1804-1920*, p. 49.

[103] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 228.

The great powers decided to take a further important step, and agreed that Greece should be independent on a limited geographic boundary. Therefore, the Treaty of London was signed in February 1830, thus, the independent kingdom of Greece was established under the guarantee of Great Britain, France and Russia. In this sense, it can truly be said that, the Greek nation lost more than it gained, since a great suspicion and hostility began in the Ottoman authorities against the Greeks. At the same time, the Greek commercial and financial interest groups were affected badly. For instance, in the area of banking Armenians replaced Greeks and Bulgarian merchants gained a prominent role in supplying the military needs of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, although the great powers became an ally for establishing an independent Greek state, they had conflicting interests on certain issues. So, Greece had to deal with the opposing policies of the great powers.[104]

In sum, the new Greek state became "an independent state" under the protection of the European powers. As seen in all major ethnic rebellions in history, the cost of independence was the loss of economic power and the following internal struggles between various groups. The Greek state, following independence, came under the control of the other independent European states. Its religious affiliation with the rest of Europe put Greece into a different group and increased the impact of major European powers. Thus, Greece became a country that would help the great powers of Europe in formulating their diplomatic policy against the Ottoman Empire. But, of course, the Greek revolution created a new socio-economic structure and this led to the establishment of new internal conflicts. In short, the new Greek state became the satellite of the great powers and took its place against the Ottoman Empire at the expense of gaining "independence."

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[104] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, pp. 51-52.

II. C. The Bulgarian Revolts (1841, 1850, 1876)

Ottoman Bulgaria was encircled by the Ottoman, Greek, and Serbian social structures. Its external relations were based on these three local powers. However, the Bulgarians did not have a tradition of integrated social organization that would unify them against the external powers, including the Ottoman Empire. Besides, Bulgaria was located very close to the central Ottoman authority.

There were several factors behind the rather late development of the Bulgarian national awakening. The major factors can be defined as follows: as Bulgaria was geographically situated near İstanbul, it was easy for the Ottoman central government to control the Bulgarian lands militarily. Besides, differing from the Serbs, Montenegrins, and Romanians; the Bulgarians did not have central institutions to unite and organize themselves.[105] Having no deep-rooted social and organizational structures, an integrated economy created an isolated social system, where Bulgaria was dependent on the external sources. The lack of central political institutions in the Bulgarian lands made the influence of religious institutions possible. But, the Bulgarians did not have their own religious institutions. The religious needs of common Bulgarians were fulfilled through the Greek Orthodox Church.

However, the revolutionary movement, which spread throughout the Ottoman Balkans, gave the first impetus for the Bulgarian national awakening. Although at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the socio-economic situation in Bulgaria was relatively weak compared to the other parts of the Balkan Peninsula,[106] the economic conditions of Bulgaria changed dramatically in the 1830s. After the abolition of the

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[105] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 335.

[106] *ibid*, p. 338.

Janissaries by Mahmud II in 1826, and following Greek independence, the Bulgarians began to supply clothes and food to the renovated Ottoman army.[107] After the Greek War of Independence, Bulgarian merchants replaced Greek merchants and businessmen throughout the Ottoman Empire. Thus, strong Bulgarian merchant colonies emerged in İstanbul. Moreover, Bulgarian merchants began to play a mediating role between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire. Hence, the region was slowly becoming economically incorporated into the Ottoman socio-economic system. This could have been another reason for the consolidation of a Bulgarian national identity, at least in the economic sense. In addition, Bulgarian towns became important centers for the manufacture of carpets, metal-work, shoes, and clothing.[108]

On the other hand, religious and cultural revival played a significant role in the Bulgarian national awakening. Paiisi, a Bulgarian monk in the monastery of Hilendar, made a deep impression on ordinary people and especially on the lower classes of the Bulgarian society. He made frequent trips throughout the Balkan territory. These trips enabled him to bring his ideas to the Bulgarians. Paiisi argued that the Bulgarians possessed a glorious past, but now they had secondary status *vis-à-vis* the Greeks. His feeling about the Bulgarians can be clearly seen in his following words:

> of all the Slav peoples the most glorious were the Bulgarians; they were the first who called themselves tsars, the first to have a patriarch, the first to adopt the Christian faith, and they it was who conquered the largest amount of territory. Thus, of all the Slav peoples they were the strongest and the most honoured, and the first Slav saints cast their radiance from the Bulgarian people and through the Bulgarian language.[109]

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[107] R. J. Crampton. *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 58.

[108] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 338.

[109] R. J. Crampton. *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, pp. 46-47.

These words indicate that the development of the Bulgarian national feeling seemed to have two components, at least in the beginning. These two components were Slavism and religious feelings. In the words of Paiisi, these two components were unified and integrated into Bulgarian nationalism. As the Bulgarians did not have an integrated socio-cultural system yet, their cultural identity took a religious shape.

There were some other important factors contributing to the cultural revival of Bulgaria. As economic relations developed drastically in Europe in the nineteenth century, the Bulgarians began to get into contact with these countries. These contacts were established through commerce, education abroad, the knowledge of new ideas of the French Revolution and liberalism, and through indirect participation in the Serbian and the Greek revolts against the Ottoman Empire.[110]

The most important impetus in the Bulgarian national movement came from educational development. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Bulgarian education system was under the domination of the Greek Orthodox church. In other words, Bulgarian schools existed in the churches and monasteries. As economic prosperity increased, people became more conscious about the world. For that reason, Bulgarians recognized that the schools located in the churches were far from satisfactory and they could not fulfill the changing needs. Thus, secular Bulgarian educational institutions were established. They were also free from the Greek control. The first modern school was established in Gabrova in 1835. Moreover, Bulgarian young people began to travel abroad for higher education. Some of them went to central Europe and especially to France. Most of them went to Russia, since they received Russian scholarships. These young students

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[110] *ibid*, p. 49.

began to play active roles in Bulgarian uprisings throughout the nineteenth century.[111] Once the Bulgarians had their own secular schools, the national feeling, which had been transferred from one generation to the other orally, could now be transferred on a written basis. This meant that the Bulgarians were paving the way for a permanent written history of their national culture. When we think that the schools were organized to respond the economic and social needs of the Bulgarian people, the cultural reference to "the Bulgarian nation" would be the cement of this social and economic integration.

Meanwhile, the Ottoman Empire took a crucial step when the *Hatt-ı Şerif* of *Gülhane* was issued in 1839. Thus, the *Tanzimât* period started. One of the major aims of the Ottoman policy in the *Tanzimât* period was to reduce the dissatisfaction of non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire. The edict of *Gülhane* promised new social rights and security of life, honour and property for non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire.[112] The assurances of the *Tanzimât* reforms were well-received by the Bulgarians. But, soon the Bulgarians were dissatisfied with the implementation of these assurances, so separatist and/or nationalist activities began to emerge among the Bulgarians.

Provincial taxation was an important problem that the Ottoman government faced in the Bulgarian lands. In the *Tanzimât* period, Bulgaria was suffering under *iltizâm*, the system that the taxes of a district were sold to a tax farmer for a year. The consequence of such a system was the misuse and abuse of the land that was given out to *iltizâm*. As there was not much control and inspection on behalf of the Sublime Porte and the period of leasing was short, the *mültezim* thought of little else but exploiting the land.[113] So, this

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[111] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, pp. 130-131.

[112] Mark Pinson. "Ottoman Bulgarian the First Tanzimat Period - The Revolts in Nish (1841) and Vidin (1850)," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 2, 1975, p. 104.

[113] *ibid*, p. 104.

process caused a high level of discontent among the Bulgarian peasants. In this sense, it seems that a major characteristic of the Bulgarian peasant uprisings was to correct the abuses of the Ottoman landholding and taxation system in the first half of the nineteenth century.[114]

The Niş uprising of 1841 was one of the most important peasant uprisings that occurred in the Bulgarian lands. The peculiarity of the Niş revolt can be defined as the result of the oppressions and depredations of the local elements and conservative Muslim provincial opposition to the new reformist policies of the Ottoman central government. With the new privileges given to the non-Muslims by the *Tanzimât*, the supremacy of the Muslim population in the Bulgarian lands began to decline. In addition, new rights for the non-Muslims may have created economic conflicts and social tensions between the two communities. This seems to have germinated the seeds of discontent and confrontation between both of the communities and the Sublime Porte. The Niş uprising was a clear indication of this discontent. Another connection between the Niş revolt and the *Tanzimât* can be seen in the problems of taxation and the failure of the *Tanzimât* reforms. According to the new reforms, multiple taxes and collection of these taxes by *mültezim*s (tax farmers) were to be replaced by a single tax, and this new tax was to be collected directly by the government through the new tax officials, called *muhassıl*s. Since the *muhassıl*s were directly appointed by the Sublime Porte, their economic relationship with the Bulgarian community did not seem to be the same as the relationship of *mültezim*. Although new officials were created for the tax collection, the older ones were not abolished. Before the edict of *Gülhane*, the Ottoman peasants were obliged to pay a multiplicity of taxes. However, now the taxes were pooled into one single tax. The edict of *Gülhane* tried to

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[114] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 335, and 340.

correct this situation, but its attempts failed since, the new emergency taxes (*avârız*) were imposed in addition to the old taxes several times a year.

As one would expect, the Bulgarians were not satisfied with this taxation policy.[115] For that reason, in April 1841, an uprising began in Kayrak, and within a short time period it spread through Niş. The leader of the Niş revolt was Miloé Javanovic.[116] While some of the Bulgarian villagers joined the rebels, others ran away from the villages.[117] It was not clear, though, who were the rebelling Bulgarians, and who were the ones running to the hills? But, it is clear that there were conflicting interests within the Bulgarian society. In spite of the mass character of the Niş revolt, the rebels could not establish a proper organization and they were armed very poorly. The leader of the revolt and his fifteen comrades died during the fighting.[118] As there was a disparity between the fire-power of the both sides, the Niş uprising was suppressed within a few weeks.[119] According to some scholars, 240 villages were burnt down, many people were killed, many children and girls were sent to İstanbul to be sold as slaves, and thousands of people were compelled to flee Serbia.[120]

After suppressing the Niş uprising, the Sublime Porte commanded Sabri Mustafa Paşa, the governor of Niş, to report the situation. He emphasized chronicling the movements of certain individuals before the revolt and the role played by Serbia as an

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[115] Mark Pinson. "Ottoman Bulgaria in the First Tanzimat Period - The Revolts in Nish (1841) and Vidin (1850) ," pp. 105-107.

[116] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1962), p. 172.

[117] Mark Pinson. "Ottoman Bulgaria in the First Tanzimat Period - The Revolts in Nish (1841) and Vidin (1850)," p. 107.

[118] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 172.

[119] Mark Pinson. "Ottoman Bulgaria in the First Tanzimat Period - The Revolts in Nish (1841) and Vidin (1850)," p. 107.

[120] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 172.

instigator. But, it can not be said that, the reason for the direct conflict between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire was Miloš' political style at all. Since, early in his reign, Miloš preferred to maintain passive relations with the Ottoman Empire. Miloš knew very well that if he did not employ such a policy, he might be dependent on Russia and this would place him in a weaker position.

However, while he was visiting İstanbul in 1825, Miloš gave his support to the emerging Bulgarian national revival in various ways. He took part in a meeting with the prominent Bulgarian laymen and clerics. In addition, ecclesiastical books and the main revolutionary newspaper, *Novine Srpske*, were sent to Bulgaria. During the Niş rebellion, Miloš was not in power anymore. He had been replaced by Mihailo, his son. Mihailo did not support any revolutionary activity against the Ottoman suzerain.[121] Here, geography proves important. Niş was close to the Serbian border, and an uprising so close to Serbia indicated the Serbian "secret hand" in the Niş revolt. Furthermore, the Serbs and the Bulgarians had common religious, political, economic and social interests against the Ottoman Empire.

Another important revolt occurred in Vidin in 1850. It was larger in scale than the Niş revolt. The fundamental causes of the Vidin uprising can be explained as the dissatisfaction of the Bulgarians with the taxation problem and the landholding system in Bulgarian lands.[122] Villagers were not satisfied with the weight of the tax burden and the diverse and confused nature of Ottoman fiscal obligations. The rates of taxation was another problem for the villagers. The traditional *öşr* (tithe) and *haraç* (a special tax on

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[121] Mark Pinson. "Ottoman Bulgaria in the First Tanzimat Period - The Revolts in Nish (1841) and Vidin (1850)," pp. 108-109.

[122] *ibid*, p. 113.

non-Muslims) were levied for the central government. In addition, there was a cooperation between the tax collectors and local officers, which resulted in to collection of more than the stated amounts of tax. Moreover, the Bulgarians were also obliged to perform *angarya* (forced labor). Although the edict of *Gülhane* abolished *angarya*, it failed to create a mechanism to take its place.[123]

Meanwhile, another factor for the outbreak of the rebellion in Vidin was the issue of land tenure. It was a well known fact that, one of the most important reforms of the *Tanzimât* was the transition from the former territorially based army to the new centralized one. This centralization paved the way for the land struggle between the *ağa* (landlord) and the peasant in the Balkans, since the peasants, in their own right, began to perceive themselves as the real owners of the land after the abolition of *sipâhilik*.[124]

The Vidin uprising was restricted to the areas of Vidin, Kula, Belgratçık, and Lom. At the beginning of 1850, serious preparations had already begun for a large scale revolt. Many representatives in these regions were called to meet at the Rakofça Monastery. Local leaders were chosen for the various areas. Representatives decided to determine the first day of the revolt. The revolt began on the exact day according to the predetermined plan. In İstanbul, a special council met on June 22, to decide how to cope with the rebels. As a result, Ali Paşa was sent to Vidin to suppress the revolt by *tedâbir-i maneviye* (moral, spiritual measures) but it could not done in this way. Later, *kuvve-i nizâmiye* (regular army forces) would be required to extinguish the revolt.[125] As the Bulgarians did not have any firearms, they were defeated within a very short time.[126]

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[123] *ibid*, p. 115.

[124] *ibid*, pp. 116-117.

[125] *ibid*, p. 124.

[126] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 177.

Under these circumstances, the immediate help of a great power was needed by the Bulgarians. Although the attitude of Russia changed towards the Balkan national movements after the Crimean War, the Bulgarians still hoped that crucial help for their national movement could come from Russia.[127] After the Crimean War, the Russians began to make use of Bulgarian national feelings and uprisings with the pretext of protecting the rights of the Orthodox community in the Balkans. In other words, Russia had begun to develop its Pan-Slavic policy.[128]

As mentioned earlier, the Ottoman Empire had decided to engage in reforms with the *Tanzimât*. This would revive the Ottoman Empire and promote the transition of the Ottoman Empire to the European system. However, the restructuring efforts of the *Tanzimât* were closely followed by the foreign powers, especially Tsarist Russia. The Russian diplomats took advantage of the *Tanzimât* and made use of the emerging uprisings afterwards.[129] In 1864, Nicholas Pavlovic Ignatiev, a famous Russian diplomat, was appointed as the Russian representative to İstanbul. He was a prominent Pan-Slav so, he was a supporter of Slavic unity. On the contrary, he was also against the formation of any national movement that was not under the Russian control. Although Ignatiev mediated for the victory of the Bulgarian national cause and wanted to have Bulgaria dependent on Russia, he could not achieve the result he desired.[130]

In the Vidin uprising, the impact of the Serbian support was of prime importance. Various Serbian revolutionaries were provoking Bulgarian national feelings and were

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[127] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 343.

[128] Mahir Aydın. "XIX. Yüzyılda Bulgar Meselesi", *5. Milletlerarası Türkiye Sosyal ve İktisat Tarihi Kongresi, 21-25 VIII 1989*, p. 282.

[129] Halil İnalcık. *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*, (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1992), p. 69.

[130] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 343.

trying to spread ideas of Pan-Slav unity. They were also encouraging Bulgarian committee members to come to their region and were giving them direct protective support.[131] Due to its unique position, adjacent to the Serbian border, Vidin was a suitable place for these provocative actions. Whenever the instigators needed protection, they could easily pass back into Serbia.[132]

At this point, it is important to focus on the relative independence of the Bulgarian Church. The origin of the church struggle within the Orthodox world goes back to the fourteenth century. When the national Bulgarian Church lost its independence, it became subject to the Greek Patriarchate. Gradually, all of Bulgaria came under the domination of the Greek Orthodox Church.[133] As mentioned earlier, Greeks controlled the schools and cultural life in Bulgaria. At the beginning of nineteenth century, the Bulgarian national awakening began. Thus, the Bulgarians began to control their own schools.

But, the Bulgarians had to cope with the church problem also. Therefore, the Bulgarian national awakening was not only against the political power of the Ottoman Empire, but also against the religious hegemony of the Greek Orthodox Church.[134] The first important struggle against the Greek Orthodox Church began in the 1820s. After the end of the Crimean War, the struggle entered a new phase, since the Bulgarians began to demand an independent Bulgarian Church.

Bulgarian intellectuals were divided into two different groups: on the one hand, the moderates (also known as the "Old") on the other hand, the extremists (also known as the

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[131] Halil İnalcık. *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*, p. 58.

[132] *ibid*, p. 65.

[133] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 143.

[134] Leften Stavros Stavrianos. *The Balkans: 1815-1914*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963), p. 58.

"Young"). The moderates were composed of rich Bulgarians like the big merchants and the industrialists. Their aim was to maintain the unity of the Orthodox Church, under the Greek Patriarchy of İstanbul. The minor traders, guildsmen, and petty-bourgeoisie were on the extremist side. In contrast to the moderates, their main aim was to create an independent Bulgarian Church.

In the spring of 1856, the "Young" group sent a petition to Sultan Abdülaziz demanding religious and political autonomy within the Ottoman Empire.[135] In a meeting of the Bulgarian Commune of İstanbul, the Bulgarians publicly declared that they would not recognize the Greek Patriarch and would soon remove his name from the Liturgy. This was done in the Church of St. Stefan on the Easter Sunday of 1860. In the Second Church Council of 1861, it was agreed that only Bulgarians or Bulgarian speaking Greek priests could be appointed in Bulgarian areas and Bulgarian Bishops might have the right to write letters in Bulgarian. But, most of the Bulgarians were not satisfied with these concessions, since their demand was no less than an independent Bulgarian church.[136]

After the Crimean War, the activities of the Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries increased dramatically. They tried to gain some new economic concessions from the Sublime Porte. But, the Bulgarians were not affected by their activities. After the defeat of Russia in the Crimean War, the church issue reached a deadlock in the negotiations between the Greek Patriarch and the central Ottoman government. Thus, some Bulgarians began to think that the best way for them lay not in a Uniat (Greek Catholic Church) with Rome, rather to create an independent church with French support. However, the Uniat movement had an important impact on the Russian diplomatic policy, since

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[135] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 151.

[136] *ibid*, p. 156.

Russia decided to give its full support to the Bulgarian demands. On the other hand, the Sublime Porte began to act as a mediator between the Greeks and the Bulgarians.[137] If the Sublime Porte could not resolve this problem peacefully, the French and Russians would find suitable ground to interfere the conflict between the Greeks and Bulgarians for their own aims.

In 1866, a popular uprising occurred in Crete. This event damaged the mutual relationship between the Greeks and the Ottomans. Thereafter, the Greek government became more sympathetic to the demands of the Bulgarians, since the Greeks were planning to obtain the support of the Bulgarians in fighting against the Ottomans. The year of 1870 was the turning point for the Bulgarians, because the Sublime Porte issued a *fermân* to establish an autonomous Bulgarian Exarchate.[138] This act was designed to keep the Bulgarians under Ottoman rule with more privileges and autonomy. At the same time, it would prevent a probable alliance between the Greeks and the Bulgarians.[139] The jurisdiction of the new institution included the whole of Moesia and Dobruca, the regions of Niş and Sofya, Northern Thrace and the northern part of Macedonia to the east of the Vardar River.[140]

In May 1872, Bishop Antim of Vidin celebrated the liturgy and read the proclamation of the independence of the Bulgarian Church. The establishment of a separate Bulgarian Church, in the long run, paved the way for the creation of a modern Bulgarian nation. As mentioned before, Bulgarian national awakening had begun with their

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[137] *ibid*, p. 160.

[138] *ibid*, pp. 162-163.

[139] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 344.

[140] Plamen S. Tzvetkov. *A History of the Balkans: A Regional Overview from a Bulgarian Perspective*, Vol. II, (New York: E. Mellen Press, 1993), p. 471.

earning the right of having secular education in their own mother language. Within a short time period, they developed a nation-wide educational system, and this led to the formation of a new intelligentsia. Finally, they managed to establish their own church.[141] Now, the ground was ready for further political demands.

On the eve of the April 1876 uprising, there were several social strata in the Bulgarian society. Among these, the peasantry was the largest class. During this time, the Bulgarian peasantry did not suffer from a lack of land as each peasant had his own house, garden, vineyard, and a plot of land. The problem of the Bulgarian peasantry was the taxation system. Since most of the harvest was taken away from the peasant in tithes (*öşr*) and taxation. Theoretically, the Bulgarian peasant was an independent small landholder, but, in practice, his whole harvest was mortgaged in advance at a low price. So, the situation was not very favorable for the Bulgarian peasantry.[142]

Life in the towns was not any better than the villages. In mountain towns like Doyran, Gabrova, Karlıova, Akça-kilise, Koprivshtitsa, Filibe, and Batak, the soil was very poor and arid. As cheap European goods were imported in large numbers, this put the local craftsmen into an even more difficult position, since they could not compete with the cheap European goods, and in order to compete with them, they were engaged in self-exploitation. For that reason, unemployment was increasing in these towns.[143]

The intelligentsia was another social strata of the Bulgarian community suffering from unemployment. As mentioned earlier, during the cultural awakening of Bulgaria, many schools were established and young students found some opportunity to study

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[141] J. R. Crampton. *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, pp. 75-76.

[142] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 236.

[143] *ibid*, p. 237.

abroad. This led to a dramatic increase in the numbers of the Bulgarian intelligentsia. Some of these intellectuals could not find suitable jobs for themselves. In addition, teaching profession was both overcrowded, and the teachers were very poorly paid.[144]

The higher bourgeoisie, industrialists, large-scale traders, tax farmers, bankers and money-lenders formed the third section of the Bulgarian community. The owners of industrial enterprises were the most important section of the bourgeoisie. The most important and profitable sections of the economy were under the control of the higher bourgeoisie. Apart from this strata, there was a middle bourgeoisie section of the Bulgarian society. The middle bourgeoisie consisted of the owners of large inns, taverns, wine cellars, and the petty capitalists.[145]

Bulgarian society, at eve of the April 1876 uprising, had the basic organization of an emerging capitalist society with its industrialists, money-lenders and independent peasant producers. It seems that the teachers and the educated section of the Bulgarian society were the locomotive force for the uprising. Due to their special function in the society, this section of the population was extremely effective in integrating the Bulgarian society both culturally and ideologically. With the accumulation of wealth in the hands of emerging capitalist enterprises and money-lenders, "freedom of trade" activity was also on the agenda of the people in the towns. However, the control of the Sublime Porte prevented and/or limited the operation of private economic activities. This was especially seen in the treatment of small land holding peasantry. This situation caused resentment amongst the peasantry and made them ready to mobilize for an uprising.

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[144] *ibid*, pp. 237-238.

[145] *ibid*, pp. 238-239.

Meanwhile, a revolt occurred in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1875 with the slogan of demanding changes in the taxation system.[146] While the Ottoman government was busy with this event, young Bulgarian revolutionaries gathered in Giorgiyu and established a new revolutionary committee.[147] Members of the Giurgiu (in Bulgarian Gyurgevo) Committee were completely in agreement on major questions of developing a common policy against the Ottoman Empire. They all agreed that an uprising must be organized in Bulgaria. The unity of the committee was very strong, since almost all of its members were experienced in practical work and each of the members maintained friendly relationships with each other. But, they faced difficulties in organizing a successful uprising. The revolutionaries had serious organizational problems like the financing and obtaining of arms.[148] The Gyurgevo Committee divided the country into four districts: Tırnova, İslimye, Vraca, and Filibe. These four districts did not cover the entire country, since time and cadres were limited. Therefore, members of the committee decided to focus on certain key areas. Mountainous areas were chosen especially as the basis of uprising by the members of the committee. These areas provided a convenient base for military operations in comparison with the plains areas where the population was composed mostly of Ottomans.[149]

The first revolutionary district, the Tırnova district, was surrounded by the central part of Northern Bulgaria and mountainous areas of the Gabrova region.[150] The Chief

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[146] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 346.

[147] Konstantiv Kosev. "The Uprising of April 1876 in Bulgaria," *Bulgarian Historical Review*, Vol. IV, No. 1, 1976, p. 26.

[148] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 242.

[149] *ibid*, pp. 242-243.

[150] Konstantiv Kosev. "The Uprising of April 1876 in Bulgaria," p. 27.

Apostle appointed to this district was Stefan Stambolov, along with Khristo Karaminkov and Georgi Izmirliev. Gorna Oryakhovitsa, not Tırnova, was chosen as an organizational center of the first district. Yukarı-Rahova was both well situated geographically and far more free of Ottoman police. In the Tırnova district, the organization of the committee was relatively unsuccessful, since there was opposition from the wealthy upper bourgeoisie against the revolutionary activity. In addition, obtaining guns and gunpowder was a big problem in this district.[151]

The second district was the İslimye district which contained the regions of İslimye, Yambolu, and Kazan.[152] Ilarion Dragostinov was chosen as the chief Apostle and Georgi Obretenov and Stoil Voivoda were his assistants.[153] Georgi Ikonomov and Stoil Voivada arrived in the İslimye district in February 1876. Sarüivanov, the owner of a textile mill, made contact with the local revolutionary-minded youth and he organized a Regional Committe. Thereafter, Dragostinov and Obretenov came from Giorgiyu to the İslimye district in order to lead the organization. Within in a short time period, conflicts arose between the local revolutionaries and the Apostles. On the one hand, the local committee was eager to form a *çete* which would operate in the mountains. On the contrary, the Apostles wanted the whole population to rise up. As Obretenov and Dragostinov visited the villages and towns in the area, Ottomans began to search for *çete* members in the district with the aid of Bulgarian spies. They also found the base camp in the mountains. This meant that visiting the villages and towns was an unfavorable activity for the committee.[154]

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[151] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, pp. 243-245.

[152] Konstantiv Kosev. "The Uprising of April 1876 in Bulgaria," p. 27.

[153] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 243.

[154] *ibid*, pp. 245-246.

The Vraca district was the third revolutionary district. It was surrounded by the settlements in North-West Bulgaria.[155] Stoyan Zaimov was chosen as the chief Apostle. Georgi Apostolov, Nikola Obretenov and Nikola Slavkov were Zaimov's assistants.[156] The Vraca district was the weakest region in the organization. While in some parts of this district successful activities were performed, especially by F. Simidov, a teacher, the preparations were not enough to draw in the mass of the peasantry. Moreover, the military preparations were relatively weak. Most importantly, there was disunity in action within the committee, since the members of the committee did everything in their own way.[157]

The fourth revolutionary district, Filibe, was surrounded by the settlements in the Orta Balkan region, the Thracian Plain, and the northern region of the Rhodope Mountains.[158] Panoit Volov was the chief Apostle of this region, with Georgi Benkovsky and later Georgi Ikonomov serving as his assistants.[159] In this region, preparations were very different than the other regions. As the higher bourgeoisie made suitable revolutionary capital, the center of gravity shifted to Filibe and Klisura. Although there was dissatisfaction among the peasants, the clever leaders tried to galvanize this dissatisfaction towards a definite goal. The four Apostles of the Giurgiu Committee toured the area, and everywhere they took an oath with the new revolutionaries and began preparations for the great uprising. Teachers and priests gave their full support for the revolutionary activities with the slogan of "Freedom or Death." Thus, Benkovsky's

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[155] Konstantiv Kosev. "The Uprising of April 1876 in Bulgaria," p. 27.

[156] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 243.

[157] *ibid*, p. 246.

[158] Konstantiv Kosev. "The Uprising of April 1876 in Bulgaria," p. 27.

[159] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, pp. 243-244.

organizational ability was coupled with the revolutionary enthusiasm of teachers, priests, and peasants. Therefore, this region became the most successful one. In this district, a secret mail and a secret police system were organized in order to protect security.[160]

On 21 April 1876, many people including rebels, children, and priests, gathered with the slogan of "Freedom or Death." They were carrying little red flags of the various units. After prayers, the flag was presented to the standard bearer, and then, Priest Doncho Plachkov scattered holy water to baptize the flag and wished success to the rebellious people.[161]

In the Filibe district, heavy fighting occurred in İstirelçe, where the Ottoman population was well-armed. Although a *çete* was sent to İstirelçe under the leadership of Vorcho Voivoda, the success of Ottoman troops continued, until the end of the uprising. Moreover, in the two main towns of this district, Filibe and Pazarcık, an uprising did not take place at all.[162]

Yukarı-Rahova was the centre of the Tırnova revolutionary district. When a courier from the İslimye district was captured by the Ottomans, many members of the Gorna Oryakhovitsa Committee were arrested. The uprising began in the village of Musina on 28 April 1876. Approximately 200 rebels gathered under the leadership of Pop Khariton. The *çete* began its attacks through the mountains, but they were also attacked by *başıbozuk*s. Intense fighting continued for three days.[163]

The İslimye committee decided to rely on *çete* tactics, and an armed camp was prepared in the mountains. When the Ottomans were informed about the uprising, Neno

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[160] *ibid*, pp. 246-249.

[161] *ibid*, p. 256.

[162] *ibid*, p. 259.

[163] *ibid*, pp. 266-267.

Gospodinov, the Chairman of the Committee, was arrested by the Ottomans. A bloody battle took place between the two groups. As a result, the Ottomans took the control of the region.[164]

The reason for the failure of the April 1876 uprising can be defined by various factors: *First*, prepatory work was inadequate and the overall leadership was weak. *Second*, the uprising was prepared within a short time period. For that reason, many regions were not ready to rebel both spiritually and materially. *Third*, as the leaders of the committee worked for their own district, the uprising was piece-meal, not simultaneous. In other words, there was no coordination among the leaders. *Fourth*, vacillating conduct of the bourgeois elements played a negative role in the success of committees. *Fifth*, as Bulgaria was close to the Ottoman Empire, Ottoman troops could soon confront the Bulgarian rebels. *Sixth*, the strategy of the rebels was defense oriented. *Finally*, heavy rain affected the morale and health of the rebels.[165]

The Ottoman government used irregular detachments against the rebels to suppress the Bulgarian rebellion. The Bulgarian insurgents, in the meantime, massacred Ottoman civilians. In short, there were many atrocities on both sides, and the death toll was heavy. According to the estimates given by the Bulgarian side, the total death toll ranged from 30,000 to 100,000; the death toll fluctuated according to the sources: according to the Ottomans 3,100 Bulgarians; the British, 12,000; the American, 15,000.[166]

After the suppression of this revolt, European newspapers paid special attention to this issue. Detailed stories of the massacres were published in the newspapers. Moreover,

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[164] *ibid*, pp. 270-271.

[165] *ibid*, pp. 274-275.

[166] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 139.

in December 1876, the ambassadors of the European powers discussed a reform program to be introduced in the Ottoman Empire.[167] Many European intellectuals like Victor Hugo, Tolstoy, Garibaldi, and Piers had important impacts on the decisions of the Western governments.[168] So, the most important achievement of the April 1876 uprising was the official recognition of Bulgarian nationhood by the great powers of Europe.

The April 1876 uprising was the final and most integrated effort among the Bulgarian revolts. The Gyurgevo Committee did not have deep roots within the Bulgarian community in order to organize a popular mass activity. Besides, the emerging industrial capitalist enterprises and merchants were not yet ready to support the uprising. Besides, it was not to their own benefit to cut off ties with the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans still had enough control on the region.

The Bulgarian aspirations for independence lacked an economic, cultural, and organizational basis in its initial phases. Besides that, being a disintegrating and primitive peasant society, the Bulgarians relied on the Greeks for their cultural needs and on the Ottomans and the Serbs for their political and economic needs. The most fruitful relationship for the Bulgarians seems to be the one they had with the Serbs. This comes from their historical, social and economic relationship, which created certain communal districts close to the Serbian community.

However, with the change in the policy of the Sublime Porte by the *Tanzimât*, the Bulgarians received another opportunity to integrate their community. As wealth accumulated in the hands of the Bulgarians, different powerful merchant groups emerged.

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[167] R. J. Crampton. *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, pp. 82-83.

[168] Simeon Danjanov. "Bulgaria and the European World in the XVth-XXth Centuries," *Études Balkaniques*, Vol. XVIII, No.1, 1982, p. 25.

Some of these economic funds were used to establish a modern and standardized education system and to establish the Bulgarian Exarchate.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, new social strata emerged within Bulgarian society. Together with the other capitalist enterprises, teachers and educated people within Bulgarian society paved the way for the new revolt. Although Bulgarian society seemed to be integrated, a coordination could not be established among the leaders and the regions. Everybody tried to see the events from their own angle. Besides, different than the other ethnic revolts in the Balkan Peninsula, the major European powers did not give their full support for the Bulgarian revolutionary movement. For that reason, the Bulgarians could not become an independent state in the nineteenth century. This showed that, the Ottoman Empire had still had a strong control over the Bulgarian lands.

II. D. The Montenegrin Revolts (1852, 1861-1864)

Ottoman Montenegro was the region in the west of the Balkan peninsula, in-between the Kotor Bay, İşkodra Lake and Drina River. This region is mainly composed of high mountains that control the hinterland of the Adriatic Sea. Due to its mountainous geographic composition, the region is not very suitable for agricultural activity.[169]

Historically, Montenegro was inhabited by the Albanian people. However, beginning by the seventh century, Serbs began to migrate into this region as well. In time, the Serbian population surpassed the Albanians. Serbs, soon, began to control the administrative and governmental positions. Meanwhile, Venetian merchants were the leading figures of İstanbul and the Balkan peninsula. Their economic influence even reached Montenegro. When the Ottomans began to move into the Balkan peninsula, they

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[169] Enver Ziya Karal. *Osmanlı Tarihi*, Vol VI, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1995), p. 70.

were confronted with the representatives of the Venetian Republic. In 1478, Mehmed the Conqueror took the Castle of İşkodra from the Venetians, formed a new province (eyâlet) and included Montenegro into this eyâlet.[170]

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Montenegro did not have well defined boundaries, and its political status within the Ottoman Empire had yet to be defined. Although Montenegrin leaders maintained many times that they were independent, the Ottoman Empire declared that Montenegrin lands were an integral part of its territory. The region was extremely underdeveloped both politically and economically. In spite of the existence of the bishopric in Çetine and the office of governor, the real authority was in the hands of the Montenegrin tribes. Local leadership and family-based groups were two important figures in the tribes. Due to the mountainous and rocky character of the soil, the land was very poor. As the suitable areas for cultivation were few, people were engaged in animal husbandry, especially raising goats and sheep. Moreover, raiding farms and cattle rustling were a part of the Montenegrin economy. On the other hand, as the land was too poor to feed the population, migration from Montenegro to Serbia, Russia, and Austria was very common throughout the nineteenth century.[171]

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the situation was not very favorable in the Western Balkans, since the Sublime Porte was unable to subdue the local notables. Ali Paşa of Yanya, Bosnian and other Albanian beys continued to oppose the authority of the Ottoman government. Besides, İşkodra, Mostar, Saraybosna, and Travnik became the rebelling centers and Montenegro was just between these centers.[172] The Montenegrin

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[170] ibid, p. 70.

[171] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 247.

[172] ibid, p. 248.

people accepted at times, the authority of the different *bey*s, although they did not like to be under their control. In a way, these *bey*s were the protectors of the Montenegrin people against their neighbours. In this sense, Montenegro acted like an independent republic in its internal affairs. But, at the same time, it was dependent on these *bey*s in their external relations with outside forces. It seems that, Montenegro acted as a buffer region between the conflicting interests of Serbia, the Ottoman Empire, and Austria.

After the success of Ottoman reforms in some parts of the Balkans, Montenegro faced the possibility of an Ottoman occupation.[173] The struggles between various *bey*s and between the *bey*s and the Ottoman Empire led to a situation, where the question of who would control Montenegro became an important decision. By applying the tax reforms in some parts of the Balkans, the Ottomans thought that they could provide some degree of economic freedom to the local agricultural population. At the same time, the Ottoman Empire would also be able to integrate the region into its dominion.

Montenegro had two recognized leaders, the bishop and the governor. The bishop was more powerful than the governor. However, the authority of both the bishop and the governor over the population was weak. The tribal social organization led to the formation of two separate, but complementary powers. Namely the religious axis of power and the administrative one were represented by bishop and governor. Bishops were more credible and had a deeper impact on the community in comparison to the governor, since they did not have direct and organic relationship with the Ottoman governorship. This is due to religious charisma and at the same time, being exempted from power.

At this time, the Çetine government of Montenegro could not implement the normal functions of a state, since there was no regular tax collection, no army, no

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[173] *ibid*, p. 248.

administration for the various regions, and no system of justice. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Montenegro was divided into 36 tribes, and most of the population was living in villages. There were no roads between the villages, and communication was very primitive.[174]

Although some important steps were taken towards establishing a central administration under the leadership of Bishop Peter I, he could not establish the real authority of a central government in the countryside, because, without collecting taxes, it was impossible to establish a functioning administrative system and to organize a modern army.

In Montenegro, another important problem was justice, since it was still in the hands of the tribes. According to tradition, the elders of each tribe judged their members. Moreover, customary law determined the relations among the tribes. As in other backward regions of the Balkans, the tradition of the blood feud existed in Montenegro. One of the major aims of the central government was to end to such feuds. Since, according to this custom, "if one member of a clan, or a similar association, killed a member of another, the life of one of the murderer's fellow clansmen had to be taken."[175] This traditional but brutal act caused a chain of deaths. The existence of blood feuds in Montenegro was an indication of a premature, if not primitive, political structure. Blood feuds gave the various tribes the opportunity to act in line with their economic and political interests.

The dual offices of the bishop and the governor can be defined as a serious problem in Montenegro. While the governorship was held by the Radonjić family, the bishopric had always been held by the Petrović family. According to tradition, the position of bishop

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[174] *ibid*, p. 248.

[175] *ibid*, pp. 248-249.

passed from uncle to nephew. There was a power struggle between the families of the groups and the governorship. This struggle intensified when Rade was selected for the governorship in 1830 at the age of seventeen.[176] He did not have any religious inclination which made things worse between the two sides. The time was ripe for the unification of power in a single administrative body, but the problem was how this unification would be reached, since both sides wanted to consolidate power in their own hands. At this time, the struggle to acquire full power in Montenegro came to a climax when the office of governor was abolished and all the members of Radonjić family were killed. In this way, the Petrović bishop became both the secular and religious leader of the country.[177] In the last fifteen years of his career, Peter I gave special emphasis to the establishment of unity among his people. In addition, he tried to end to blood feuds, which passed from one generation to the next.[178]

After Bishop Peter I, his nephew Rade (Peter II) came to power upon his consecration in 1833 and was named Peter II. He can be defined as a successful warrior, a statesman, and a poet. During his reign, a printing press was established in Çetine. Most importantly, the vendetta was completely abolished. In the meantime, some important changes occurred in the administration of the country. For instance, previously, much of the power belonged to the heads of the *nahiye*. The power was then transferred to a senate which was directed by twelve leading figures called *glavari* and the senate convened its meetings generally at Çetine. Moreover, the number of *sudaci* (judges) was increased dramatically. The first half of Peter II's reign marked the continuous struggle between

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[176] *ibid*, p. 249.

[177] *ibid*, p. 249.

[178] Francis Seymour Stevenson. *A History of Montenegro*, (London: Jarrold and Sons, Warwick Lake, 1912), pp. 177 and 179.

Montenegro and the Ottoman Empire.[179] There was a need to consolidate, under one roof, power in the name of Montenegrins under one roof. So the conflict between the hereditary aristocratic power, the bishop and the senate seems to mark the beginning of the restoration period. The impact of changes brought by the new senate and the charismatic leadership of Peter II was seen in the banishment of the civil governor Radonić. The Radonić family had ruled over the region with a hereditary aristocracy since the year of 1746.[180]

Montenegro had an outlet to the Adriatic Sea, enabling it engage in sailing activity. Due to this strategic geographical position, Russia paid special attention to these lands. Russia subsidized Montenegro's financial resources. In addition, the Russian government sent two envoys to Montenegro in order to assist in the establishment of the institutions of a central government in 1831. In the same year, the Administrative Senate of Montenegro was also established. This senate was composed of sixteen men who represented the interests of the central administration. Moreover, another organization, namely "the Guard" was formed. The members of the Guard were sent to the districts and the clans, in order to carry out both police and judicial functions. The central government paid salaries to all the members of the Guard. In this sense, it is evident that, Russian subsidies played an important role in the salaries of the statesmen and the state expenses of Montenegro. It should be noted that, the amount of the Russian subsidy was much higher than the revenues, which were collected from the taxes. Peter II's position in Montenegro became stronger, especially after his visit to Russia. But Peter II was aware of the fact that, clans

[179] *ibid*, p. 181.

[180] *ibid*, pp. 179-180.

and their chiefs still had primary powers. For that reason, he tried to manipulate his rivals against each other.[181]

Meanwhile, during the reign of Peter II, the foreign policy of Montenegro became far more active. As in the eighteenth century, the main aim of his foreign policy was to secure an outlet to the Adriatic. In this sense, Peter II faced the opposition of the major powers of Europe. Since, they believed that, if Montenegro kept control of the Adriatic, then Russia would soon acquire a base on the Adriatic. On the other hand, Peter II focused on three strategic points on the other borders: Spuž, Podgoridsa, and Grahova.[182] Being an important part of the Balkan peninsula because of its outlet to the Adriatic Sea, Montenegro also acquired a very specific situation in the eyes of the major European powers. The Russian moves to control Montenegro were closely observed by the other European powers. Of course, the awakening ones were not only the Europeans, but the Montenegrins had become aware of their own strategic importance as well. That is why, the first thing Peter II did was to strengthen the bordering regions of Spuž, Potgoridsa, and Grakova. This decision was taken, on the other hand, in order to help to integrate the Montenegrin population under a common cause of geographic identity. But at the same time, it also aggravated internal problems and power struggles.

In 1846-1847 a revolt broke out against Peter II. The rebelling forces cooperated with the paşa of İşkodra. Although Peter II managed to hold his country together during his reign, the central government remained relatively weak. For instance, there was no

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[181] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 249-250.

[182] *ibid*, pp. 250-251.

significant treasury and judicial system. In other words, the organization within the government was too weak to implement the main functions of a central government.[183]

In 1851, Peter II died and his nephew Danilo came to power. Danilo had not received religious training, and, he did not want to be the bishop. For that reason, in 1852, he not only secularized his office, but also proclaimed himself as the prince of Montenegro with the approval of both Russia and Austria. He also wanted to establish his authority over the tribes throughout the whole country.[184]

Meanwhile, the Ottoman Empire had succeeded in reestablishing its authority in Bosnia. But Ömer Paşa wanted to expand the Ottoman political authority in the entire region. While Ömer Paşa was trying to detach the Piperi tribe from its allegiance to Çetine, Montenegrin forces tried to seize Zobliak Lake İşkodra. Therefore, an open conflict occurred between the two sides. When Ömer Paşa was able to advance into Montenegrin territory, Danilo attempted to obtain assistance from the great powers of Europe. Austria gave its full support to Danilo, since it preferred the authority of Danilo rather than the Ottoman authority to control this region bordering Dalmatia. As the Sublime Porte had received an ultimatum from the great powers of Europe, Ömer Paşa was recalled and the occupied Montenegrin territory was soon returned.

After this conflict, although Danilo met some opposition within the country, he became a stronger leader. The important step was taken in 1855: "A law code was issued that was based on the principles of equality before the law and the protection of the rights of private property."[185] In addition, Danilo was called "prince" (*kniaz*) and "lord"

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[183] *ibid*, p. 251.

[184] *ibid*, p. 252.

[185] *ibid*, p. 252.

(*gospodar*) of the Karadağ and the Brada.[186] With the acceptance of the new law, the region began to enjoy the benefits of free commercial activity, especially in agriculture. This law was very important, because it was giving the rights of private property to the peasants. Now, the commercial relations could develop without any limitation and the central government would be able to control and direct the commercial activities of the tribes. This may be accepted as the turning point of the formation of a local domestic Montenegrin market. Interestingly, this was combined with the announcement of Danilo as a prince. So, the route was opened for both a local domestic economy and a consolidation of political power that would apply its authority over the region.

Although Montenegrin rulers did not engage with the land question before the Crimean War, they wanted to use the opportunity of this war to capture some neighbouring territory. But, Danilo remained quiet partly due to the strong pressure of Austria. During the Crimean War, as Russia was in a weak position, Danilo tried to establish relations with France. However, after the end of the Crimean War, Russia managed in reestablishing its impact over Montenegro.[187] In the Paris conference, the Russian government declared that they "had no other relations with Montenegro than such as sprang from the sympathies of the Montenegrins for Russia, and from the friendly dispositions of Russia towards those mountaineers." On the other hand, the Ottoman Empire declared that "the Porte regarded Montenegro as an integral part of the Ottoman Empire."[188] Therefore, in May 1856, Danilo demanded the following articles from the major powers of Europe: *First*, the independence of Montenegro should be recognized diplomatically. *Second*, Montenegro should have the

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[186] Francis Seymour Stevenson. *A History of Montenegro*, p. 183.

[187] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 252.

[188] Francis Seymour Stevenson. *A History of Montenegro*, p. 185.

right to extend its frontiers in the direction of Albania and Herzegovina. *Third*, the definitive Boundary Line towards the Ottoman dominions should be settled. *Finally*, Antivari should be annexed to the principality.[189] It was not in the interests of the European power to accept the full independence of Montenegro.

In 1858, an important crisis occurred in the Balkans. As the Christian population of Herzegovina was not satisfied with the Ottoman rule, an uprising broke out within this region. Montenegrin tribes were also actively involved in this uprising. In May 1858, Grakova was taken by the combined Montenegrin and Herzegovinian forces. In addition, France and Russia interfered into this conflict on the side of Montenegro. As a result, the boundary between the Montenegrin principality and the neighbouring Ottoman lands was fixed.[190] This action brought a new situation, since the Ottomans were forced to accept this fixed border.

Danilo was assassinated in 1860 at Kotor, and Nicholas I came to power. During his reign, the army was reorganized, a new law code was introduced, and throughout Montenegro, unity and order were reestablished.[191] Moreover, Nicholas I won an extremely important position in international relations. In contrast, the status of Montenegro within the Ottoman Empire remained gloomy. The Sublime Porte continued to argue that Montenegro was still an integral part of the Ottoman Empire. But, it is important to note that, neither taxes nor tributes could not be collected by the Sublime Porte. Meanwhile, Montenegro kept close relations with Serbia, since both parties shared the same desire for territorial expansion.[192]

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[189] *ibid*, p. 186.

[190] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 252-253.

[191] Francis Seymour Stevenson. *A History of Montenegro*, p. 187.

[192] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 253-254.

The second wave of uprising began in 1861. Danilo's administration decided to reach an agreement with the Sublime Porte, but this meant that Montenegro would postpone its desire for and any decision to become independent. But, local consciousness towards an ethnic Montenegrin identity had already developed by this time. So, what the Montenegrins could do was to directly and indirectly support the rebellions in Herzegovina against the Ottoman Empire. By doing this, the Montenegrins could both help Herzegovina free itself from the Ottoman Empire and at the same time, pave the way for their own independence. They thought that the Ottoman Empire was not strong enough to fight on two fronts.

What made this possible was the dissatisfaction of the local population in Herzegovina. Russia provoked the Montenegrins against the Ottoman Empire; Austria protected the rebelling forces; and finally, the Montenegrins began to cooperate with the Herzegovinian insurgents.[193]

On the surface, the Montenegrin *bey* announced that they were not willing to take any sides in the dispute between the Ottoman Empire and Herzegovina. Secretly, the Montenegrin insurgents were participating in the rebelling forces in Herzegovina. Therefore, it was not possible for the Ottoman Empire to suppress the uprising in Herzegovina. In addition to that, the Montenegrins were continuously arming themselves.[194]

The Ottoman administration soon understood that these two regions were acting together in trying to prevent the Ottoman Empire from establishing full control over these regions. The Sublime Porte appointed Ömer Paşa to suppress the uprising in Herzegovina.

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[193] Enver Ziya Karal. *Osmanlı Tarihi*, Vol. VII, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1995), pp. 3-4.

[194] *ibid*, p. 4.

To prevent the possibility of Montenegrin support for this uprising, control points were established in the bordering regions of Montenegro. The Sublime Porte also gave a written warning to the consulates of the great powers. The Ottoman administration demanded the great powers be careful about the security issues in Herzegovina. They also warned the great powers of Europe, that Montenegro would be punished if they did not behave. The Ottomans also argued that they would be kept under strict control for their misconduct. Then, the Sublime Porte demanded that the Montenegrins be disarmed. However, the great powers refused these demands. So, there was nothing else to be done on the part of the Sublime Porte. Finally, Ömer Paşa was ordered to leave for Herzegovina. But, the Ottoman administration was cautious enough to inform the great powers. The aim of the march was, the Ottomans argued, to safeguard security in the region. They also said that the Ottoman Empire would not change the current status of the region. The foreign consulates in İstanbul were also assured on this issue.

The first European power accepting the Ottoman guarantee was Austria.[195] Similarly, Lord Palmerston announced in the British Senate that Britain would be happy if the Ottoman Empire punished the insurgents. According to Lord Palmerston, the insurgents were acting against peace and order and were causing political instability in the region. So, the Ottoman Empire reached its goal of isolating Montenegro politically. However, one unexpected thing happened. The pope acted on behalf of the Montenegrins, and interfered the conflict. He even advised the Albanians not to cooperate with the Ottomans against the Montenegrins. This situation created an atmosphere as if there was a direct confrontation in Montenegro between the Muslims and Christians. After fierce fighting, the Ottomans managed to break the resistance of the Montenegrins. Upon the

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[195] *ibid*, p. 4.

Ottoman military success, the foreign powers intervened in the conflict. Consulates of France, Britain, Austria, Russia, and Italy sent a note to the Sublime Porte and asked the Ottoman Empire to end the war.[196]

According to the agreement made between the Montenegrins and the Ottoman Empire, thereafter, Montenegro would be independent in its internal affairs. The trade road between Herzegovina and İşkodra would be left open. Mirko, the father of the current prince, would leave Montenegro permanently. However, the Montenegrins were still unsatisfied with the autonomous status they obtained from the Ottoman Empire. They also requested that Mirko be allowed to come back to Montenegro.[197] This request was important for Montenegro, because Mirko was a strong defender of independence. With the assassination of Danilo in 1860, Montenegro actually decided not to enter into agreements with the Ottoman Empire to obtain autonomy. Actually, their demand was more than autonomy. This could be an important factor for the assassination of Danilo. Their request from the Ottoman Empire to forgive Mirko indicates this.

The Montenegrins were more lucky than the other Balkan ethnic groups because, they were not under the direct control of the great powers, including their relationship with the Ottoman Empire. The geography of the region and their tribal social organization was also effective in this situation. It was not difficult for the Ottoman Empire to rule Montenegro, since the Montenegrins lacked a central government. The Montenegrins seemed happy with the Ottoman Empire, until the declaration of law of private property in agriculture and the consolidation of political power under the prince. With the declaration of the new law giving the right to private property in agriculture, the region received the

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[196] *ibid*, p. 5.

[197] *ibid*, pp. 6-7.

opportunity to increase commercial agricultural activity. So, Montenegrins began to develop their economic and social activities. The isolated tribal system began to disintegrate and new local merchants emerged. Shortly thereafter, commercialization of agriculture created a common economic togetherness for the Montenegrin people. The second important aspect of Montenegrin identity formation came with consolidation of political power under the prince. The old political system could not manage the developing economic activities. New and enlarged commercial activities could be directed by the princedom with its newly consolidated and unified power.

II. E. The Cretan Revolts (1866-1868)

The Island of Crete had a very strategic position in the Mediterranean. However, the Ottoman Empire was relatively late in conquering the island. Its first attempt to conquer Crete began after 1533. Various events took place in the reign of Selim II and Murad IV and this increased the relative importance of Crete. While the African and North Adriatic Costs were under Ottoman administration, Crete was the only place in this route, which had not been conquered by the Ottoman Empire, yet. Finally, in September 1699, Crete accepted Ottoman domination.[198] With this occupation, the Venetian yoke in Crete ended.[199]

However, the Greek efforts at independence spread to Crete as well. Seven major Aegean islands were given to Greece in 1864. Greece sent a special envoy, composed of priests and teachers, to the island of Crete. In 1866, the missionary activities provoked a

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[198] Salâhi Mehmed. *Girid Meselesi 1866-1889*, (İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Matbaası, 1967), p. 1.

[199] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," *Dış Politika*, No. 6, 1977, p. 102.

rebellion in Crete in 1866.[200] On the other hand, Cretan Greeks demanded new schools for education in their own mother tongue, construction of ports on the island, establishment of an agricultural bank, and an easing of the taxation policy. These demands were inspired and supported by the European states.[201]

It is a known fact that, Hellenism was very popular in Europe during the nineteenth century. It should be noted that the Greek War of Independence paved the way for *"Hellas."* Then, the Cretan question emerged. During the Ottoman administration, the system of serfdom ended and a relatively fair system of taxation was established in Crete. Society was divided into three groups, namely the upper class, the middle class, and the lower class. Moreover, the land owned by the first two classes was fertile and arid. Together with these developments, from 1699, the population of the island increased dramatically in the eighteenth century. The Cretan economy also developed in the eighteenth century and this led to the enrichment of all Cretans in the commercial section.[202]

People in Crete were engaged in the production of olives, growing grapes and trading these goods with the neighbouring islands and mainland Greece. The development of trade in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries increased benefits obtained from the production and sale of these agricultural goods. The formation of an integrated economic structure began to change the trade-links with its surrounding environment. Hence, this opened the way for an integrated island economy, which seems to have lead to a direct confrontation with the Ottoman administration. In the beginning, this confrontation was

[200] Salâhi Mehmed. *Girid Meselesi 1866-1889*, p. 2.

[201] Tahmiscizâde Mehmed Mâcid. *Girit Hatıraları*, (İstanbul: Kervan Kitapçılık, 1977), p. 16.

[202] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," pp. 103-104.

over the share and distribution of economic resources and gains of the island. Later, it took a political character.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Cretan Greeks began to complain about the degeneration in the behavior of the Janissaries, since all types of profiteering were restored by the Janissaries.[203] The irresponsible and provocative activities of a certain uncontrollable portion of the Janissaries was effective in this process, as it was in the Serbian case. Janissaries acting independently plundered fields and entered into various types of profiteering against the Cretan Greeks. This created a popular fervor among the Cretan people.

In the meantime, the Orthodox Church became more belligerent towards the Ottoman rule. The Greek clergy began to foment a rebellion against the Muslim "overlords," under the name of a "Holly War."[204] It can be said that the missionary priests and teachers, who were previously sent to Crete, were effective in the crystallization of Orthodox Christian beliefs. A common religious background became an integrative element and a banner for their national feelings.

Importantly, in 1821, Crete was one of the worst governed provinces in the Ottoman Empire. Mutual understanding and cooperation between Ottoman rule and the Cretan Greeks could not be achieved. Therefore, "1821 marked the beginning of yet another insurrection, thus appealing to the martial sentiments of the Cretan Greeks."[205] Crete had lacked an independent economy for centuries. Due to its remote location from İstanbul, problems rose regarding the government of the island. On the other hand, the

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[203] *ibid*, p. 104.

[204] *ibid*, p. 104.

[205] *ibid*, p. 105.

revival of Hellenism affected the Aegean islands, considerably, including Crete. After consolidating their national togetherness in mainland Greece, the Greek administration began to interfere the economic, cultural, and political affairs of those on its periphery and tried to integrate them into mainland Greece. As Crete had an important strategic position, it became an important domino tool in the consolidation of Greek domination in the Aegean Sea. Both the efforts of mainland Greece to control the island and the Ottoman enforcement of a strict administration in the governorship of Crete created chronic administrative problems.

In 1864, a petition listing many complaints of the Cretan Greeks was sent to Sultan Abdülaziz. But, no action was taken by the Sublime Porte. So, in 1865, a number of leading Christian Cretans decided to make a new plan for the revolution. The Prime Minister of the Greek government, Alexandros Koumoundouros, did not support such a rebellion, since he thought this would be contrary to the interests of Greece. After a while, his successor, the new Prime Minister Demetrios Voulgaris, supported a revolt in Crete. On the contrary, the Foreign Affairs Minister of the Greek government, Epamenondas Deligiorgis, supported "coexistence" with the Ottoman Empire. He believed that, if good relations continued between the two countries, this would contribute to the progress of the Greek populace living in the Ottoman Empire. It would also prevent the forces of Pan-Slavism from winning a victory in Macedonia. After becoming a full-fledge state, the Greek administration began to change its foreign policy with the Ottoman Empire. Now, they had to deal with the nationality issues in Macedonia. This meant that Deligiorgis did not support any revolutionary activity outside the borders of the Greek state. The aim of

Deligiorgis was to wait and prepare for the day of reckoning with the Ottomans and the achievement of Hellenic aspirations.[206]

Meanwhile, in the international arena, the prestige of Napoleon III was reduced by the defeat he suffered in the Austro-Prussian War. The lack of prestige would force him to seek a diversion in the East, through the Cretan rebellion. This diversion was extremely beneficial to French interests, since the possible collaboration between the Tsar and Bismarck could be avoided. Thus, France favored an uprising in Crete.[207]

The Cretan insurrection was planned by the Cretan societies, both in Greece and Europe. The main aim of the Cretan Greeks was to unite with Greece and to reach the ideal of *"Enosis."*[208] As the Ottoman government decided to reinforce the garrison on the island, the Christian population of Crete requested the help of Queen Victoria, Napoleon III, and the Tsar for the unification of Crete with Greece.[209] They demanded the following from the consuls of the three powers:

> Crete, if united to Greece, would confer great advantages on the whole Greek race and would be able to embark on a system of civilisation. If the creation of an Hellenic kingdom had for its object the regeneration of this people, Crete, which is purely Hellenic country, should become on half of its foundation-stones.[210]

The new Greek government, which was successful in establishing an independent Greek state, was now able to promote Hellenism to Crete. Within the period of thirty six years after the Greek independence, the Greek people in the island consolidated their

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[206] Theodore George Tatsios. *The Cretan Problem and the Eastern Question: A Study of Greek Irredentism, 1866-1898*, (Washington, D. C: Georgetown University, 1967), pp. 89-90.

[207] *ibid*, pp. 90-91.

[208] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1889)," p. 105.

[209] Theodore George Tatsios. *The Cretan Problem and The Eastern Question*, p. 92.

[210] J. Gennadius. "Cretan Struggles For Liberty," *Contemporary Review*, No. 71 (1897), p. 487.

national consciousness and promoted their economic activities with mainland Greece. The final political act of the island population would be to unite with mainland Greece. However, this required not only a big-scale organization, but also international support, as well.

In August 1866, a revolt occurred in Crete. Meanwhile, on 28 August 1866, the Cretan Greeks issued a proclamation at Prosnero, declaring their independence. On 2 September, they organized a "General Revolutionary Assembly" at İsfakiya. Furthermore, this assembly voted for the union of the island with Greece.[211] Moreover, the island was divided into three military commands by the rebels. The Western part of the island was held by Zymbrakakes, the central part by Koronaios, and the Eastern part was held by the Cretan chief Korakas.[212]

The arrival of Mustafa Naili Paşa, an ex-Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire, did not change the decision of the Cretan Greeks.[213] During the first few weeks of the rebellion, the Cretan Greeks won a number of battles not only against the Ottomans, but also against the Egyptians.[214] After this, the Ottoman army decided to surround Crete with a total naval blockade and prevent any entry into and exit out of the island. In this aim, the Ottoman Empire transported a naval force of 40,000 soldiers. The army was lead by *serdar* Ekrem Ömer Paşa. His forces left İstanbul on 20 April 1867.[215] These new forces were able to get rid of the rebels from many important points on Crete. Two hundred Cretan

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[211] Theodore George Tatsios. *The Cretan Problem and the Eastern Question*, pp. 87, 93.

[212] William Miller. *The Ottoman Empire and its Successors, 1801-1927*, (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1966), p. 311.

[213] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," p. 106.

[214] Theodore George Tatsios. *The Cretan Problem and the Eastern Question*, p. 93.

fighters were imprisoned at one of the most beautiful monasteries of the island, Arkadion, by the Ottomans and the Egyptian troops. The Cretan fighters kept in Arkadion Monastery became the symbol of uprising for the Cretan Greeks. Somehow the monastery was blown up and many prisoners were killed. This event increased the fervor of the local Greek population against the Ottoman Empire rather than subduing them. With the help of Greece, this ignited the consolidation of organized efforts to act against the Ottoman administration. Arkadion Monastery was used to create a favorable reaction to the Cretan struggle by the Greek government. In this sense, the Greek government was successful, since the interest and sympathy of the great powers were awakened towards the Cretan uprising. However, the Greek government could not openly intervene in the rebellion, because Greece was afraid of the reaction of the great powers, especially Britain. Also, Greece was not militarily ready to intervene in the Cretan revolt. Thus, Greece focused on publishing newspaper articles and on monetary drives. On the other hand, throughout Greece, committees were formed in order to support the Cretan insurrection. In addition, ships full of supplies and volunteers were sent from Greece to Crete.[216]

It should also be noted that news of the explosion at the Arkadion Monastery spread throughout the world. Diverse figures like Garibaldi and Victor Hugo gave their support to the Cretan Greeks.[217] So, the Cretan crisis came onto the agenda of the European powers. The French government gave its full support for the Cretan uprising in order to obtain Russian support in European disputes. As Russia was defeated in the Crimean War, it wanted to regain its position with regard to the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, France and

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[215] Ali Haydar Emir. *1866-1869 Girit İhtilali: Gamsız Hasan Bey Erkadiyi Nasıl Bastırdı*, (İstanbul: Deniz Matbaası, 1931), p. 13.

[216] Theodore George Tatsios. *The Cretan Problem and the Eastern Question*, pp. 94-95.

[217] Adam Hopkins. *Crete: Its Past, Present and People*, (London: Faber, 1977), p. 131.

Russia shared the same attitude towards the Cretan question. Their main aim was to establish a semi-autonomous Crete. Russia also wanted to see some turbulent activities on the Greco-Ottoman frontier. For that reason, Greek bands began their terrorist activities both in Epir and Teselya.[218]

On the other hand, Britain did not want to intervene in the Cretan uprising. The British government feared a break in diplomatic relations between Greece and the Ottoman Empire because of the Cretan uprising. As a result, Britain would not give any support to the Greeks. Moreover, Britain did not accept the French proposal to force a plebiscite in Crete. In the meantime, the Sublime Porte tried to solve the Cretan problem through humanitarian methods. In March 1867, Kostaki and Sava *Efendi*s went to Crete with stores of food and goods of many kinds. Their aim was to help the families, not giving any support to the rebellious movement on the island.[219]

In October 1868, the Grandvizier Âli Paşa went to Crete again. He formulated the Organic Statute, according to which Crete was divided into five provinces. The Ottoman governor was the chief authority. The governor had two assistants, one of them was to be a Christian and each provincial governor had to have a Muslim assistant and *vice versa*. Greek and *Osmanlıca* were accepted as the official correspondence languages for the island. Apart from this, a general assembly was elected by the Council of Elders of each district. The general assembly consisted of four delegates. The delegates from three towns, namely Kandiye, İsfakiya, and Resmo, were to meet at Kandiye every year for a period of 40 days to discuss public concerns and matters. Although the Organic Statute provided a nearly semi-autonomous status to Crete, the Cretan Greeks were not satisfied with it,

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[218] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," p. 106.

[219] *ibid*, pp. 106-107.

because, the Cretan Greeks wanted to reach the ideal of *Enosis* as soon as possible. So, Âli Paşa's tolerant measures could not solve the Cretan problem.[220]

In the international arena, the Sublime Porte strengthened its position with the Organic Statute, since the major European powers could not find another pretext to put pressure on the Ottoman government. As the European public observed the Cretan refugees could not obtain any economic benefit from the Greek government, they began to act against Greece. In the meantime, the refugees made a request to the Greek government to return to Crete. The Greek government would never let them go, since the Greek government thought that if they allowed the Cretan refugees to return to the island, their *Enosis* policy would be publicly defeated.[221] It was the policy of the Greek government to direct and control the Cretan uprising from mainland Greece. They thought that without forming a central organization for the Cretan revolt in Greece, the efforts of the Cretan Greeks for independence would be doomed to failure. That is why the return of the refugees to Crete would be against the *Enosis* policy.

In mid-April 1868, the French Foreign Minister, Moustier, offered the guarantee of support for plebiscite if the Greek government made efforts to re-transport Cretan refugees to the island. Russia did not pay any attention to this offer. Britain was also not eager to work on this offer because of its non-intervention policy.[222]

When the great powers were unwilling to intervene on behalf of the Cretan rebels, the Sublime Porte grew stronger than Greece. In December 1868, the Ottoman government issued an ultimatum to Greece. The ultimatum included the following five demands: *First,*

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[220] *ibid*, pp. 107-108.

[221] *ibid*, p. 109.

[222] *ibid*, p. 109.

Greece must stop organizing irregular bands of volunteers and prevent to the formation of new ones. *Second*, the Greek ships must be disarmed running the Ottoman blockade of Crete, or at least all Greek ports should be denied to these ships. *Third*, Greece should help the Cretan refugees who left the island to return to Crete. *Fourth*, Greece should punish Greek attacks against Ottoman soldiers or subjects and compensate the families of victims. *Finally*, the Greek government should act in accordance with the existing treaties and international law.[223] This ultimatum aimed to subject the Greek government to the political demands of the Ottoman Empire. It was also designed to force Greece to accept that the Cretan problem was an internal matter of the Ottoman Empire. Otherwise, the Ottoman Empire would not hesitate to open a war against Greece.

The Greek answer was unsatisfactory to the Ottomans. For that reason, Fotyadi Bey, the Ottoman ambassador in Greece, and the other Ottoman legation left Greece for İstanbul. The Greeks living in the Ottoman Empire were faced with difficulties, and the relationship between the two countries was totally broken down. The great European powers did not want a Greek-Ottoman war, since they were not sure about its consequences. Therefore, in December 1868, the six European powers came together in Paris to discuss the issue. The participants of this conference were the European governments that had signed the Paris Treaty of 1856: Britain, France, Prussia, Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Russia. As the Ottoman Empire had also signed the Paris Treaty, it would be a natural participant of the new conference. Greece, however, was not represented in Paris in 1856, and had not signed the Paris Treaty. So, Greece was not invited to the new conference.[224] Once more, the major European powers, including the

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[223] Theodore George Tatsios. *The Cretan Problem and the Eastern Question*, pp. 104-106.

[224] Roderic H. Davison. "Ottoman Diplomacy and the Ending in 1869 of the Crisis with Greece Caused by the Rebellion in Crete of 1866-69," *10. Türk Tarih Kongresi, 22-26 IX, 1986*, pp. 1195-1196.

Ottoman Empire, in some way, agreed to resolve the international problem arising from the situation in Crete.

The Sublime Porte feared that such a conference would lead to foreign intervention in the administration of Crete. Moreover, if Greece was accepted as a participant in this conference, then it would find a suitable forum to act against the Ottoman Empire. Thus, Âli Paşa said that the Ottoman "Five Points" ultimatum was meant to defend the Ottoman Empire and to prevent a war against Greece. During the last week of December, the Sublime Porte accepted international assurances that the internal affairs of Crete would not be discussed in Paris conference. The rupture between Greece and the Ottoman Empire, the repatriation of Cretan families to Crete, and the Ottoman ultimatum to Greece were taken into consideration by the participants at the Paris conference. Furthermore, another assurance was given that "Greece would not be a member of the conference, but would only be consulted as needed."[225]

On 30 December 1868, the Sublime Porte sent a message to all European capitals that the uprising volunteer bands in İsfakiya had been destroyed by Ottoman troops. Moreover, with this unsuccessful uprising, the Cretan Provisional Government had decided to leave Crete. On 12 January 1869, the Sublime Porte declared that all foreign volunteers and several local chiefs had surrendered to the Ottomans. This meant that the Cretan revolt had almost been suppressed. This was reported to the participants, when the Paris conference was nearly at its end.

On 13 February 1869, the Sublime Porte declared that the situation in Crete was wholly calm. But in this sense, the European powers participating in the Paris conference did not focus on the Cretan revolt anymore. The possibility of a direct military

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[225] *ibid*, pp. 1196-1197.

confrontation between Greece and Ottoman Empire across their common frontier in Epir and Teselya was taken into consideration by the major European powers.[226] However, Greece refused the "consultative" role and demanded a deliberative role like the Ottoman Empire played. This demand was not accepted by the participants of the conference. So, the Greek delegate left the conference. Then, the participants decided to continue in the absence of Greece.[227] The talks in the conference once more endorsed Greece was secondary role in international political affairs. Greece had to rely on the decisions taken by the major European powers. The importance of the conference, for the Ottoman Empire, was the fact that the Cretan problem was implicitly accepted as an internal problem of the Ottoman Empire. The ultimatum given to Greece before the Paris conference was very effective in this decision, as the major European powers were extremely reluctant to see a Greek-Ottoman war. Such a war would have unpredictable consequences for the security of the region.

The European powers began to avoid investigating details of the Greek-Ottoman dispute. Rather, the Ottoman "Five Points" ultimatum was used as a basis and a declaration was written, meeting most of the Ottoman demands. The declaration stated as follows:

> Greece had no right to allow bands to be recruited on her soil, or ship to be armed in her ports, to attack the Ottoman Empire or to assist an insurrection. Greece must also obey international law. Further, Greece is to declare her readiness to assist in repatriating Cretan families. As for punishments and indemnities, the Ottoman Empire could pursue these cases in the Greek courts. It was agreed additionally that diplomatic relations must be reestablished between the two Governments. Greece, according to the declaration within a week, or face the consequences of her refusal.[228]

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[226] *ibid*, pp. 1198-1199.

[227] *ibid*, p. 1200.

[228] *ibid*, pp.1200-1201.

The dispute between Greece and the Ottoman Empire became an international legal and political problem between the two sides. The Ottoman Empire demanded that the rights of Ottoman minority in Crete had to be defended and repatriations were to be supplied to assist the Ottoman Cretan families residing on the island. The Ottoman Empire was ready to solve the dispute on legal and political grounds. A Greek rejection once more led the Ottomans warn Greece against the military and political consequences, if Greece once more violated the international regulations, and rules on conduct. If Greece did not comply with the appropriate legal and international conduct, this act would soon lead to another direct confrontation between the Ottoman Empire and Greece.

Cemil Paşa, the Ottoman ambassador in Paris, was authorized by the Sublime Porte to sign the Paris declaration. As the decision of the conference was openly favorable to the Ottomans, a governmental crisis occurred in Greece. But on 9 February, the Greek cabinet decided to accept the declaration of the Paris conference. For that reason, the participants of the Paris conference came together again in February 1869, to accept the Greek adhesion to the declaration. Meanwhile, arrangements were made to restore diplomatic relations between the Ottoman Empire and Greece. As a result, Greece was obliged to accept the essentials of the Ottoman ultimatum, and the Paris conference declared that the problem was finally solved. So, a major crisis of the Eastern Question in the 1860s ended with very favorable results for the Ottoman Empire. In contrast to the previous experiences of the Ottoman Empire, the European powers did not intervene in Ottoman domestic affairs.[229]

The Cretan revolts of 1866-1868 formed a critical juncture in the relations between Greece and the Ottoman Empire. While Greece was trying to support the revolts in Crete

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[229] *ibid*, p. 1202.

and integrate the island with mainland Greece, the Ottoman Empire was trying to obtain a diplomatic victory and to force Greece give up supporting the rebellious acts in Crete. The Cretan revolt and its consequences showed that the major European powers were not in favor of an independent Crete, since it would lead to a serious armed conflict between Greece and the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Empire, after having repressed the revolts, developed a new political and diplomatic initiative to force Greece away from interfering into the Ottoman affairs. Due to its remote position, Crete did not have the necessary economic, political, and social conditions to organize itself against the Ottoman Empire. The decisions in the Paris conference were a turning point for the Ottoman Empire. From now on, ethnic problems of the Christian Ottoman minorities would be handled at international conferences, according to the basic rules and conduct of international law. Thus, starting with the Cretan revolts, ethnic internal problems of the Ottoman Empire acquired an international character.

II. F. The Herzegovina Revolt (1875)

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, unlike other provinces of the Ottoman Empire, Bosnia was the most underdeveloped but autonomous Ottoman Balkan province. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Ottoman administration tried to reestablish its authority over Bosnia. The mountainous geographic character of Bosnia had an important impact on its political and economic life. The population was centered generally in the river valleys and the passes between the mountains and high hills. This meant that, the geographical character of Bosnia was very different from most of the rest of the Ottoman Empire.[230] In Bosnia, one third of the total population was Muslim. But it is important to

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[230] Mark Pinson (ed.). *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina*, (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 54-55.

note that, most of the Muslims were Slavic in their ethnic background, and their native language was Serbia-Croatian. Other Muslims in the population came from various different ethnic origins. In most of the cases, they had come to Bosnia as Janissaries, sipahis or refugees from the Hungarian lands.[231]

Bosnia became a separate Ottoman province, under the command of an Ottoman governor in 1580. Although Herzegovina was originally a separate province, it became part of Bosnia in 1833. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Yenipazar sometimes belonged to Bosnia, but sometimes not. But, between the years of 1850 and 1875, it was a part of Bosnia. In 1875, Ottoman Herzegovina province was composed of two *sancaks*: Herzegovina and Yenipazar.[232]

By 1800, political authority in Bosnia was under the control of the hereditary Muslim notables, the *kapudan*s. The *kapudan* system developed from the Ottoman *timâr* system. The main aim of the *kapudan*s was the defense of Bosnia. This system can be defined as a part of the Bosnian political and military system. But, during the eighteenth century, the *kapudan*s began to keep control over their lands and ignored the legal rights of not only the peasants and but also the Ottoman sultan. Since the Ottoman administrative system was no longer strong, it could not control the *kapudan* system. For that reason, the *kapudan*s began to rule Bosnia in their own interests. Although Bosnia was one of the Ottoman provinces, in reality, Ottoman law was no longer valid in Bosnia.[233]

Sultan Mahmud II made some reforms in the Ottoman Empire. He aimed to increase the power of central government. According to him, if the power of the central

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[231] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 348.

[232] Mark Pinson (ed.). *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 55.

[233] *ibid*, p. 72.

government increased, the role of the local notables would decline. When the local notables (âyân) realized this, they did not support the reforms of Mahmud II. On the other hand, the Muslims of Bosnia did not support his reform program either. They were religiously conservative, so the reforms of the Ottoman Empire were considered a potential threat to Islam, by the Muslims of Bosnia. The main reason for the Muslim notables in Bosnia to oppose the reforms was the effort of Mahmud II to establish a centralized state system, similar to the ones in Europe. The reforms would endanger their economic interests and would deprive them of tax returns, which they obtained from the local farmers. These reforms would end their power and they would lose their independence. They had a good example in front of them. Mahmud II had already systematically destroyed the power of independent notables in Bulgaria and Southern Albania.[234]

Although the province of Bosnia was under the control of Muslims, the Sublime Porte did not have confidence in the region. For instance, during the Serbian revolt, Bosnia did not provide effective aid to the Ottoman government. After the abolition of the Janissaries by Mahmud II, Bosnian military men began to modernize themselves. In this sense, under the leadership of captain Hüseyin, the Muslim landholders and the Bosnian military leaders demanded autonomy for Bosnia and Herzegovina with an elected native ruler. Meanwhile, an uprising began in Bosnia against Hüseyin's authority. It was led by Ali Rizvanbegović and İsmail Ağa Cengiz. Hüseyin was defeated by these men with the support of the Ottoman forces. Within a short time period, Herzegovina was separated from Bosnia and began to be ruled by Ali Rizvanbegović.[235]

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[234] ibid, pp. 74-75.

[235] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 348-349.

After 1830, Bosnia province was divided into seven *sancak*s, and each *sancak* was divided into several *kaza*s. On the other hand, the population of Ottoman Bosnia was also divided in itself, according to the religious affiliation of its population. Each religious group had the right to establish its own schools and courts. Muslims, Greek Orthodoxes, and Catholics were the three main religious groups in the Bosnia province. It is also interesting to note that, the highest proportion of Orthodox Serbs were not settled along the Serbian border, but rather along the Croatian border.[236]

In 1845, provincial councils were organized. For that reason, local Muslim leaders began to oppose these centralizing measures, and from 1847 to 1850, they rebelled against the central Ottoman authority. Ömer Paşa was sent to Bosnia to suppress the rebellion. The Bosnian rebels were suppressed by Ömer Paşa in 1850. By 1851, Bosnia and Herzegovina was under the control of the Ottoman forces, at least militarily. In the meantime, the strongest element in Bosnian society was not satisfied with centralizing reforms in their efforts to reform the tax system. Although the opposition against the reforms was very strong, the Sublime Porte continued its reform program without hesitation. For instance, in the 1860s, schools and roads were built in Bosnia. In spite of these reforms, Bosnia and Herzegovina remained among the most underdeveloped regions in the Balkan peninsula.[237]

Bosnia and Herzegovina were at the extreme west end of the Ottoman Empire. Being at the furthest end meant that the economic and social life of Bosnia would continue on a local basis and in an isolated form. Bosnian peasants were engaged in subsistence farming and their main economic contact and trade was through the road connecting the region to Austria. This isolation was due to the political strategy of the Ottoman Empire,

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[236] Mark Pinson (ed.). *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina*, pp. 58-59.

[237] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 349-350.

which paid a lot of attention to undermining the economic and political relations between Bosnia and Serbia. Hence, the agrarian population of Bosnia was not only isolated, but also under pressure, at the same time, by different political forces and religious activities. Bosnia and Herzegovina were composed of various religious groups. But, originally, its people were from Slavic background. Long years of Ottoman domination and an influx of the Ottoman population created a sort of religious and later ethnic mosaic in Bosnia.

Although our knowledge about the ordinary lives of peasants in Ottoman Bosnia is relatively weak and limited, we know clearly that half of the Bosnian peasants were freeholders with their own land. As in the rest of the Ottoman Empire, the lands of the peasants were not situated together. In other words, the Bosnian peasants did not have consolidated plots. Early in the nineteenth century, taxes were imposed on farmholding peasants locally. This meant that only a small part of their payments was sent to the central government. Later, that situation changed and Ottoman power increased in Bosnia. Then, payments by the peasants began to be sent İstanbul.[238] The existing land owning system limited the capacity to extract land tax from the local peasant subjects. Local notables tried to find ways to collect taxes and this created tensions among the local population and caused confrontations with the central administration.

Sharecroppers and serfs (*kmets*) were the other groups of Bosnian cultivators. Many of them were peasants who lived on the land owned by the Ottoman sultan. Some of these lands were given to the landlords. These landlords obtained part of the products in return for military service and policing their districts. Other lands were given to the tax farmers. Moreover, rents were collected by these tax farmers for the government, while a small

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[238] Mark Pinson (ed.). *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 64.

portion of the taxes were kept for themselves, in return for their services.[239] There was no uniform rule applicable both to the Muslims and Orthodox Serbian peasants. The Muslims and the Serbian peasants were not treated equally, at all.

While a majority of the Muslim peasants were freeholders, a majority of the Orthodox Serbian peasants were sharecroppers.[240] This difference in treatment put extra pressures on the Serbian peasants. The Muslim freeholder peasants could prosper and develop economic and trade activities, so they could accumulate wealth and become effective in the community. On the other hand, the sharecropper Serbian peasants had to share their extra product with the representatives of the Ottoman Empire in the region.

Meanwhile, the traditional system of land tenure continued to be exercised in Bosnia. This system was not very favorable for the central government. The Ottoman government wished to increase the taxes it collected from Bosnia, during and after the *Tanzimât*, because imperial lands had been converted to private ownership, the Bosnian landowners were unwilling to forward the "sultan's share." As a result, the treasury of the Ottoman Empire was being robbed. However, throughout the nineteenth century, Ottoman reforms tried to regulate land tenure and taxation from crops. But, they were far from being successful.[241]

The economic problems of the Ottoman Empire, like lack of capital, low educational levels, and high taxation, were also very common in Bosnia. Hand-woven items could be exported to Dalmatia and Trieste. On the contrary, producing manufactured goods was almost impossible. During the nineteenth century, guns were produced by local

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[239] *ibid*, p. 64.

[240] *ibid*, p. 66.

[241] *ibid*, p. 66.

workshops for the Bosnia province. Transportation between Bosnia and other provinces was relatively weak, because there were no direct rail connections between Bosnia and İstanbul. Even before 1878, Austria had economic hegemony over Bosnia. Moreover, in the nineteenth century, profitable markets and the ports on the shores of the Adriatic were in the hands of the Austrians. On the contrary, roads from Bosnia to Serbia were very underdeveloped, since the Ottoman government was very reluctant to establish connections between the Bosnian Serbs and Serbia for political reasons. The main reason for this decision must have been economic,[242] since the Ottoman Empire did not provide a good transportation base for trade with the other provinces of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. Bosnia, therefore, directed its trade relations toward Austria. This situation gave Austria an advantage in keeping close control over Bosnia and Herzegovina with the aim of annexing it to Austria.

As Bosnia was geographically remote from the central Ottoman administration, it was very difficult for the Ottoman governors to control and rule this region. Its mountainous land enabled small groups to resist large armies. For that reason, the Ottoman Empire had already allowed Bosnian leaders a great degree of autonomy.[243]

Throughout the nineteenth century, many rebellions occurred in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bad agrarian conditions led these chronic peasant uprisings against local abuses. The conditions became worse with the difficulty of the Sublime Porte in controlling the *bey*s and *ağa*s. The *beylik*s and *ağalık*s were the two principal types of estates in Bosnia. In the former, the peasants had settled rights to use the land. On the other hand, as the *beylik*s were the full property of the landlord, the peasants worked the land

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[242] *ibid*, p. 69.

[243] *ibid*, p. 71.

according to the terms decided upon by the owners. In other words, tax levels and the corvée dues were too high.[244] During the governorships of Ömer Lütfi Paşa and Topal Osman Paşa, the administration of Bosnia was reorganized and the control of the central government was improved. But, the traditional system of land tenure could not be altered.[245]

Meanwhile, Serbian leaders began to focus on the Bosnian issue. They believed that although there were religious differences in Bosnia, the Muslim population was also Serbian in ethnic background.[246] As both Serbia and Montenegro shared common Serbian nationality and Orthodoxy, their relations were in line with each other.[247]

In the 1870s, the major European powers began to concentrate on the agrarian conditions within the Ottoman Empire. As these powers had declared themselves to be guarantors and protectors of the Ottoman Christians in the Treaty of Paris of 1856, they had some right to interfere into the problems of Balkan Christians.[248]

The poor harvest of 1874 caused a great deal of suffering among the peasants.[249] Therefore, in July 1875, the uprising starting in Gabela in southern Herzegovina and quickly spread into Nevesin.[250] The major reasons for the revolt can be defined as the bad agrarian situation, and the tense relationship between the peasants and the landholders. The

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[244] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 143.

[245] Mark Pinson (ed.). *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina*, p. 77.

[246] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineenth Centuries*, p. 350.

[247] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 143.

[248] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 351-352.

[249] *ibid*, p. 144.

[250] Jelena Milojkovic-Djuric. *Panslavism and National Identity in Russia and in the Balkans, 1830-1880: Images of the Self and Others*, (New York: 1994), p. 96.

bels were in a relatively strong position,[251] so the Ottoman authorities were unable to

ppress down the uprising in this region. Montenegro and Serbia provided not only

apons, but also volunteers.[252] This revolt paved the way for reopening the Eastern

uestion.[253]

Besides the reasons given above for the 1875 Herzegovina uprising, Pan-Serbism,

n-Slavism, and Austrian expansionism should also be taken into account. Although

lan, the head of Serbian state, had little sympathy for the revolutionary movements, Pan-

rb agitation continued to give support to the rebelling forces in Bosnia and

rzegovina.[254]

Pan-Slavism also played an important role in this revolt. Pan-Slav circles in Russia

l great sympathy and enthusiasm for the insurgents.[255] Thus, some Pan-Slav societies

re soon established in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev, and Odessa. The Russian General

leev was the most important Pan-Slav propagandist. His ideas on Slavic union can be

arly seen in the following words:

> The liberated East of Europe, if it be liberated at all, will require: a durable bond of
> union, a common head with a common council, the transaction of international
> affairs and military command in the hands of that head, the Tsar of Russia, the
> natural chief of all the Slavs and Orthodox... Every Russian, as well as every Slav
> and every Orthodox Christian, should desire to see chiefly the Russian reigning
> House cover the liberated soil of Eastern Europe with its branches, under the
> supremacy and lead of the Tsar of Russia, long recognised, in the expectation of the
> people, as the direct heir of Constantine the Great.[256]

Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 352.

Helena Milojkovic-Djuric. *Panslavism and National Identity in Russia and in the Balkans*, p. 96.

Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 352.

-. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, p. 397.

Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 145.

A. L. Macfie. *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, (London: Longman, 1996), pp. 35-36.

Besides the slogan of creating a Slavic union, the Russian Empire aimed to control the Serbian population and to tie different Slavic groups to Russia. Support for the uprising had the aim of reviving the Russian Empire in the Balkans, as the heir of Constantine the Great.

Nicholas Ignatiev, another Russian Pan-Slav intellectual who served as an official diplomat in İstanbul, argued as follows: "the Austrian and Turkish Slavs must be our allies, the weapons of our policy against the Germans."[257] This also shows that Russian interest in the Slavic rebellion was political, rather than defense of ethnic rights of the Slavs.

In the early 1870s, the governments of Russia, Germany and Austria joined the Three Emperor's Alliance (*Dreikaiser-Bund*). Although it was not a formal alliance, this informal connection was used as a basis of visiting and communicating between the heads of the three empires. As they were unwilling to support a great Christian revolt in the Balkans, the three empires wished that the Bosnian revolt would soon end peacefully. At this time, the Russian government was under big pressures, since there was great enthusiasm in Russian society for the Balkan issue. Now, the Pan-Slav feeling was added to the one of Orthodoxy.[258] On the contrary, the members of the Russian government were not willing to implement a Pan-Slavist policy in the Balkans. They feared that the events of the Crimean War could again be repeated. The other great powers of Europe began to act against Russia and this led to the overturn of the balance of power in Europe. According to the official Russian policy, negotiation among the great powers was the only solution for the Bosnian revolt. As there was a close relationship between the interests of Vienna and

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[257] L. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, p. 398.

[258] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 146.

Berlin, the Russian government should act in line with their interests. For that reason, Russia, Germany, and Austria had cooperated during the Bosnian crisis. But, Britain did not like the close association of these three powers. The British government, under the leadership of Benjamin Disraeli, was the supporter of the Ottoman interests in the Balkan affairs.[259] The Balkan region was a strategic place for the major European powers. So, an absolute authority of one power was unacceptable. This was one of the reasons, why the Bosnian revolt was widely supported. In the first instance, the Ottoman authority over the region weakened, but once the Serbian community began to get stronger and the Russians increased their influence in the Balkans, the great powers of Europe began to act against it.

However, Julius Andrassy, the Austrian foreign minister, proposed a reform program for the rebellious Ottoman provinces. This proposal was known as the Andrassy Note.[260] It included:

> a grant of religious liberty; an end to tax farming; an amelioration of the conditions of life of the rural population; the appropriation of direct taxes raised in Bosnia and Herzegovina to local purposes; and the appointment of a mixed Christian-Muslim commission to supervise the proposed reforms.[261]

According to the Andrassy's proposal, it was clear that the uprising in Bosnia had an economic character. It was a political activity to improve the economic conditions of the peasants. The agreement neither mentioned the status of Ottoman administration in the region, nor pointed out the Austrian intervention to the region. The proposal for reform tried to prevent a political uprising of Slavic community and aimed to annex these regions

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[259] *ibid*, p. 147.

[260] *ibid*, p. 147.

[261] A. L. Macfie. *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, p. 37.

to Austria with the consent of the European states.[262] This Note also aimed to create an autonomous multi-religious, multi-ethnic Bosnian community, with a high degree of economic freedom and independence. Although the Andrassy Note was accepted by the Sublime Porte, it was rejected by the insurgents. In May 1876, the three states planned a second program, which was not accepted both by Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire.[263]
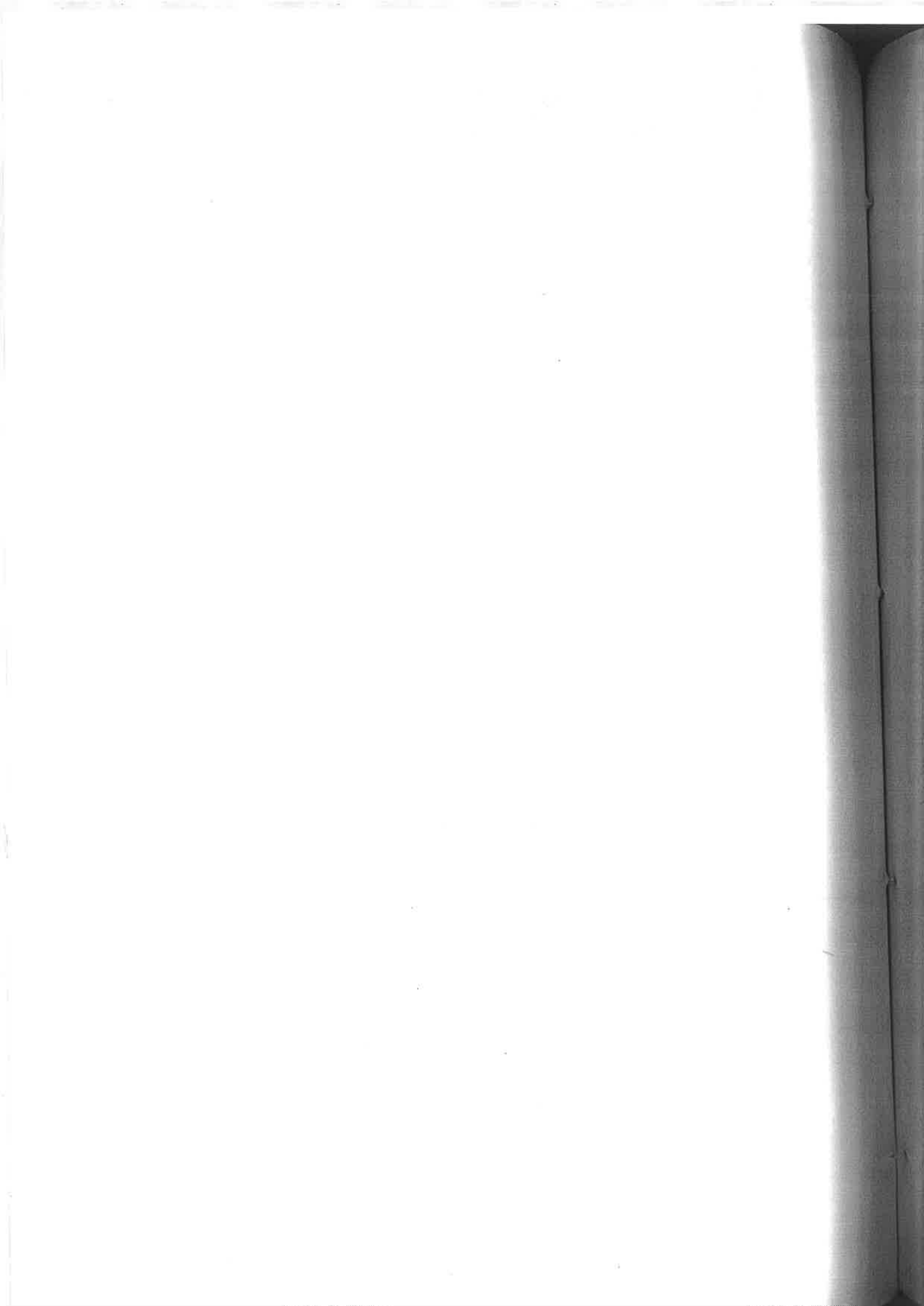
In 1876, Ottoman territory was invaded by Serbian and Montenegrin forces. Both governments hoped that, at the end of the war, they could take back these territories from the Ottoman Empire. The Montenegrin government wanted to annex Herzegovina and Serbia wanted to annex Bosnia. Although Montenegrin forces proved to be successful, the Serbian action ended in disaster, since the Serbian peasant soldiers were not well- trained and well-equipped. In addition, Milan was no longer very eager to fight against the Ottoman Empire.[264]

In April 1877, Russia declared war against the Ottoman Empire. As Russia wanted to reassure itself about the neutrality of Austria in the war, because the Russians thought that Bosnia and Herzegovina could be occupied by the Austrians. At the end of the war, the Ottoman Empire was defeated by Russia. Moreover, Russia forced the Ottoman Empire to sign the Treaty of San Stefano. In this sense, Austria and other European powers interfered with this treaty, since the Russian conditions offered to the Ottoman Empire were against their interests. Therefore, they forced Russia to accept the new terms of the Berlin Treaty of 1878. In this treaty, Bosnia and Herzegovina were given to Austria. A small part of Herzegovina was given to Montenegro. But, the *sancak* of Yenipazar remained in the

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[262] Kemal Baltalı. "1875 Hersek Ayaklanmasının Uluslararası Bir Nitelik Kazanması," *Belleten*, Vol. LI, No. 199, (1987), p. 207.

[263] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 147.

[264] *ibid*, p. 145.

Ottoman Empire. It should be noted that, after the Treaty of Berlin, the demographic picture of the Bosnian province also changed. In 1870, The Muslims were the largest group in the population of Ottoman Bosnia. But by 1879, Orthodox Serbs had become the largest population group in the area.[265]

Bosnia and Herzegovina were now at the juncture point of three important countries: Serbia, Austria, and Montenegro. Therefore, it was open to all sorts of economic, social, and political influence by the nearby countries of Austria and Serbia. The Ottoman Empire was unable to control these provinces with its classical system of tax farming, appointing *paşas*, and giving out some sort of local autonomous rule. Unlike the other Ottoman provinces that were closer to the mainland empire, any further autonomy given to Bosnia and Herzegovina would upset the sensitive balance of power not only within the province, but also in the Balkan peninsula as a whole. The major European powers were keeping a close eye on the region and were trying to create a semi-autonomous region, which would, in the long run, have its own internal administration. The Ottoman Empire would then act only as the legal representative of the province. Whenever there was a threat to the balance of power, internal uprisings increased. Hence, this region became the play-ground for establishing control of the Balkan peninsula, and it had a special place in Ottoman diplomacy, because Austria was trying to annex not only Bosnia but also Herzegovina.

The ethnic composition of the Balkan peninsula was also manipulated by the great powers of Europe. The indigenous population did not have a developed ethnic identity. But the political struggle to dominate the region led to an inflow of Muslims, Orthodox

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[265] Mark Pinson (ed.). *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina*, pp. 79-82.

Christians, and Catholics. The composition of these ethnic communities continuously changed with political interventions and struggles for domination. So, the Balkan ethnicity in Bosnia and Herzegovina seems to have followed a route of its own.

II. G. The Cretan Revolt (1896)

The Cretan revolt of 1866-1868 formed a critical juncture point in the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Greece due to the unique position of Crete, as a gateway between the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea. Crete was also a stepping point on the route to Cyprus. After the Cretan revolts of 1866-1868, the situation in Crete was relatively calm. However, within the thirty year period between the first wave of the Cretan revolts of 1866-1868 and the second wave, the Ottoman Empire had to deal with other uprisings, namely the Herzegovinian (1875) and the Bulgarian (1876). These uprisings served as outside catalyzers to the cause of the Cretan revolt in 1896. During the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire entered a new phase. Macedonian, Armenian, and the Cretan question were three well-known questions, which the Ottoman Empire had to deal with in this period.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Cretan problem acquired a more and more complex character. It was extremely effective in the redefinition of international relations for the Ottoman Empire. This problem was among the main reasons for the confrontation between the Ottoman Empire and Greece, which resulted in the war of 1897. On the other hand, the Cretan problem was the result of the strategic plans of the European powers regarding the region. It became a major concern for the Ottoman Empire to handle

the Cretan problem carefully. Hence, this problem became a major reason for the Ottoman Empire's attitude toward the major powers of Europe.[266]

In 1877, once again, the Cretan question came onto the agendas of the Ottoman Empire, Greece, and the great European powers. This time, the Cretan Greeks were demanding "self government" for Crete. But, this demand was simply refused by the Sublime Porte. Therefore, the leading Cretan Greeks met in Athens, and decided on a popular revolt. A committee was soon established in Crete, and they demanded complete autonomy. Although there was a large peace party among most Orthodox, the new chiefs of the revolt did not remember the hardship from the last revolt of 1866-1868. The leaders of the revolt were in favor of more bloodshed. For that reason, after 15 February 1878, guns were fired in Crete. At the same time, there was a war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia. So, the Ottoman troops stationed in Crete were few in number and poor in quality. On the other hand, the insurgents faced a scarcity of food on the island. This also meant that, the insurgents were well-prepared to wage a decisive war against the Ottoman Empire. On 26 May 1878, through British mediation, an armistice was reached. By this way, the Cretan question soon came to the diplomatic platform, and therefore acquired an international character.[267]

The 23rd article of the Berlin Congress stated that the Sublime Porte had to modify the Organic Statute. The Ottoman Empire was reluctant to accept all the provisions of the conference regarding Crete. According to the Greeks, this modification meant that the governor of Crete should be a Christian. In order to lower tensions, Kostaki Paşa was appointed as the governor of the island by the Sublime Porte. Besides the requirement of a

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[266] A. Nükhet Adıyeke. "Girit Sorunu Karşısında Avrupa Basın ve Kamuoyu," *Toplumsal Tarih*; Vol. XII; No. 67, (Temmuz 1999), p. 25.

[267] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," p. 111.

Christian governor for the island, the Greeks also demanded a "Princedom of Crete" as in the case of Bulgarian Principality. When Kostaki Paşa intentionally failed to implement his duties, Gazi Muhtar Ahmet Paşa was sent to Crete by the Sublime Porte in August 1878.[268]

Meanwhile, the great powers of Europe increased the pressure on the Sublime Porte in order to force the Ottoman Empire to give compromises to the rebels in Crete. Both sides, Greece and the Ottoman Empire, began to negotiate at Halepa near Hanya. Although the insurgent leaders were still insisting on self government, Gazi Muhtar Ahmet Paşa succeeded in forcing the rebels to withdraw many of their terms. So, on 23 October 1878, a final agreement was signed. This agreement is known as the Halepa Pact.[269] The Halepa Pact can be defined as the expansion of the Organic Statute.[270] According to this pact,

> the governor general was to be selected for five years and his assistant was to be of the other faith. In the general assembly, the Christians were to have 49 and the Muslims 31 seats. In addition to Turkish, Greek was to be the official language to be used both in the Assembly and in the law courts. The gendarmerie was to consist of volunteers of both religions with an injunction that so long as their number filled the contingent, there was to be no recruitment from the other regions of the Ottoman Empire.[271]

Although the Halepa Pact was signed, the Cretan rebel leaders did not give up their ideal of *Enosis*. They had to postpone their ideal due to European protestations. In order to avoid further tension Fotyadi Bey was sent to Crete by the Sublime Porte. At the same

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[268] *ibid*, p. 111.

[269] *ibid*, p. 112.

[270] Ferdinand Schevill. *A History of the Balkans: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, p. 428.

[271] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," p. 112.

time, for more than three years, both the Greek and Ottoman governments had been engaged with the frontier rectification in Epir and Teselya.[272]

The formation of a party system and the choosing of deputies for the Local Assembly favored the struggle for independence. Now, especially the Conservatives were developing policies for the unification of Crete with Mainland Greece. In 1889, a confrontation occurred between the two political parties, known as the Conservatives and the Liberals. As the Liberals obtained the majority in the elections, five conservative deputies brought a motion for union with Greece.[273] This action paved the way for the already increasing hostility between the Christians and the Muslims living in Crete. Thus, quickly, a political party struggle acquired a religious character. To restore law and order in Crete, Sultan Abdülhamid II issued a decree (fermân) on 24 November 1889.[274] According to this decree, the number of Christians in the Assembly was reduced from 57 members to 35 members. Moreover, the decree announced that "a gendarmerie was formed from natives of other Ottoman provinces, established a fixed sum in lieu of the tithe of oil, and gave a preference to those who knew Turkish. By this way, the insurrection ceased."[275] Conservatives were very effective in increasing the tension between the Muslims and Christians in Crete. That is why, the new gendarmeria force was formed to settle the disputes between the Muslim and Christian population of the island. The existence of this force would also calm down the political situation in the island.

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[272] *ibid*, p. 112.

[273] William Millar. *The Ottoman Empire and its Successors, 1801-1927*, p. 432.

[274] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1886-1912)," p. 113.

[275] William Miller. *The Ottoman Empire and its Successors, 1801-1927*, p. 427.

Meanwhile, in 1893, a financial crisis occurred in Greece. This currant[276] crisis led to a fiscal crisis in the winter of 1894-1895. The phylloxera in France had created a great demand for these serviceable berries, and Greece began to send its currants to France. So, Greece soon raised the prices which brought a lot of money into the country. Therefore, the peasants thought that the demand of France for the currants would last forever, and they cut down their olive trees and planted currant-vines wherever there was room to grow them. Within a short time period, the Greek production of currants was in trouble, while France solved the problem of phylloxera. In 1891, France imposed a duty upon currants. Germany and Russia also used the same tactics. For that reason, huge amounts of currants remained in the hands of the Greek producers. This caused a currency crisis in 1894-1895.[277]

The Christians and Muslims of Crete were both dissatisfied with Abdülhamid II's policy. In 1896, Karathedori Paşa was replaced by Berevich Paşa by the Ottoman government. The new Albanian Christian governor, Berevich Paşa, was accepted neither by the Cretan Greeks nor by the Cretan Muslims. Thus, on 24 May 1896, a bloody conflict occurred in the streets of Hanya. After this incident, the Muslim population of the island began to move to the coastal areas, where the Ottoman troops were comparatively in control.[278] On the other hand, the Cretan Greeks went to the mountainous countryside of Crete.[279]

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[276] The word currant originates from Anglo-French (*raisins de*) Corauntz, (raisins of) Corinth: so-called-as coming from Corinth in Greece. See *The Lexicon Webster Dictionary*, Vol. I, A to Oyster Encyclopedic Edition, (USA: The English Language Institute of America, Inc., 1978), p. 247.

[277] William Millar. *A History of the Greek People (1821-1921)*, (New York: E. P. Dutton Publishers, 1922), p. 100.

[278] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)", p. 113.

[279] Ferdinand Schevill. *A History of the Balkans: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, p. 429.

Although the European Commission was to organize the gendarmerie, the fighting began on 2 February 1897, and it soon became much more severe. So, the Greek consul, Genadis, telegraphed the situation in Crete to Athens: "... I have asked the consuls to debark marines to save what is possible, the consuls have refused. No hope. The Christians of the town will be massacred."[280] The consuls of the great powers in the Ottoman Empire were reluctant to develop supportive actions for the Greek local administration. It seems that the great powers of Europe evaluated the situation as an internal matter of the Ottoman Empire. Crete was geographically very close to mainland Greece, but at the same time, it had a substantial Muslim population. Greece felt itself pressured by the Cretan Greek insurgents. Philike Hetairia was especially effective in the provocation of direct action to be taken by Greece. However, they were not aware of the consequences. Perhaps, they thought that the Sublime Porte would take a step back.

This news of clashes spread across Athens. Thus, public pressure began to increase over the Greek government. On the other hand, Philike Hetairia supported the Cretan Committee. On February 1897, the rebelling forces in Crete announced *Enosis*. Within a short time period, the Greek government began to act with the insurgents and Prince George of Greece appeared off the shores of Hanya. Moreover, Greek Colonel Vasos joined the insurgents in Hanya.[281]

As the Hellenic royal family had blood relations with the crowns of Britain, Germany, and Russia, King George hoped that these countries would support Greece, in terms of the Cretan question. But, the German Emperor and the Russian Tsar preferred cool politics towards this question. However, Queen Victoria was in favor of the Cretan

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[280] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)", p. 114.

[281] *ibid*, p. 114.

Greeks. Russia, Germany, France, and Austria opposed the cession of Crete in a definite manner. According to them, acceptance of the demand for Enosis would simply mean the beginning of the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire. Then, an ultimatum was sent to Athens, demanding that the Greek government withdraw the Hellenic troops from Crete. This ultimatum was, of course, not accepted by the Greek government.[282]

This was an important development for European public opinion. Various analyses were written, regarding the situation in Crete and its impact on the foreign relations of the European governments. In most of the newspapers of the time, the nationality issue was taken into consideration. The major fear was that the dispute would soon turn into a national struggle between the Greeks and the Ottomans. The struggle in Crete aroused sympathy in the European public opinion. Thus, Europeans gave their full material, financial, and spiritual support to the Cretan insurgents. However, this was in contradiction to the governmental policies of the European powers. These governments were giving signs and impressions of being, at least, neutral. However, there was not a consensus in attitude among the European press towards the Cretan uprising. For instance, while the Italian press gave provocative news on the situation of the Cretan Greeks in Crete and their being massacred, the German press developed a more balanced political attitude towards the situation in Crete. The Ottoman Empire was very sensitive about the situation. The majority of the Muslim and Christian Ottoman populations hoped that a peaceful end would be brought to the situation soon.[283]

On April 1897, armed bands of the Greek para-legal "National Society" crossed into Macedonia. At the same time, conflicts occurred on the Thessalian frontier and on 17

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[282] *ibid*, p. 114.

[283] A. Nükhet Adıyeke. "Girit Sorunu Karşısında Avrupa Basını ve Kamuoyu," pp. 26-27.

April 1897, the Ottoman Empire declared war against Greece.[284] The Greek army was relatively weaker than the Ottoman army. Shortly before, the Ottoman army had been reorganized under the direction of German officers. For that reason, the Greek army soon collapsed.[285] The great powers of Europe interfered in the Greek-Ottoman war. On May 1897, Greek troops were withdrawn from the frontier. The Greeks were also defeated at Domoko. After the personal appeal of Tsar, an armistice was signed on 19 May 1897.[286]

The Sublime Porte was reluctant to keep Crete under its control, because Crete had long been a chronic problem and headache for the Ottoman government. On the contrary, the Ottoman government was unwilling to give an inch of territory on the Greek frontier in mainland of the Ottoman Empire. In contrast to the Greek policy, the Ottoman Empire was reluctant to intensify the conflict on the island. Thus, Crete became a source of trouble for the Ottoman Empire.

Moreover, the Ottoman Empire was no longer receiving revenues from Crete.[287] This meant that the Ottoman Empire preferred to keep control of its frontiers, which were more important and closer to the Ottoman Empire, despite Crete's important geographic location and strategic position in the Mediterranean. As mentioned earlier, the Cretan Greeks had strong organic ties with mainland Greece. Because of its remote location to the Sublime Porte, the economic, cultural, and political affairs between Greece and Crete had developed, especially after the establishment of an independent Greece. At the same time, the revival of Hellenistic ideas both in Greece and other parts of Europe affected the Aegean islands, including Crete. Most importantly, due to its strategic position, Crete

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[284] William Miller. *The Ottoman Empire and its Successors, 1801-1927*, p. 436.

[285] Ferdinand Schevill. *A History of the Balkans: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, p. 430.

[286] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)", pp. 115-116.

[287] *ibid*, p. 114.

became a significant domino tool in the consolidation of Greek domination in the Aegean Sea. These features of Crete were used as a tool both by the Greek government and the European governments against the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, it is important to note that, in the nineteenth century Crete was one of the worst developed provinces of the Ottoman Empire. So, this misgovernment by the Ottoman administration in Crete paved the way for conflicts between the Muslim and Christian populations of the island.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the deteriorating situation in Crete undermined the political relations between mainland Greece and the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, there were ethnic problems between the Ottomans and the Greeks in Epir and Teselya. When Greece could not exert its influence over the Cretan population, it directed its policy towards Epir and Teselya.

The outcome of the Greek-Ottoman war can be defined in the following words of Professor Langer:

> Rarely has a victorious power been put off so little of the fruits of victory, even more rarely has a state so completely defeated as Greece emerged from a war of aggression so lightly penalised. The principle that territory once taken from the infidel Turk and assigned to a Christian power could never be returned to Muslim rule was sanctified by the proceedings of the great state in 1897.[288]

Although the Greek "National Society" was completely defeated by the Ottoman forces, the outcome was not totally acceptable for the Ottoman Empire. Although the Ottoman Empire was the victorious power, it was forced to retreat. At the same time, the aggressive Greek forces were not actually penalised. Here, it can be said that, for the first

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[288] *ibid*, p. 114.

time all the major powers of Europe acted "in concert" against the Ottoman Empire. They gave their unconditional support to Greece.

Britain, France, Russia, and Italy pressured Sultan Abdülhamid II to give full autonomy to Crete. They even guaranteed that Crete would never have an independent status. However, the Ottoman Empire was conscious not to rely on what the great powers of Europe promised. The real intention of the guarantor powers of Russia, Britain, France, and Italy became evident, when Greece decided to bring Crete into its territory in 1909.[289] To assure this, British, French, Russian, and Italian troops would be stationed in the island. So, the great powers of Europe gave autonomy to Crete on 18 December 1897. The Ottoman Empire could not cope with the pressures of the great powers of Europe and pulled the Ottoman troops from the island. Although the Ottoman Empire objected, Russia and Britain took advantage of the problematic atmosphere and appointed Prince George as the governor of Crete. So, both the Greek people and the Cretan Greeks came one step closer to their ideals of *Enosis* and were successful in obtaining a full autonomy.[290]

The appointment of Prince George to Crete can be defined as an important step in the Cretan history, because Prince George was the first Greek governor of Crete since the Roman conquest of the island. The history of Crete under the governorship of Prince George was composed of two periods. During his first years, he tried to be the prince of all Cretans. After a while, turbulent years began for Crete.[291] After the withdrawal of Ottoman troops from Crete, the Cretan Ottomans were forced to migrate to the mainland empire.[292]

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[289] Sabahattin İsmail. *Girit Nasıl Kaybedildi?* (Lefkoşa: Dışişleri ve Savunma Bakanlığı Tanıtma Dairesi, 1997), p. 8.

[290] *ibid*, pp. 6-7.

[291] William Millar. *A History of the Greek People (1821-1921)*, p. 110.

[292] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," p. 116.

The confrontation of the Ottoman Empire with Greece in Epir and Teselya was a turning point in the relationship between Christians and Muslims. Now, religious and political attitudes acquired an importance in international relations. This was effective both in the consolidation of Greek Hellenism and in paving the way for the *de facto* disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire was determined to take a finishing action against the Greek "National Society", which had become an unacceptable threat. The European powers also understood the decisiveness of the Ottoman Empire. The only thing they could do was to weaken the existence of the Ottoman Empire in Crete. This would also force the Ottoman Empire to divide its forces between Crete and the mainland frontier. But, the Ottoman Empire gave its priority to Epir and Teselya, since these lands were an integral part of the mainland empire. In the end, the conquest of Crete by Hellenism was not the work of Greece alone. The great powers of Europe paved the way for the creation of Hellenistic imperialism in the Aegean basin.[293]

The Cretan uprising of 1896 was important in two respects: First of all, Crete was a strategic island controlling the passage between the Mediterranean and the Aegan Sea. Second, it revealed the hidden conflict between the Muslim and Christian populations of Crete and opened the way for the war between Greece and the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan peninsula.

This last Cretan revolt of 1896 played an important role in international diplomatic relations of the Ottoman Empire with the great European powers. The different political interest of the major European powers began to melt within the newly arising "Christian-Muslim" conflict. So, the Cretan revolt of 1896 marked the unfolding of religious conflict in the international arena. When the Ottoman Empire began to step down in Crete, the

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[293] *ibid*, p. 117.

seeds of a new wave of uprisings were sown. In this interval, Crete acted as a catalyzer and made things worse for the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman administration, finally, understood that it had to develop its own political strategy rather than relying on differences of political strategies of great powers and taking advantage of these differences. After this revolt, the European powers acted in concert to undermine and divide Ottoman rule in the Balkans.

II. H. The Albanian Revolts (1909-1912)

> "Awake, Albanians, awake!
> Let not mosques and churches divide you.
> The true religion of the Albanian is his national ideal."[294]

> Vassa Paşa.

Different than any other national movement in the Ottoman Balkans, the Albanian national movement had a unique character. Before 1912, the Albanians did not seek an independent state. They preferred autonomy within the Ottoman Empire, since the Albanians feared that if the Ottoman Empire fell, their land would be divided among the neighbouring countries.[295]

Although the Albanians were from a single nationality, they were divided into two main groups: the Gegs and the Tosks. The Gegs had a strong tribal organization, and they lived in the mountains of the northern part of Albania. In contrast, the Tosks lived in the southern half of the country, and they were not as conservative as the Gegs. Most of the Tosks were peasants working on estates for large landowners. The landowning system in Albania was somewhat different from the other Balkan regions. Landowners had more

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[294] J. Swire. *Albania: The Rise of a Kingdom*, (New York: Richard R. Smith, 1930), p. 42.

[295] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 222.

autonomy in Albania, and they could employ peasants on their lands according to their own benefits. The majority of the peasants in southern Albania were from Muslim origin. The Muslim Gegs generally belonged to the *Sünni* version of Islam. On the other hand, the Tosks were both *Sünni* and *Bektaşi*.[296] There were three dominant religions in Albania: Muslim, Orthodox, and Catholic, but approximately 70 percent of the population was Muslim.[297]

Historically, in comparison with the Greek civilization Albania had a relatively backward social organization. In their social and cultural relationships with the Greeks, this "inferiority" led to reactions against Greek culture. Hence, being under the protectorate of the Ottoman Empire, Albanians felt themselves closer to the Ottoman Empire rather than any of the other Balkan minorities. So, it was easier for the Ottoman Empire to convert the majority of the Albanians to Islam. The Orthodox Albanian population mainly lived in the south. The Greek patriarchate and Greek culture had important impacts on Orthodox Albanians. The Albanian population in the south was economically dependent on Greece. Trade relations with Greece also created an atmosphere of cultural exchange. So, the Orthodox Church found the opportunity to have an impact on the religion of the local population of the southern region. On the other hand, Catholics lived in the northern coastal areas, and they had close economic and social relations with neighbouring Italy and Austria.[298]

Ottoman Albania, due to its unique strategic position, had always had its place on the agenda of not only the Ottoman Empire but also the great powers of Europe. The

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[296] *ibid*, pp. 222-223.

[297] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Balkans*, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 69.

[298] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 222.

relationship of the Albanians with the Ottoman Empire was a love/hate relationship. The Albanian population actually felt itself an integral part of the Ottoman Empire. They did not act as an alien minority group. They lived as an integral part of the social and political structure of the Ottoman Empire, but wanted to have more share in political power. This is also understood from the form of rebellions and from the nature of the demands of the Albanians. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Sublime Porte dealt with the disobedient *paşa* of Yanya, Tepedelenli Ali Paşa. Moreover, a series of peasant uprisings occurred in Albania from the 1840s to the 1870s. The uprising peasants were generally from the mountains and most of them were Muslims. Their main aim was to preserve local autonomy within the country. They opposed high taxation and they wanted reforms in the Ottoman army, as there was a high number of Albanians in the Ottoman army. Meanwhile, the countries neighbouring Albania were seeking liberation from the Ottoman Empire, and they established political contacts with the Albanian leaders. It is important to remember that the Albanians also had an active role in the Greek and Romanian revolutions.

But, the Albanian bourgeoisie did not want to change the existing status of Albania within the Ottoman Empire, since the Albanian bourgeoisie was economically weak. In addition, Albania was a relatively conservative country. The Sublime Porte and the Greek Patriarchate had significant impacts on the cultural life of the Albanian people. In the 1860s, Albanian intellectuals were focused on the teaching and use of the Albanian language. They knew very well that cultural renaissance was one of the most important factors in the national awakening of Albania. This renaissance would give the first impetus for the idea of Albanian independence.[299]

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[299] Ramadan Marmallaku. *Albania and the Albanians*, (London: C. Hurst, 1975), pp. 21-22.

"For the first time for four centuries Albanians from Yanya to İşkodra were united for one purpose -the preservation of their country- and a general *besa* [oath] was proclaimed."[300] Although the Albanians had not formed a literature and national religion yet, the common unifying factor, namely patriotism, played a crucial role in the achievement of their independence.[301] The complex social and cultural organization of the Albanian population and its disunited ethnic groups led to different "Albanian identities". It was difficult to form a nation from people coming from various religious backgrounds of Islam, Orthodox, and Catholic. The slogan of unifying the people under the nationalistic banner of "Albanianism" would be difficult. So, for the diverse Albanian cause, patriotism was a better form of unification, since in patriotism, the land rather than the nation is the common dominator of integration. Under patriotism, whatever ethnic, religious, linguistic background, all the people living within the same territory have equal interests and demands with the others.

While patriotic sentiment was developing within the Albanian population, the Ottoman Empire reacted with a shift to Islam and Pan-Islamic ideals. Abdülhamid II's coming to power in 1876 was an indicator of this shift. During his reign, Abdülhamid II was quite suspicious of the activities of the great powers of Europe as well as the non-Muslim minorities in the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, he thought that the Ottoman Empire needed a solid ideological basis, so he returned to Islam and Pan-Islamic ideals.[302] Although Abdülhamid II was unwilling to recognize the principle of nationality, he willingly favored individual Muslim Albanians. For instance, the President of the National

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[300] J. Swire. *Albania: The Rise of a Kingdom*, p. 52.

[301] *ibid*, p. 53.

[302] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans*, Vol. II, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 79 and 82.

Albanian Society in İstanbul, Ferid Paşa, became his Grand Vizier.[303] Although his administration had Islamic flavor in its ideology, the administration remained central and bureaucratic in nature.[304]

During the reign of Abdülhamid II, the international situation was very complex for the Ottoman Empire. Austria was trying to establish its own domination in the Balkans, while Italy had greedy feelings towards Albania. Moreover, in 1877, Russia declared war against the Ottoman Empire and the Balkan crisis entered a new phase.[305] After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, the Treaty of San Stefano was announced. According to the terms of this treaty, "greater Bulgaria included parts of present-day eastern Albania, while Montenegro was awarded lands in the north primarily inhabited by Albanians."[306] Russians did not have influence in the Albanian region. It was suitable to their interests when part of Albania would be included in greater Bulgaria and part would be left under the influence of Montenegro.

The reactions of the other major powers of Europe and Albania were quite strong against the Treaty of Berlin of 1878.[307] After the Berlin Congress, Balkan affairs were rearranged. In this sense, Albania began to suffer from the curtailment of its territory for the benefit of its neighbours. Kurşunlu-Vranya was given to Serbia, Triepshi and the highlands of Gosinye-Plevne were given to Montenegro, and Greece was to get Yanya. The Treaty of Berlin was a turning point for the Albanians, since their basic autonomy and

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[303] J. Swire. *Albania: The Rise of a Kingdom*, p. 78.

[304] Nuray Bozbora. *Osmanlı Yönetiminde Arnavutluk ve Arnavut Ulusçuluğunun Gelişimi*, (İstanbul: Boyut Yayın Grubu, 1997), p. 273.

[305] Ramadan Marmallaku. *Albania and the Albanians*, p. 23.

[306] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, pp. 223-224.

[307] Ramadan Marmallaku. *Albania and the Albanians*, p. 23.

national rights were under serious threat. The division of the region created a lot of fervor. Therefore, the Albanians were not satisfied with this partition of their national territory. Thus, in 1878 the "Albanian League for the Defense of the Rights of the Albanian Nationality" was organized at Prizren. Elbasan became the center for the headquarters of the League.[308] Elbasan was a very important cultural center. It was in the middle of Albania located on the Shkumbi river. It also served as the natural border between the two main ethnic groups of Albania: the Gegs in the north and the Tosks in the south. In Elbasan, there was both Orthodox Christian and a strong *Bektaşi* presence.[309] The formation of the Albanian League can be defined as the turning point in the modern development of the Albanian nation. Until the formation of the League, national movements had been pursued by individuals like the *paşa*s of İşkodra and Yanya. But, now, the Albanians had an organized national body.[310]

The establishment of the Albanian League was an alarming situation for the Ottomans. It showed that, from then on, any confrontation of the Ottoman Empire with the Albanians would be at a national level. An international conspiracy was undermining the Ottoman position in Albania, and it was forcing the Ottoman Empire to handle the situation militarily. *Firstly*, the Albanian League formally protested the alienation of the Albanian territories. *Secondly*, the League protested the delimitation of the boundary of Montenegro. The Albanian League said the following words to the International Commission: "no transfer of territory could be effected without the consent of Albania."[311]

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[308] Constantine A. Chekrezi. *Albania: Past and Present*, p. 51.

[309] Nathalie Clayer. "Bektaşilik ve Arnavut Ulusçuluğu," *Toplumsal Tarih,*, Vol. I, No. 2, (Şubat 1994), p. 59.

[310] Constantine A. Chekrezi. *Albania: Past and Present*, p. 51.

[311] *ibid*, p. 52.

Europe did not take these protests into account, and in December 1879 Montenegrin troops continued to seize Albanian territory, which was assigned to them. But, the armed forces of the League managed to stop their advance.

Apart from that, when the Albanian League issued a proclamation for the establishment of an autonomous regime covering all Albania, the Sublime Porte took some necessary measures. Derviş Paşa was sent to Albania by the Sublime Porte to suppress the Albanian League. After a series of bloody engagements, the Albanian resistance was crushed by the Ottomans. As a result, supporters of the League were dispersed.[312] At this point, it should be noted that, although the Albanian League was suppressed, it became a secret national society. Thereafter, this league began to engage in some underground activities during the Greek-Ottoman War of 1897, and during the Bulgarian uprising in Macedonia in 1903.[313] The situation in the Balkans became less and less favorable for the Ottoman Empire, since Greece and Serbia had already acquired their independence. When the Albanian League became a secret national society, this created a favorable atmosphere for the organized Bulgarian rebels, since they could now ally themselves with the Albanians. Day by day the situation was growing worse for the Ottoman Empire, and the Balkan region was becoming an ethnic boiling pot.

In the meantime, the Ottoman Empire was going through a series of social and legal transformations. The proclamation of the 1876 Constitution created an ambiguous political atmosphere. The Ottoman Empire had difficulty in following the events going on the Balkans, since it was busy with its own internal, legal affairs. In 1906, the Committee of Union and Progress had been re-formed in Selanik. Its aim was to restore the constitution

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[312] *ibid*, pp. 53-55.

[313] *ibid*, pp. 56-57.

of 1876 and to remove Abdülhamid II from the Ottoman throne.[314] Jews and Judeo-Muslims (*Dönme*) were the leading elements of the movement. The wealthy *Dönme*s and Jews of Selanik, and the capitalists of Vienna, Budapest, Berlin, Paris, and London were the financial sources for the Committee of Union and Progress.[315]

In February 1902, the Young Turks met in Paris for the First Young Turk Congress and several Albanians had also participated in this meeting. The majority of the Young Turk group was headed by Prens Sabahaddin. This group agreed upon the principles of the 1876 Constitution, which promised justice, liberty, and national rights to all the ethnic elements of the Ottoman Empire. The other group, which was headed by Ahmet Rıza, insisted on the importance of organization. This group had two principal components, the one supporting Turkish nationalism and the other Ottoman liberalism.[316]

The Young Turk movement had a considerable impact on the leadership of minority groups in the Ottoman Empire. The Young Turks discussed intensively what sort of a government was more suitable for the empire and for the relationship of the central power with the minorities, once the rights of equality would be given to different nationalities. Some groups within the Young Turk movement defended justice, liberty and national self-determination rights for the ethnic elements of the Ottoman Empire, while others were against it. This was a political turning point among the Ottoman intellectuals, so there was no clear attitude towards the minorities.

In 1906, the Young Turk movement began to reshape itself within the Ottoman Empire. Its main center was Selanik. As mentioned earlier, the Committee of Union and

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[314] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 214.

[315] R. W. Seton-Watson. *The Rise of Nationality in the Balkans*, pp. 134-135.

[316] Stavro Skendi. *The Albanian National Awakening: 1878-1912*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 336.

Progress was formed as a secret society, and its ranks included many Albanians. Its first political program required constitutional guarantees and convocation of a parliament. In this parliament, all the "races" of the Ottoman Empire would be represented, without regards to religion or nationality (*bilâ-tefrîk-i cins ü mezheb*).[317] Although the Albanians had been the most loyal ethnic group in the Ottoman Empire,[318] it became difficult for them to maintain their loyalty to the regime of Abdülhamid II. Since, his *istibdâd* policy was really intolerable. For that reason, they embraced the cause of the Young Turks.[319] The oppressive regime and centralist administration of Abdülhamid II brought the Ottoman intellectuals and the Albanian ethnic leaders closer to each other. Oppression was not a problem for the minorities, but it was against the political demands of the Ottoman intellectuals, so the ethnic uprisings had an important impact on the ideological and political atmosphere of the Ottoman Empire as well.

As the Albanians enjoyed the program of the committee, Manastır became another chief center of the Committee of Union and Progress. In the south, branches of the committee were established in Resne, Ohri, Sturuga, Ergiri. In the north, other branches of the committee were organized in İşkodra, Üsküb, Firzovik, Mitroviçe and Prizren. At the same time, the Albanian *Bektaşi*s supported the Young Turks since the *Bektaşi*s shared the liberal doctrine of the Young Turks, and some of the founders of the Committee of Union and Progress were also *Bektaşi*s. On the other hand, the Kosovars were unwilling to abandon the side of Sultan Abdülhamid II.[320] The Young Turk movement found its

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[317] *ibid*, p. 338.

[318] Wesley M. Gewehr. *The Rise of Nationalism in the Balkans, 1800-1930*, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1931), p. 88.

[319] J. Swire. Albania, *The Rise of a Kingdom*, p. 113.

[320] Stavro Skendi. *The Albanian National Awakening: 1878-1912*, pp. 338-339, 341.

reflection in Albania as well. Those Muslim subjects in Albania, especially *Bektaşi*s, were inclined to act with the Young Turk movement, which was against Abdülhamid II. In this period, the Young Turks even established various clubs in Albania, among which "Fukara Kulübü" should be counted.[321]

In 1908, the Constitution of 1876 was brought back to power again, by force. This meant that the Young Turk revolution had triumphed. The Albanians were full of joy with the proclamation of the Constitution, like any other people of the Ottoman Empire. But in İşkodra, the Muslims were against that news. According to many of the Albanian national patriots, the declaration of the Constitution favored the Albanian national movement. In Selanik, the first speech in Albanian said that "now is the day for us also to say freely that we are Albanians. Until today we could not say this, because our tongue would be cut, we would be thrown into prison. But now we will say it knowingly, with joy and hope in our heart."[322] But, the Young Turks tried to control the Albanian national movement with slogan that there would be no Muslims or Christians, but only the Ottoman people in the Ottoman Empire.[323] With the liberty brought by the Constitution of 1876, the Young Turk revolution opened the new path for the minorities in the Balkans. The Young Turk movement created a favorable cultural and political atmosphere for the Albanians. For the first time, they could loudly declare that they were, actually, Albanians.

However, the warning of the Young Turk leadership was not taken seriously by the Albanians. After the proclamation of the Constitution, Albanian national clubs were established in the main cities of the country and in the different parts of the Ottoman

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[321] Nathelie Clayer. "Bektaşilik ve Arnavut Ulusçuluğu," p. 59.

[322] Stavro Skendi. *The Albanian National Awakening: 1878-1912*, pp. 344-345.

[323] *ibid*, p. 345.

Empire, where the Albanians were living. The main aim of the clubs can be defined as "the cultural development of the Albanian people." For instance, the Albanian press became very active with the establishment of these clubs. In this way, the ideas of the Albanian national movement spread over the country. *Korça, Tomorri*, and *Bashkimi i Kombit* were the leading Albanian newspapers.[324] The first phase of freedom after the proclamation of the Constitution led to the consolidation of national and ethnic feelings among the Albanians. It also created a cultural revival on the behalf of the Albanians.

The programs of the clubs were various. For example, the aim of the club in Yanya was to free education and the church of the Albanians from the impact of the Greek Patriarchate. On the other hand, the club of Üsküb was aimed at enlightening the Albanian people through the cultivation of the Albanian language and the establishment of schools. During the first period after the victory of the revolution, the Committee of Union and Progress encouraged the establishment of these clubs. Therefore, in the southern part of Albania, many Albanian clubs were opened by November 1908. But the situation was different in the north, since the people were fanatics and bigots. As the Muslims were too fanatical, they were not willing to accept a club which would propagandize the Albanian language.[325]

Although the Albanian patriots wanted to serve the new leaders of the new regime, they did not believe in its durability. As the Albanian clubs were under the control of the Young Turks, the Albanians could not engage their nationalist activities openly. In August 1908, the National League for the Promotion of Albanian Schools was founded in Avlonya. They had two conflicting political programs: on the one hand, the combination of

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[324] *ibid*, p. 346.

[325] *ibid*, pp. 347-349.

the Ottoman national state of the Young Turks; on the other hand, implementation of the separatist and autonomous tendencies of the Albanian patriots.[326] After the establishment of the National League for the Promotion of Albanian Schools, division among Albanians along different lines began to form. Some segments of the Albanian population, who were closely affiliated and integrated with the Young Turk movement, developed cultural and political programs with the aim of transforming the Ottoman Empire. Meanwhile, those with separatist tendencies rejected totally any dialogue with the local Ottoman rulers. After the establishment of the National League for the Promotion of Albanian Schools in 1908, the dual character of Albanian patriotism was once revealed more.

In October 1908, Bosnia-Herzegovina was annexed by Austria. In the meantime, Bulgaria proclaimed its independence from the Ottoman Empire. All of these events had a serious impact on the Young Turk regime, weakening its authority among the different ethnic populations of the Balkans. As the Albanians still enjoyed the constitutional rights and freedom for national development, they naturally wanted to act with the Young Turks against the events occurring in the Balkan peninsula. In addition, they were afraid of the political and military consequences of the newly independent Bulgaria, since independent Bulgaria was seen as a direct threat to the territorial integrity of not only the Ottoman Empire but also Albania. Moreover, an independent Bulgaria would encourage the expansionist policies of Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece.[327] The Albanians were squeezed between different sources of power: if they preferred to live under the authority of the Ottoman Empire, their ethnic and cultural identities would be under pressure. But, if they choose to struggle for independence, they would soon be controlled by the great powers.

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[326] *ibid*, p. 352.

[327] *ibid*, pp. 355-356.

Greece had an important interest in the question of Albania. If the question of Albanian autonomy became prominent, the delineation of Albanian-Greek frontiers in the future autonomous or independent Albania came into a position of importance. Moreover, Greece feared that this event would have an impact on southern Albania or northern Epir. According to the Greek government, southern Albania was mostly composed of Greek Orthodox people. But, this territory was mostly occupied by Albanian speaking Orthodox and Muslims.[328] The development of an Albanian national sentiment in Epir was favored by the Young Turks as a counterpoise to Hellenism.[329] "The establishment of frontiers had strategic implications. If the mainland next to the Greek Island of Corfu in the Adriatic was Albanian, there existed a future potential threat to Greek interests," since it would then became very difficult for Greece to control the straits of Otranto.[330] The Albanian national awakening and the development of the Young Turk movement coincided. It was to the benefit of the Young Turk movement to nurture Albanian autonomy providing that it helped the political transformation of the Ottoman Empire. This would stop further demands for independence and it contain any expansion in Greek influence over the Albanians. The Albanians were inclined to compromise with the Young Turks as well, since they lacked the capability to acquire independence from the Ottoman Empire.

However, the relations between the Albanians and the Young Turks began to deteriorate. The main reason for this conflict was the Albanian alphabet and Albanian schools. The Young Turks had two main policies: the first one was centralization and the second one was Ottomanization. It is evident that, there was a conflict between these

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[328] M. B. Hayne. "Great Britain, the Albanian Question and the Concert of Europe, 1911-1914," *Balkan Studies*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2, 1987, p. 328.

[329] Basil Kondis. *Greece and Albania 1908-1914*, (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1976), pp. 44-45.

[330] M. B. Hayne. "Great Britain, the Albanian Question and the Concert of Europe, 1911-1914," p. 329.

Ottoman policies and the aspirations of the Albanians for national development and autonomy.[331]

Schools and the alphabet were two important questions in the struggle of the Albanian national movement. Although the use of the Albanian language was allowed by the Ottoman government after the Young Turk Revolution, progress in Albanian enlightenment could not be made without Albanian schools and without a uniform language.[332] At first, the Albanians were given the right to express themselves in their own language by using their alphabet but, with certain internal and external influences, this right was limited.

Until 1908, religion was the predominant factor, which organized the schools in Albania. But in order to unite the Albanians and to awake and develop their national consciousness, new schools had to be non-denominational. Another problem was the fact that the books in Albanian were insufficient. Religious communities and foreign countries like Greece, Serbia, and Austria subsidized the denominational schools in Albania.[333] The Serbs had established schools and churches in north eastern Albania, but the Albanians remained almost only Albanophone. This meant that a dispersed Serb element had been absorbed by the Albanians. Austria also encouraged the establishment of schools at İşkodra. The main aim of Austria was to prevent Pan-Slavism in the Balkans and to control the eastern shores of the Adriatic Sea.[334] In spite of financial difficulties, the Albanian clubs managed to open Albanian schools in the various towns, like Elbasan, Görüce, and

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[331] Stavro Skendi. *The Albanian National Awakening: 1878-1912*, p. 365.

[332] *ibid*, p. 366.

[333] *ibid*, p. 366.

[334] J. Swire. *Albania, The Rise of a Kingdom*, pp. 65-66.

Manastır.[335] On the contrary, the Muslims of İşkodra were unwilling to open Albanian schools or to hear of Albanian. According to them, Turkish was an official language, and they did not want to hear any language other than Turkish.[336] Greece, Austria and Serbia took advantage of the opportunity of the permission given to use the Albanian alphabet in the schools and they all began to engage in religious and cultural activities with the aim of weakening Ottoman cultural impact in Albania. Soon, a multitude of alphabets were circulating in Albania.

This multitude of alphabets was a big obstacle for the development of Albanian education. "In the Catholic Schools of Shkodër, the alphabets employed were those of Bashkimi (Union) and Agimi (Dawn), the two literary socities."[337] The alphabet of İstanbul was used in the south. It is evident that a unified national alphabet was quite necessary in order to develop the national consciousness and the unify the Tosks and Gegs. For that reason, in November 1908, an alphabet congress was organized in Manastır. In this congress, an alphabet committee was elected with Fishta at its head. This committee focused on three questions: *First*, among the three alphabets -İstanbul, Bashkimi and Agimi- which one should be chosen. *Second*, parts of each alphabet should be combined for the formation of a new alphabet. *Third*, a new alphabet should thus be created. In the end, the İstanbul and the Latin alphabets were chosen by the alphabet committee to be used in all Albanian schools. So, it is important to note that the Manastır Congress gave the first impetus to the unification of education and the union of the Albanians.[338] The acceptance of the İstanbul and the Latin alphabets endorsed the equal weight of the Muslim and

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[335] Basil Kondis. *Greece and Albania 1908-1914*, p. 43.

[336] Stavro Skendi. *The Albanian National Awakening: 1878-1912*, p. 368.

[337] *ibid*, p. 370.

[338] *ibid*, pp. 371-373.

Ottoman subjects and the non-Muslim character of the remaining population. The solution brought aimed to unify the Muslim and Christian cultural tendencies within the same national territory in a peaceful manner.

The Muslim Gegs were not satisfied with the new trends that emerged under the constitutional regime. The Kosovars were pleased with the rule of Abdülhamid II, since he respected their laws and customs and allowed them to carry arms and pay low taxes. The Muslims of İşkodra were also Hamidians, since they believed that they could keep their privileges only under the authority of Abdülhamid II. Not surprisingly, the strong opposition to the Young Turk regime came from the Kosovars. They reminded the Committee of Union and Progress that they were in favor of preserving their privileges. Therefore, in May 1909, a military expedition was sent to Kosova by the Young Turks to stop the growth of hostile attitudes.[339] Northern Albania was the most appropriate region for the uprising. Since it was both at the far end of the Ottoman Empire, and at the same time, it could obtain direct support from the Serbs. Besides that, national and Slavic identity were firmer in the north.

Southern Albanians had also some problems with the centralization policies of the Young Turks. Although the Muslim religion was a binding factor between the Muslim Albanians and the Young Turks, the principle of nationality separated them from each other. "The Young Turks aim at reviving Turkey and the national Albanians endeavor to expel her from their country and govern themselves."[340] The religious divisions among the people and cultural differences between the north and south can be seen as the main obstacles to Albanian national development. In addition, the Young Turks used these

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[339] *ibid*, pp. 390-391.

[340] *ibid*, p. 396.

differences as a tool for their own interests. Meanwhile, in March 1910, the situation in Kosova became worse.[341] It was the Young Turk oppression, which paved the way for uncoordinated uprising. It spread from Piriştine to the province of Kosova.[342] In April, Şevket Turgut Paşa was sent to Kosova by the Ottoman government to suppress the uprising. Apart from cavalry and artillery, the Ottoman forces had 16,000 infantry under the command of Şevket Turgut Paşa. Although the Albanian rebels were fewer in number, they managed to occupy the passes. At Kaçanik, the commander of the insurrectionists was İdris Seferi. In Crnoleva, Hasan Hüseyni and İsa Buletini were commanding the insurrectionists. In the battle of Kaçanik, there were heavy losses on the Albanian side. In May 1910, Mahmut Şevket Paşa, the Ottoman Minister of War and of Albanian descent, arrived Albania and the army became more powerful. Within a short time period, the Albanian insurrection was suppressed.[343]

In the summer of 1910, Şevket Turgut Paşa's armies occupied the whole of northern Albania. Thereafter, Şevket Turgut Paşa left İşkodra in August 1910 and went to Selanik. Five months after going to Selanik, the whole campaign of Şevket Turgut Paşa in northern Albania was over. After the suppression of the northern revolt, a systematic war began against the Albanain cultural movement. The Albanian clubs and newspapers were closed, and the editors and leaders of newspapers were imprisoned.[344]

The Catholic Chieftain of Hot, Ded Gjo Luli, gathered his highlanders and decided to refuse the orders of the *vali* of İşkodra, to pay taxes and to deliver their arms. As the

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[341] *ibid*, pp. 404-405.

[342] Edwin E. Jacques. *The Albanians: an Ethnic History from Prehistoric Times to Present*, p. 268.

[343] Stavro Skendi. *The Albanian National Awakening: 1878-1912*, pp. 405-406.

[344] *ibid*, pp. 406-407.

insurgents were pursued by the Ottoman troops, they entered Montenegro and Podgoricë became the center of the refugee Albanian revolutionaries. This showed that the sharp reaction of the Sublime Porte in Albania had annoyed the Catholics.[345]

In March 1911, an uprising occurred in the mountains of İşkodra. It was led by Ded Gjo Luli. In order to suppress the revolt, Bedri Paşa, the *vali* of İşkodra, tried to use the Muslim religion. As most of the rebels were Catholics, Bedri Paşa made a strong request to the Muslims to obtain arms from the government and suppress the insurgents, who wanted to destroy their religion. After the strong attack of the Ottoman army, the whole mountainous region of İşkodra was united. It should be noted that Montenegro played an important role in the uprisings, which occurred in northern Albania. It supported Catholic Albanian revolutionaries and supplied them with weapons. The main aim of Montenegro was to expand its territory. For that reason, the Albanian insurrections were used as a tool to achieve its goal.[346]

On the other hand, Russia was in favor of the Albanian insurrectionists, since it wanted to establish a link between the Albanian and Slavic elements in order to get rid of Austrian intervention the Balkans.[347]

As Sir Edward Grey, England's Minister of Foreign Affairs, received a petition from the chieftain at Podgoridsa, he began to play the role of peace-maker. He proposed to "bring the rebellion to an end or to avert the serious consequences that may arise from its being prolonged." So, the Ottoman Empire and Montenegro begun to talk about the Albanian refugees.[348]

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[345] *ibid*, p. 409.

[346] *ibid*, pp. 411-413.

[347] *ibid*, p. 415.

[348] *ibid*, p. 418.

In the spring of 1911, the central committee of the League in Manastır asked some Albanian notables to organize guerilla bands. In May 1911, a strong request was made by the Central Revolutionary Committee to the Albanians to be ready for the general revolution. The committee demanded some privileges from the Ottoman government. These were as follows: the Ottoman Empire should give administrative unity to the Albanians; İşkodra, Kosova, Manastır, and Yanya should be united in a single *paşalık* and governed by Albanians with a separate parliament and a separate army; all government employees should have Albanian nationality. The Central Revolutionary Committee organization spread over other parts of the south and guerilla bands were formed. These guerilla bands consisted of men coming from various social strata and different faiths. It should be noted that in Görüce and Ergiri, the *Bektaşis* played a significant role in assisting the guerilla bands. Kâmil Panariti's band decided to attack to the prison of Görüce in July 1911. However, they could not achieve this, since the Ottoman army surrounded them at Orman Çiftlik. After a severe battle, several young Albanians fell.[349]

During the 1911 uprising, contacts between the north and the south of Albania were more evident. But various revolutionary actions under a common leadership could not be created. Thus, the "Black Society" was formed in the south in order to direct the entire Albanian national movement. This did not prove successful. On the other hand, the revolutionary movement of 1911 can be defined as a milestone towards mobilization and the organization of forces and the development of the political consciousness of the Albanians. From then on, the Ottoman Empire started political negotiations with the Albanians. In this way, the Albanian question came onto the agenda of the great powers.[350]

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[349] *ibid*, pp. 420-422.

[350] *ibid*, p. 424.

Meanwhile, the other elements of the Ottoman Empire began to suffer under the Young Turk regime. As a result, Liberty and Entente (*Hürriyet ve İtilâf*) Party was established. The aim of this party was to decentralize the administration and to recognize the constitutional rights of the national provinces of the Ottoman Empire. As the election campaign started in Albania, the relationship between the Young Turks and the Albanians worsened. The Young Turks used money, fraud, and terror, to prevent their opponents from being elected. During the convention of Turkish parliament on 18 April 1912, they succeeded in obtaining a majority of the deputies, who were favorites of the Young Turks. Leading Albanian figures like İsmail Kemâl and Hasan Piriştina could not be re-elected as deputies. But Hasan Piriştina established contact with the leaders of the Bulgaro-Macedonians to give an extra impetus for the revolutionary movement.[351]

In the meantime, Kosova, Avlonya, Berat, Tiran, Dıraç, and Kruje were ready for the insurrection. In May 1912, the conflicts between Albanian insurgents and the Ottomans intensified. At this time, political leaders and members of the Central Committee began to act with the revolutionaries, and within ten days 3,000 rebels reached İpek and the rest were at Gjakovë. Then, the main aim of the revolutionaries was to obtain autonomy. Moreover, the Catholics of Mertur and Nikaj supported the uprising of İpek and Gjakovë. Kruje, Tiran, and İşkodra also backed the insurrection. This meant that not only Catholic towns, but also Muslim towns supported the uprising. Besides, Albanian colonies abroad had also gave their full supports for the rebelling forces. The growing national currents in Albania made a deep impact on the Ottoman government. In order to preserve division among the Albanians and to negotiate with the leaders of uprising, the Sublime Porte sent peace delegations to Albania. In İpek and Gjakovë, the revolt of the Kosovars was

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[351] *ibid*, pp. 425-427.

successful.[352] The rebelling forces in Kosova put their demands in a written memorandum containing fourteen points. The Ottoman Empire accepted most of the proposal, but the demand for autonomy was rejected totally by the Ottoman government.[353]

In 1912, the Albanians had two important goals: on the one hand, in order to gain time for the preparation of independent Albania, the Albanians wanted to preserve the Ottoman Empire as a means to reach their national end. On the other hand, they focused on securing an autonomous administration, since this administration could be defined as a milestone for their complete independence.[354] The Albanian revolution followed a long path and, at each phase, the struggle acquired certain rights. The revolutionary process developed piece by piece, and Albania did not want to cut its ties with the Ottoman Empire until the last moment. However, the political instability in the Ottoman Empire prevented the proper handling of the Albanian question.

In November 1912, Albanian societies, organizations and individuals from both the homeland and abroad met in Bucharest. They decided to proclaim Albanian independence and to elect a provisional government. On 28 November 1912, the Congress in Avlonya, headed by İsmail Kemâl, proclaimed Albania as an independent state.[355]

In December 1912, the great powers of Europe decided to recognize an independent Albania. So, Albania obtained its full independence during the Balkan Wars and in 1913, the last Balkan State was established.[356]

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[352] *ibid*, pp. 428-430.

[353] Ramadan Marmallaku. *Albania and the Albanians*, p. 28.

[354] Constantine A. Chekrezi. *Albania: Past and Present*, p. 63.

[355] Ramadan Marmallaku. *Albania and the Albanians*, p. 28.

[356] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 230.

The interesting thing about the Albanian revolution was that the Ottoman Empire was going through the process of disintegration. The Young Turk movement tried to find a solution to the minority problem until the last moment. But, the already independent Greek and Serbian nations forced Albania towards a national liberation activity, rather than being a fully autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire. Russia was effective in this process too. However, the internal dynamics of the Ottoman Empire played the chief role in the disintegration process. Thinking that further violence and rebellious activity in Albania would endanger the stability of the Balkans, the major European powers and the Ottoman Empire had to accept Albanian independence. It is interesting to note that nobody knew that the chaotic situation in the Balkan peninsula would even be more severe by the Balkan Wars.

Conclusion

These ethnic uprisings can safely be considered one of the great turning points in the long and variegated history of the Balkans. At the end of the uprising era, the Ottoman Empire had lost some of its strategic lands. Meanwhile, the Balkan peninsula entered a new era where new nation-states were established. But, the ethnic problems of the Balkans never come to an end.

Greece obtained its independence in 1830, which meant that the Greek people were the very first people who obtained their independence from the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. Serbia and Montenegro were recognized as independent states after the Treaty of Berlin in 1878. Although Serbia became an autonomous state at the beginning of the nineteenth century, its independence was somewhat late. As Bulgaria was geographically closer to the Ottoman Empire, its national awakening was relatively late in comparison

with the other ethnic minorities in the Balkans. Moreover, the Bulgarian revolts in the nineteenth century were harshly suppressed by Ottoman troops. In addition, Bulgarian aspirations for independence lacked a solid economic, political, and organizational basis. Therefore, Bulgaria finally obtained its independence at the beginning of the twentieth century. Bulgaria became an independent state in October 1908, under the reign of Ferdinand. Similar to Bulgaria, Albania obtained its independence in the twentieth century. In 1913, the last Balkan nation-state was established.[357]

Here, it is interesting to note that, all of these new Balkan states adopted similar patterns of government. The new governmental patterns of the Balkan states were constitutional monarchies with highly centralized administrative systems. This system was extremely different from the autonomous local governmental system of the Ottoman Empire.[358]

These new regimes emerging throughout the Balkan peninsula were faced with important financial burdens. Since, they had to find resources in order to pay for establishing new administrative systems, for national improvements, and for national defense.[359]

Let us assume that, this chapter was the "x" axis of this study. The "y" axis of my matrix would be the next chapter of this study. In this sense, it is important to remember that this first chapter is the historical framework of the study. Moreover, this chronological chapter can be considered the "guide" for reading the second chapter of this study, which constitutes the comparative analytical framework of the study.

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[357] *ibid*, pp. 156, 195, and 230.

[358] *ibid*, p. 321.

[359] *ibid*, p. 322.

III. ETHNIC UPRISINGS IN THE OTTOMAN BALKANS :

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Introduction

The Ottoman Empire was structured over a wide variety of geographic regions ranging from the Arabian peninsula to North Africa, Anatolia, Caucasus, and the interior regions of the Balkans. Besides, its widespread geographic location included a multitude of ethnic minorities of different backgrounds. These ethnic differences were the most complicated in the Balkans, since within a relatively small geographical area there were the Serbs, Bulgarians, Greeks, Croatians, Albanians, Montenegrins, Bosnians, and others.

With the development of capitalism, a new wave of national tendencies developed in Europe. This national sentiment and the formation of nation-states had a destructive impact on the multi-national and multi-religious empires, including the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires. Throughout the nineteenth century, the agrarian empires of the old days were transforming themselves into newly industrializing nation-states. Although the Ottoman Empire caught the industrialization train rather late, it was also going through a process of social, economic, and political transformation. This process had its impact on the political structure of the Ottoman Empire as well.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the first symptoms of national awakening were seen in the Balkans. As the Balkan peninsula was located at the outskirts of the major European nations, the ethnic minorities in this region were the first affected by the national sentiments going on in Europe.

The decentralization nationalist tendencies in the Ottoman Balkans were aided by the inability of the Ottoman Empire to keep track of the major changes going on in the economic and social spheres in the Ottoman Empire. To prevent decentralization, the Ottoman Empire even resorted to certain economic reforms. However, this action aggravated the situation, since the ideological awakening of the Balkan peoples at different stages and different times combined with the development of domestic markets in each ethnic territory.

III. A. Former status of the uprising people

Towards the middle of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was a big empire positioned on three continents: namely, Europe, Asia, and Africa. There were 36 million people living on these vast lands. However, this gigantic empire was actually the ghost of a disintegrating organism, which was losing its political, economic, and social unity day by day. The Ottoman Empire was far from giving the impression of a unified and orderly state.[360]

At the stage of disintegration, the Ottoman Empire made its last attempt to save the empire itself. This was the reformation of the *Tanzimât*. The aim was to reestablish this huge empire with new cadres and to transform the Ottoman Empire into something like a modern European state. In other words, it can be said that the *Tanzimât* was an attempt to reorganize the Ottoman Empire against highly developed European civilizations. The main aim of the *Tanzimât* was to restructure the empire in accordance with the Western system, so that, the Ottoman Empire would have a similar socio-political system to that of

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[360] Halil İnalcık. *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*, (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1992), p. 1.

the Western states. The *Tanzimât* was a complete Westernization movement.[361] The other aim of the *Tanzimât* period was to establish a stronger empire, so that the Christian subjects of the empire could then be integrated and subdued with the Ottoman state.[362]

The idealist attempt of the *Tanzimât* to restructure the Ottoman Empire could not be easily fulfilled. There were too many conflicting interests in the domestic spheres of the Ottoman Empire. Equality before law and the right to own private property were the two most important problematic concepts. The Western protages of the non-Muslim ethnic minorities were also unhappy with the policy of the Ottoman administration towards the minorities. As in the Bulgarian case, the Ottoman Empire did not fulfill its promise of reforming the taxing system for agriculture.

The minority groups were not happy with political and economic conditions in their own provinces. Their demands were not, however, taken into account by the Sublime Porte. Hence, an ethnic opposition group in Bulgaria called the "Young" group demanded political and religious autonomy and sent a petition to Sultan Abdülaziz. The Sublime Porte replied by only granting permission to the Bulgarian Bishop to write letters in Bulgarian. This was just a very small portion of what the Bulgarian minority had demanded. They were really dissatisfied with the Ottoman policy of not taking their ethnic demands seriously.[363]

The ethnic minorities in the Balkans were deprived of independence in internal issues, electing of local leaders, freedom of commerce, use of mother tongue, and use of their ethnic alphabets. These demands were interrelated with each other and they were the

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[361] *ibid*, p. 2.

[362] *ibid*, p. 3.

[363] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1962), p. 151.

early indicators of future attempts for independence. This is why the Sublime Porte was extremely reluctant to accept and endorse these demands. So, naturally, the lack of fulfillment of these demands led to confrontation of ethnic Balkan minorities with the central administration of the Ottoman Empire.

III. B. Reasons of the Uprisings

Although ethnic uprisings in the Balkans stemmed from various sources, the aims of the Balkan people were more or less the same: to rebel against the Ottoman Empire and acquire independence. Before explaining the specific reasons, it is important to summarize the existing social, economic and political situation in the Balkans in the nineteenth century. The dominant factors in the history of the Balkan peninsula were the theme of national revolt and the formation of new governments.[364] At this point, it can be said that there was a close relationship between the theme of national revolt and the formation of new states. Since, if the Balkan peoples did not rebel against the Ottoman rule in the Balkans, they thought that they could never obtain their independencies. As the Ottoman administration was very weak in the Balkans, the Balkan peoples found a suitable environment for revolt. At the turn of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman administration had difficulties with the Janissaries, since the Janissaries had begun to act independently and irresponsibly in most of the Ottoman provinces. In the Balkan provinces, Serbia should be taken into consideration first. As the Sublime Porte could not control its own army fully, this paved way for the conflicts between the Janissaries and the Serbs. Therefore, within a short time period, the first Serbian revolt began in the form of minor attacks

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[364] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, Vol. I, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 171.

against the Janissaries.[365] Although the Janissaries were one of the most important representatives of the Ottoman Empire in Serbia, the main aim of the Serbs was to get rid of the Janissaries but not the Ottomans. In other words, the reason of the first Serbian uprising was to fight against the "lawlessness" of the *dayıs*. In this sense, the main aim of the Serbian revolt was not full independence. Initially, the Serbian revolt was not against the Sublime Porte, either. But, after a while, the character of the revolt shifted. Soon, it was not a revolt against the disorderly Janisssaries, it instead took the shape of a revolt geared towards founding an independent nation.[366] This meant that the aim of the Serbian insurrection was a fight against the Sublime Porte. The Janissaries became an autonomous military power which could not be controlled by the Ottoman Empire. When they were sent to the bordering regions of the Balkan peninsula, they acted on their own. Although the Sublime Porte did not approve most of their actions, they were seen as the representatives of the Ottoman Empire. So, any ill actions on the part of the Janissaries were seen the bad intentions of the Ottoman Empire.

As in the case of the Serbia, the Cretan Greeks were also unhappy with the Janissaries. The Janissaries in Crete not only began to act irresponsibly, but also were engaged in various types of profiteering actions.[367] This led to wide-spread fervor among the Cretan Greeks.

On the other hand, misrule by the Ottoman governors was among the most important reasons for ethnic uprisings. For instance, the Sublime Porte had to deal with the disobedient governor of Yanya, Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, for a long time. He managed to gain

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[365] Michael Boro Petrovich. *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1918*, (New York: Harcourt· Brace- Javanovich, 1976), pp. 31-32.

[366] *ibid*, pp. 37-39.

[367] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," *Dış Politika*, No. 6, 1977, p. 104.

control over a wide plot of land encompassing central and southern Albania, Macedonia, Northern Greece and the Ionian Islands.[368] Moreover, as Yanya was located on the outskirts of the Ottoman Empire, Tepedelenli Ali Paşa had been a chronic problem for the Sublime Porte. Like Yanya, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Crete were also on the outskirts of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, control of these distant provinces was very difficult for the Ottoman administration. On the contrary, Bulgaria was located very close to the Ottoman Empire, so it was relatively easy for the Ottoman governors to control this region. As a result, the national awakening of the Bulgarians began at a later date than the other minorities in the Balkans.

When we look at the general picture of the rebelling people, we see that they were generally peasants who were not satisfied with the land system in the Ottoman Empire. As mentioned earlier, in the nineteenth century, *timâr* was changed into *çiftlik* system. In this system, the economic conditions of the peasants worsened, and they became share-croppers. On the other hand, Muslims were the *çiftlik* owners. This indicated that the conditions were not in favor of the peasants, who were, in most cases, Christians. Thus, antagonisms developed between Muslims and Christians.[369] The heart of the politico-military and socio-economic structure of the Ottoman Empire was the *timâr-sipâhi* system. According to some historians, Ottoman feudalism was "retrogressive" from the beginning or only after the sixteenth century, when it transformed into the *çiftlik* system.[370] After the sixteenth century, military defeats and territorial loses led to the deterioration of Ottoman feudal military institutions. Therefore, the central power soon weakened and ethnic

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[368] Edwin E. Jacques. *The Albanians: An Ethnic History from Prehistoric Times to the Present*, (London: Mc- Forland & Company, 1995), p. 250.

[369] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States,1804-1920*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), pp. 12-14.

[370] W. S. Vucinic. "The Nature of Balkan Society Under Ottoman Rule," *Slavic Review*, No. 21, 1962, p. 600.

uprisings occurred in both the Balkan provinces and the others.[371] The Ottoman land system differed drastically from the European feudal system. There was not any real private property. The land basically belonged to the Ottoman state and only in certain instances, leasing and tax farming could be applied. So, class conflicts in the Ottoman Empire took different forms. Since the lack of private property prevented the emergence of a big land owning class, relationship with the state became important.

The taxation policy of the Sublime Porte towards the Balkan peoples was the other reason for the ethnic revolts in the Balkans. For example, during the *Tanzimât* period, *iltizâm* was one of the Ottoman systems, which Bulgarian peasants suffered under, since this system opened the way for the misuse of the land.[372] Hence, it can be said that Bulgarian peasants tried to correct the abuses of the Ottoman landholding and taxation system.[373] When the *Tanzimât* reforms were not successful in solving the problems of taxation, Bulgarian lands became a suitable ground for several uprisings in the nineteenth century, as in the case of Niş and Vidin uprisings. Moreover, harvest was another important problem in Ottoman Bulgaria, because most of the harvest was taken from the peasants under the name of tithe.[374] Meanwhile, peasants faced the consequences of the unsatisfactory harvests due to a bad agrarian situation. The Herzegovinian uprising of 1875 was an important example of this. The bad agrarian situation opened the way for the intense relationship between the peasants and landholders.[375]

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[371] *ibid*, p. 601.

[372] Mark Pinson. "Ottoman Bulgarian in the First Tanzimat Period – The Revolts in Nish (1841) and Vidin (1850)," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 2, 1975, p. 104.

[373] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 335.

[374] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 236.

[375] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 352.

III. C. Timing

When the ethnic uprisings in the nineteenth century are analyzed, special attention should be paid to the timing of each uprising, because throughout the nineteenth century, many uprisings occurred in the Balkans. Some of them took a long time, and lasted until the achievement of independency or semi-autonomy. On the other hand, some of the uprisings were suppressed by the Sublime Porte within a short time period. It can safely be said that the timing of the uprisings depended on both the internal factors of the provinces and the international situation. For instance, in the eighteenth century as the *paşalık* of Belgrade had witnessed battles between Austria and the Ottoman Empire, this condition had an important impact on the Serbian national revolt.[376] The other important factor for the Serbs in choosing the beginning of the nineteenth century for their uprising was the uncontrollable actions of Pasvantoğlu Osman Paşa. As Pasvantoğlu was a chronic headache for the Ottoman Empire, the Sublime Porte was not able to focus on the other problems in Serbia.[377] Besides that, in 1792, the invasion of Egypt by Napoleon can be considered as a direct threat to the Ottoman Empire and its provinces. As the Ottoman army had to deal with the Napoleonic army, the Ottoman soldiers in the Balkan provinces were recalled by the Sublime Porte to İstanbul.[378] This weakened the military might of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. So, the Serbs thought that the time was ripe for rebellion, and the uprising took place in Serbia. The Ottoman Empire had to deal with the Serbian revolts from 1804 to 1830.

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[376] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 26.

[377] *ibid*, p. 18.

[378] George Castellan. *History of the Balkans: From Mohammed the Conqueror to Stalin*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 234.

Meanwhile, in 1821, the Greek revolt occurred and the situation became extremely unfavorable for the Ottoman Empire, since it was difficult to fight on two fronts. The changing policy of the European great powers developed deep interest in the Middle East and North Africa. This led to the further disintegration of the Ottoman Balkan provinces. Now, the Ottoman Empire had to deal with the ethnic groups on two major fronts: one in Egypt and the other in the Balkans. It seems that there was enough flow of information about what was going on in the outskirts of the Ottoman Empire. The consecutive uprisings of the Serbs and Greeks were indicators of this tendency.

On the other hand, another Greek uprising took place in the Danubian Principalities, since it was difficult to control this region for the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman administration had loose ties with these principalities, and the rebelling forces thought that the Danubian Principalities were a convenient place for rebellion.[379] Apart from that, as the Ottoman forces were busy with Tepedelenli Ali Paşa, the Greek leaders of the uprising decided to inflict a revolt in the Peloponnesus in 1820.[380] So, we can safely say that there was a close relationship between these events. In other words, the timing of the uprisings often depended on other events, occurring in different regions of the Ottoman Empire.

Another specific example of this was the relationship between the timing of the Herzegovinian revolt of 1875 and the Bulgarian revolt of 1876. As the Ottoman administration focused on Herzegovina, young Bulgarian revolutionaries organized a new revolt in the Bulgarian lands.[381] So, it is evident that, choosing this specific time for the

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[379] R. W. Seton-Watson. *The Rise of Nationality in the Balkans*, (London: Constable, 1917), p. 50.

[380] Dougles Dakin. *The Unification of Greece, 1770-1923*, (London: Benn, 1972), pp. 36-37.

[381] Konstantin Kosev. "The Uprising of April 1876 in Bulgaria," *Bulgarian Historical Review*, Vol. IV, No. 1, 1976, p. 26.

rebellion was not a fortuitous event, rather there was a close relationship between these events.

Although there was a war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia in 1878, the Cretan insurgents were willing to fire guns in Crete. Because, this situation was regarded as an advantage by the Cretan insurgents. They knew very well that while the Ottoman army was fighting against the Russians, the Ottoman troops stationed in Crete were, of course, relatively few in number.[382] Timing of the uprisings was then ripe for the rebelling ethnic groups, since the international arena was cloudy. Interests of the major powers of Europe were changing quickly, while the issues of religious conflicts and antagonisms between the Muslim and Christian groups were also ascending. With the rise of nationalism in Europe and the consolidation of nation-systems, other cultural and religious issues began to emerge as differentiating factors between communities formerly living together. Since, the Ottoman Empire had its roots in the Islamic culture. Thus, the Ottoman Empire was becoming a battle ground between the religious claims of various ethnic minority groups. Albania was a specific example of this in terms of its religious atmosphere.

III. D. Duration

The duration of the uprisings differed from one place to another. Although some of the uprisings repeated themselves, some others were suppressed within a short time period. For example, the Cretan revolts reoccurred over a thirty year period. This indicates that the Cretan question had became a chronic and incurable problem for the Ottoman Empire.

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[382] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," p. 111.

On the other hand, the Greek revolts can be defined as a set of consecutive revolts, since the Greek revolts first occurred in the Danubian Principalities, and in the meantime, other revolts occurred in mainland Greece. In the Serbian revolts, there were three phases: *First*, the revolt was mainly against the misrule of the Janissaries. *Second*, the Serbs demanded self government. This meant that the revolt had became an action against the authority of the Sublime Porte. *Third*, loyal countrymen from every social strata flocked to the aid of Miloš. The rebels gained a decisive military success. Within a few weeks, the Ottoman forces were completely cleared from the battle field.[383] Apart from that, between the years of 1815-1830, many local uprisings occurred consecutively against the rule of Miloš in Serbia.[384]

Depending on the geographical location of the region, composition of its population and its relationship with the Ottoman central administration, uprisings developed various features. Almost all of the uprisings had the final aim of acquiring ethnic independency. This meant that whatever the cost of the uprisings for the rebels, they developed implicit actions to reorganize the uprisings after each suppression. Depending on the intellectual, organizational capability, internal and external political atmosphere, reorganization of the rebellions showed distinctive differences from one place to another.

III. E. Location

In the nineteenth century, Ottoman society was divided into two basic parts: rural and urban. The Balkan city population was predominantly Muslim, while the Balkan rural population was composed mainly of Christians. Therefore, it should be noted that, the city

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[383] Wesley M. Gewer. *The Rise of Nationalism in the Balkans*, (New York: Henry Holt, 1931), p. 18.

[384] Michael Boro Petrovich. *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1918*, p. 106.

can be defined as the place of the Muslim ruler, tax collector, and security agent. On the contrary, the village symbolized Christian peasant, tax payer, and food-producer.[385] In this sense, it can be said that, the first impetus for the uprisings in the Balkans came from the rural parts of the region. The very first revolt of the Balkan peasants against the Ottoman administration was the Serbian revolt. In this revolt the peasantry played an important role, and the village of Orašac became the place where the Serbian notables and fighters organized the revolt against the Janissaries.[386] The first Serbian Insurrection was a local insurrection against the Janissaries.[387] However, the second wave of the Serbian insurrection also had local and ethnic characteristics.

Unlike the Serbian revolts, the Greek revolt in the Danubian Principalities had different characteristics. One of the most important features of this revolt was the fact that the revolt occurred outside of mainland Greece, because the Ottoman control of the Danubian Principalities was weaker than mainland Greece. And, the organizational centre of this revolt, Odessa, was near the Danubian Principalities. This meant that it was easier to control the rebelling forces from such a distant place. In contrast to the uprising in the Danubian Principalities, the Greek uprising in the Peloponnesus arose from local events as in the case of the Serbian uprising.[388] Moreover, resembling the Serbian revolt, the uprising in the Peloponnesus had a nationalistic characteristic, and the rebelling population mainly consisted of peasants. So, it can be safely said that, the location of the uprising was determined by the rebelling forces with regards to their social class. This meant that if the

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[385] W. S. Vucinich. "The Nature of Balkan Society Under Ottoman Rule," p. 603.

[386] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 11.

[387] Michael Boro Petrovich. *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1918*, p. 38.

[388] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 216.

rebelling forces were peasants, the location of the uprising would generally be local and limited.

III. F. Leadership

Although there were some common features in the leadership styles of the uprisings, each one had its own characteristics. Since there were regional, traditional, and political differences within the Balkan societies. In this sense, it is important to give some specific examples from the major ethnic uprisings, which occurred in the Balkans. In the first phase of the Serbian revolt, the leader was George Petrovich, better known as Karadjordge.[389] At this time, he lived in the village of Topola, and as he had served in the Austro-Turkish war on the sides of the Austrians, he had some experience in warfare.[390] Although he was a violent, morose, simple, and illiterate peasant, he had remarkable qualifications of leadership.[391] Besides, Karadjordge was one of the most important and enterprising men in Serbia. He was a wealthy pig merchant. Being a pig merchant was an important thing in Serbia, since traditionally the pig trade had been one of Serbia's most important sources of revenue.[392] Meanwhile, it should be noted that, as the population of Serbia was composed mainly of peasants, it was not difficult for them to act under the command of such a leader. They needed such a leadership style, because the main feature of the Serbian uprising was its local orientation and guerilla warfare. The Serbian socio-psychology favored these fears and charismatic leadership.

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[389] Wesley M. Gewehr. *The Rise of Nationalism in the Balkans, 1800-1930*, p. 17.

[390] Woislav M. Petrovich. *Serbia, Her People, History and Aspirations*, (London: George G. Harrap, 1915), p. 70.

[391] Wesley M. Gewehr. *The Rise of Nationalism in the Balkans, 1800-1930*, p. 18.

[392] Woislav M. Petrovich. *Serbia, Her People, History and Aspirations*, p. 71.

Similar to the first Serbian insurrection, the second Serbian uprising also occurred under the command of a single leadership, that of Miloš Obrenović. He was a cunning, unscrupulous, and clever man. Contrary to Karadjordge's "simple" character, Miloš had a complicated character, and he was able to play his own game of duplicity and bribery against the Ottoman Empire.[393]

One of the most important uprisings that occurred in Bulgarian lands was the Niş uprising. Its leader was Miloé Javanovic, who had been a member of the delegation to İstanbul.[394] It is evident that the Serbian and the Niş uprisings took place under the leadership of a single man, since these societies were willing to follow such a leader. Otherwise, they would not be able to organize themselves, because they did not have such a capacity. Being extremely reluctant to risk their lands, the peasants always acted in line with their leaders.

In contrast to the Serbian and Niş uprisings, the Greek revolt was more complicated, since the Greek people were more intellectual and they had a strong tradition of ancient civilization. Due to these factors, Greek society was more sophisticated than the other minorities in the Balkans. Unlike the Serbian revolts there was a balanced rivalry between the leading individuals, and a strong leader to command the rebels did not flourish in the Greek revolt.[395] We can safely say that, the main reason for this difference in leadership style came from various factors, such as the two societies having their own understanding of political power and tradition of policy making. On the other hand, the revolt in Peloponnesus was conducted under the command of Alexander Ypsilantis, who

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[393] *ibid*, p. 91.

[394] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 172.

[395] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, pp. 38-39.

was not only a member of an old *Phanariote* family but also an officer in the Russian army.[396] This was also an example of a single leadership style which was very common in the peasant societies.

In some cases, former Ottoman officials also became the leaders of the rebellious movements against the Ottoman administration. Tepedelenli Ali Paşa and Kavalalı Mehmet Ali Paşa were the two important disobedient Ottoman governors, who were chronic rebels against the Ottoman Empire.

III. G. Organization

Throughout the Balkan Peninsula, organizational activities in various revolts can be considered as a cornerstone in obtaining independency or autonomy. In order to get rid of the Ottoman administration from the Balkans, various kinds of organizations were established both in the Balkans and abroad. In some cases, they organized their cadres within the country, where the revolt occurred. In some other cases, they organized their cadres outside the Balkans. Although most of the organizations had common characteristics, each one had its own way of organizing the ethic uprisings.

In the nineteenth century, the Greek organization known as Philike Hetairia was very active in the Balkans as well as in the other provinces of the Ottoman Empire. As mentioned earlier, Philike Hetairia was established by the Greek merchants in Odessa.[397] This was a secret, Orthodox, and hierarchical organization. In other words, there was a strict level of hierarchy among the members of the organization. Besides that, members of the organization joined Philike Hetairia through the "Great Oath." When the text of Great

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[396] Wesley M. Gewehr. *The Rise of Nationalism in the Balkans, 1800-1930*, p. 24.

[397] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 39.

Oath is read, it is understood that Philike Hetairia had a firm ideological framework to unite the Greek people under the banner of nationalistic and religious sentiments. Moreover, this organization also had a Masonic character. On the other hand, it was not a limited organization within a certain region. Members of the Philike Hetairia managed to set up a network of secret cells from İstanbul to Greek territory and the Danubian Principalities.[398] Here, it should be noted that, during the Cretan revolt of 1896, Philike Hetairia gave its full support to the Cretan Committee in order to reach the ideal of *"Enosis."*[399]

One other important revolutionary committee that was established before the Bulgarian uprising of 1876 was known as the Giurgiu Committee. The members of this committee were extremely experienced individuals and there was a close and organic relationship between its members.[400] Different than the Philike Hetairia, this committee suffered from obtaining arms and establishing its operations. As most of the members of Philike Hetairia were composed of wealthy merchants, they were easily able to finance their revolutionary activities in the Balkans and abroad. The other difference was the way their cadres organized themselves. Although the Philike Hetairia had contacts with members living outside the country, the Giurgiu Committee's activities were mainly limited to within Bulgaria. Therefore, the Giurgiu Committee divided Bulgaria into four districts in order to pay special attention to key regions.[401] On the other hand, while members of the Philike Hetairia worked in harmony with each other, the individualistic members of the Giurgiu Committee saw everything from their own angles.

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[398] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 206.

[399] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," p. 114.

[400] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 242.

[401] *ibid*, pp. 242-243.

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[398] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 206.

[399] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," p. 114.

[400] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 242.

[401] *ibid*, pp. 242-243.

Besides that, there were conflicts between the local Bulgarian revolutionaries and the Apostles. The local rebels were willing to use a *çete* tactic, but the Apostles preferred the whole population rise up.[402] The Apostles of the Giurgiu Committee toured the districts in the whole area, rather than administering the revolutionary activities in specific centers. This action of the Apostles led to mass revolutionary movements. They took oath with revolutionaries and were supported by the teachers and the priests for the great uprising. Various social strata of the Bulgarian society like children, teachers, and priests came together under the same feeling of "Freedom or Death." In this meeting, religious ceremony played an important role for awakening their national feelings. For example, the little red flags of various units were baptized with the holy water.[403] This indicated that religious and nationalistic feelings of the Bulgarians were quite strong, and they were quite intermingled with each other. However, as the Giurgiu Committee was not able to create deep impacts on the Bulgarian society, they could not achieve their goals.

In the case of the Albanian revolts, many organizations were established. The establishment of the Albanian League should be considered as the milestone in the emergence or development of the Albanian nation.[404] After the suppression of the Albanian League, the League became a secret national society, and began to perform secret activities in Macedonia.[405] After this League, many committees were established within the country with the aim of integrating the Albanian people as a whole.

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[402] *ibid*, pp. 245-246.

[403] *ibid*, pp. 246-249.

[404] Constantine A. Chekrezi. *Albania: Past and Present*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1919), p. 51.

[405] *ibid*, pp. 56-57.

The loosely organized committees and mass movements resorted to applying psychological pressures against possible betrayals, while militant and clandestine organizations used more strict measures to keep their members under control. In both cases, members of the organizations felt themselves fully dedicated to the causes of the uprisings and even accepted any certain voluntary punishment, including death.

III. H. Education system

The education system was an obvious mechanism through which national identity was cultivated in the Ottoman Balkans.[406] The development of the education system had a special meaning in the international awakening of Bulgaria and Albania. As the Bulgarian education system was under the control of the Greek Orthodox Church, primarily Bulgarian intellectuals began to focus on this issue in order to achieve their national awakening. Meanwhile, economic prosperity increased and people began to get into contact with the rest of the world. Therefore, Bulgarians thought that the schools located within the churches were far from satisfactory. So, secular educational institutions were established in Bulgaria.[407] Similar to the Bulgarian national awakening, the Albanian people recognized the education system was very important in the development of national consciousness. However, there was not a single unified national alphabet, and the Albanians tried to eliminate this obstacle in the development of Albanian education system.[408]

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[406] Paschalis M. Kitromilides. *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy*, (Great Britain: Variorum; 1994), p. 163.

[407] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, pp. 130-131.

[408] Stavro Skendi. *The Albanian National Awakening: 1878-1912*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 368.

III. I. Ideology

The transformation of the ideas of the Enlightenment and French Revolution was a turning point in the development of the national awakening of the Balkan peoples. Actually, the values and implications of the Enlightenment were completely inimical to the deeply-entrenched traditional social cultures and the collective mentalities of the Balkans. In this sense, we can say that, the reception of the Enlightenment in the Balkans was a difficult process and it was met with cultural and structural resistance. The most important resistance came from the Orthodox Church.[409]

The acceptance of the new ideas of the Enlightenment and French Revolution shows us that intellectual communication between Western Europe and the Balkans was established. Moreover, the reception and adaptation of the modern liberal ideas by the Balkan intellectuals opened the way for the reinterpretation of its history, and the imagination of its political future in terms of new ideas.[410] So, "the transmission of the Enlightenment in Southeastern Europe constituted the first case of an attempt at Westernization and inaugurated a cultural process that has transformed the world in the last two centuries."[411]

On the other hand, cultural criticism became the departure point in the essence of the Balkan Enlightenment. The political criticism of Neo-Aristotelianism was the beginning of cultural criticism in the region. The philosophical reorientation was voiced by Greek scholars such as Methdios Anthrakites and Antonios Katiphoros.[412] "The

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[409] Paschalis M. Kitromilides. *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy*, p. 54.

[410] *ibid*, pp. 54-55.

[411] *ibid*, p. 55.

[412] *ibid*, p. 56.

rediscovery of the historical past of the Balkan peoples was the product of a yearning for a sense of dignity." Hence, the Serbs and the Bulgarians turned their intentions to a glorious ancient and medieval past.[413]

The psychological and ideological impact of the French Revolution upon the Balkans was also very important. Although the Balkan peninsula was relatively isolated from other parts of the Europe, revolutionary ideas came into the region through various channels. As the trade relations with the Western Europe increased in the nineteenth century, merchants and mariners began to go to Western Europe in order to sell their products. Meanwhile, they absorbed the new ideas of the French Revolution.[414] So, the ideas of the French Revolution gave the ideology and a clear concept of nation to the Balkan peoples for revolt.[415] On the other hand, students obtained scholarships to study in Western universities and they returned home with newly acquired Western ideologies. Developing their cultural, social and economic contacts with the rest of Europe, the Balkan peoples began to develop the ideas of self-identity and national belongingness, in terms of ethnic frameworks. This identity formation was also integrated with local patriotic feelings. Their departure point was the formation of "Greekness", "Bulgarianness"... However, due to the backward social and economic organization of the Balkan peninsula, the Enlightenment and identity formation generally took the form of a religious revival. When this was not possible, as in the case of the Serbian minority, patriotism took its place. As a result, the major principles of the French Revolution opened the way for the

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[413] *ibid*, p. 58.

[414] L. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, (Illinois: Dryden Press, 1958), p. 253.

[415] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Balkans*, (New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs, Prentice, 1965), p. 45.

emergence of contemporary literature, the improvement of educational, political, social, and economic changes within the Balkans.[416]

In this sense, it should be noted that both the Enlightenment and the French Revolution had an important impact on all aspects of the lives of the Balkan peoples. As Balkan merchants learned foreign languages, bought printed materials, and read the books about the ideas of the French Revolution, they contributed to the intellectual awakening of the Balkan people.[417] The ideals of French Revolution brought in by the Balkan merchants, helped in the creation of an uprising ideology.

Nationalism can be regarded as one of the most powerful forces shaping Balkan history, both in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. According to some historians, after the national struggles within the region, the Balkans became the "powder keg" of Europe.[418] However, the theory of nationalism in the Balkans was based on the idea of dependency. As the Ottoman Empire became peripheral to the world market economy in the nineteenth century, the Balkans became dependent on northern Europe. But, this did not alter social and economic relations of the Balkan peoples with northern Europe, rather the new political system of European models was transformed into the Balkans. This system was known as the nation-state, and its ideology was nationalism. From then on, the political life of the Balkan peninsula became a suitable ground for the contradiction between the unchanged traditional norms of the Balkans and the new political system of

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[416] Dimitris Loules. "The French Revolution and its Influence upon Greece," *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol. XV, No. 26, 1991, p. 290.

[417] William W. Haddad & William Ochsenwald. (eds.). *Nationalism in a Non-National State*, (Colombus: 1977), p. 81.

[418] Paschalis M. Kitromilides. *Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy*, p. 149.

Western Europe.[419] At this point, Balkan nationalism, on the one hand, became a mass movement of peasantry origin, under the humble and community-oriented leadership of the village teachers and priests. On the other hand, it also created a modern, intellectual cadre, who took Western society as a model for their organization. When merchants and shipowners began to play their own role in the mass movements, ideological and intellectual oriented movements began to be transformed into actual mass mobilizing and ethnic uprisings.[420]

In order to answer the question of "what was the situation of the Ottoman Empire that made nationalism such a great problem?" we need to examine the diverse population of the Ottoman Empire. Only then, will it be possible to arrive at a plausible answer. In the mid-nineteenth century, the total population of the Ottoman Empire was estimated to be between 35,000,000 and 36,000,000. But, it should be noted that there was no general population census held on the basis of scientific principles.[421] Here the most important point is that the Ottoman Empire was a multi-ethnic empire. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Ottoman governors considered nationalism as one of the most important issues to tackle. For that reason, it would not be an exaggeration to say that, throughout the nineteenth century, nationalism prevailed not only in the Balkans, but also in other parts of the Ottoman Empire. Meanwhile, Ottomanism emerged as a unifying reaction to separatist tendencies of ethnic nationalism.[422]

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[419] Gail Stokes. "Dependency and the Rise of Nationalism in Southeast Europe," *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, Vol. I, No. 1, 1979-1980, p. 54.

[420] Stefanos Yerasimos. "İlber Ortaylı: Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Kökenindeki Balkan Milliyetçiliği," *Toplumsal Tarih*, Vol. III, No. 15, Mart 1995, p. 18.

[421] William W. Haddad- William Ochsrenwald.(eds.). *Nationalism in a Non-National State*, pp. 29-30.

[422] İlber Ortaylı. "Formation of National Identity Among Balkan Peoples," *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, No. 1, 1993, p. 49.

Pan-Slavism was also a major ideology, which was utilized in the uprisings. Its origin can be traced back to the Slavophil cultural movement, which emphasized the intrinsic value of Russia against the Western European culture. The main aim Pan-Slavism was to unite all Slavs under the protection of Russia. The two important Pan-Slav leaders, General Rotislav Fadaev and Nicholas Danilevski, published very important books, which furthered the aim of Pan-Slavism. According to the general thesis, different than the decadent Western Europeans, the Slavs were young and strong. So, with the help of the Russians, Slavs had to free themselves both from Ottoman and Austrian domination. Therefore, Russia would be the leader of Pan-Slavism, and İstanbul would be the capital of this Slavic Empire. Pan-Slavist activities played the key role in the Herzegovinian revolt of 1875. As Pan-Slav circles in Russia were on the side of the insurgents, Pan-Slav societies were established in various cities of Russia.[423] This indicated that supporting the uprising by the Pan-Slav circles in Russia aimed to create the Russian Empire in the Balkans.

The other ideology utilized in the uprisings was *Enosis*. This ideology belonged to the Cretan Greeks. As they wanted to unite Crete with mainland Greece, the Cretan Greeks followed this ideal throughout the nineteenth century. Moreover, the organic ties between the Cretan Greeks and the Greeks living in the mainland gave the first impetus to the ideal of *Enosis*. During the Cretan revolt of 1866-1868, despite the Organic Statute's formulation in Crete, the Cretan Greeks did not want to give up their *Enosis* policy. Since, their main aim was to unite with Greece. They were sure that they could only reach this goal through *Enosis*. After the Cretan revolts of 1866-1868, another revolt took place in Crete in 1869. The cause of this revolt was the same as the former one. During this uprising, the Halepa Pact was signed between the Ottoman Empire and the Cretan Greeks.

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[423] L. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, pp. 397-398.

But this pact was also meaningless, because the Cretan Greeks never gave up their ideal of *Enosis*. As the great powers of Europe acted together against the Ottoman Empire, the Cretan Greeks reached their ideal by obtaining full autonomy.

III. J. Orthodox Church

The Orthodox Church was one of the most important institutions combining the Orthodoxes living in the Balkans under the banner of "togetherness." After the conquest of İstanbul by Mehmed the Conqueror, the Orthodox Church was organized as a *millet* under the Greek Orthodox Patriarch. His election was allowed by the Sultan, and moreover, he was formally recognized as the spiritual leader of the Orthodox Church. The Sultan gave many rights to the Patriarch. In addition, the Patriarch of İstanbul was regarded as the head of the Orthodox *millet* by the Sublime Porte.[424] In this sense, it should be noted that Mehmed the Conqueror "recognized not only the ancient religious privileges of the Greek Patriarch, but, beyond these, he granted them considerable political authority as well."[425]

The Orthodox Church can be considered as the most important institution that survived from the time of the medieval states. Meanwhile, the Orthodox Church conserved the cultural heritage of the Balkan peoples and preserved the ethnic individuality of the faithful. In addition, the Orthodox Church was in contact with the outside world, and most importantly, it was the center of the social life of the Balkan peoples.[426] On the other hand, it can also be argued that the Orthodox Church preserved the two fundamental elements of

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[424] W. S. Vucinich. "The Nature of Balkan Society Under Ottoman Rule," p. 605.

[425] Halil İnalcık. *Essays in Ottoman History*, (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1998), p. 195.

[426] W. S. Vucinich. "The Nature of Balkan Society Under Ottoman Rule," pp. 608-609.

national consciousness: language and history.[427] Language and history played an important role in the national awakening of the Balkan peoples. For example, in the national awakening of the Albanian people, the Albanians paid special attention to the teaching and use of the Albanian language.[428]

Here it should be noted that, during the nineteenth century, when the revolutionary ideologies of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution reached the Balkan Peninsula, the leaders of the Orthodox Church believed that the ideologies of secularism and nationalism were hostile to the interests of the Orthodox Church.[429] The Enlightenment and French Revolution brought a new dimension into the social organization of the ethnic and religious communities. This was also against the structure of the *millet* system and the religiously-based social organization of the Ottoman Empire. So, the two pillars of secularism and nationalism were direct threats to the socio-political organization of the Ottoman Empire. Secularism meant that religious ideology would lose its role and impact over the Ottoman population. The Ottoman Empire tried to reform its political system to be able to cope with the changes, but it was not possible. On the other hand, secular trends in the Balkans favored the development of religious and ethnic organization of the Greek, Serb, Albanian, and other ethnic communities.

The Balkan peoples thought that the Orthodox Church was an indispensable institution in their daily lives. As the mass of the peasantry was illiterate and superstitious, the Orthodox Church provided religious and psychological support to these people. Besides, until the nineteenth century, the Orthodox Church had served as a common and

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[427] Gail Stokes. "Church and Class in Early Balkan Nationalism," *East European Quarterly*, Vol. XII, No. 3, 1979, p. 262.

[428] Ramadan Marmallaku. *Albania and the Albanians*, (London: C. Hurst, 1975), pp. 21-22.

[429] L. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, p. 281.

unifying bond among the Balkan Christians.[430] On the contrary, during the ethnic uprisings of the nineteenth century, priests of the Orthodox Church were very active in these uprisings. We can give a specific example from the Greek uprising in the Peloponnesus. The flag of the Greek revolution was raised by Bishop Germanos at the Agia Lavra Monastery in 1821.[431] As in many cases, the reason for the uprising was the conflict between the Muslim and Christian segments of the population. The Orthodox priests gave their full support, both actively and passively, to the rebelling ethnic but Orthodox forces. Moreover, the Greek clergy in the Cretan revolts provoked the uprising against the Ottoman Muslim "overlords."[432]

Although it seems that the Orthodox people acted in harmony with each other, some Orthodox peoples began to demand their own churches. As all Bulgaria was under the domination of the Greek Orthodox Church after the fourteenth century, Bulgarians began to demand for an independent Bulgarian Church, after the end of the Crimean War. Meanwhile, the Ottoman Empire issued the *Hatt-ı Hümâyûn* and "the Bulgarians hailed this stipulation because of their Orthodox *millet* offered that some of their grievances, and perhaps even some of their nationalist aspirations, might be satisfied."[433] Therefore, the Bulgarians decided to establish their own church, and in 1870, an autonomous Bulgarian Exarchate was established by the *fermân* of the Sublime Porte.[434] The opening of the Bulgarian Exarchate did not ease tensions between the Greeks and the Bulgarians, nor could it solve the hostility among Bulgarians due to the Ottoman presence in Bulgaria.

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[430] *ibid*, p. 149.

[431] Dougles Dakin. *The Unification Of Greece, 1770-1923*, p. 40.

[432] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," p. 104.

[433] L. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, p. 372.

[434] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, pp.162-163.

III. K. Who were the rebels?

The rebels of the ethnic uprisings in the Balkans came from various social strata of the ethnic societies. Although there were some similarities between the rebels, each province had its own proto-type rebels due to their own characteristics. As Montenegro had a mountainous geographic composition and as it lacked political authority, the real authority was in hands of the Montenegrin tribes. Moreover, there were 36 tribes in Montenegro and the population generally lived in the villages.[435] So, the unique characteristic of Montenegro made clans and their chiefs the primary power-holders. We can say that, the first impetus for the Montenegrin uprisings came from the tribes, because the tribes had real authority over Montenegrin society. Similar to the Montenegrin tribal organization, Ottoman Albania also had a strong tribal organization.[436] These tribal organizations motivated their peoples to rebel against Ottoman rule.

In the nineteenth century, the rural population of the Balkan peninsula was composed of illiterate peasants and in most of the provinces, peasants were the main class rebelling against the Sublime Porte. They were not satisfied and they suffered from the Ottoman tax and land systems. For that reason, they always had an excuse to rebel against the representatives of the Ottoman Empire, or the empire itself. In the meantime, the Orthodox feelings of the peasants were very strong. So, the peasants and the clergy were natural allies, who could easily combine their powers to rebel against the Ottoman rule. In other words, in some cases, the uprisings can be defined as the reaction of the Christian Orthodox peasantry against the Muslim Ottoman misrule. In this sense, it is noteworthy to

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[435] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 247-248.

[436] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 222.

say that, although the lower strata of Greek society wanted to improve their own lot, the upper class of Greek society demanded an autonomous rule without the Ottomans. This indicated that such a diversification sharply divided the Greek society into two parts: the poor and the rich.[437] The upper class of Greek society were very happy with the Ottoman administration and social system. But, being Greek subjects, they were in a position of being in between the Greek population and the Ottomans. It was the lower class(es) of the society which suffered the most, and they were the first to rebel against the Ottomans.

During the eighteenth century, trade relations between the Ottoman Empire and Europe increased dramatically, both through the Balkan overland routes and by the sea. Most importantly, the provinces of Austria and Russia contributed favorably to the benefits of the Balkan merchants. After the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca and the Russian conquest of the northern land of the Black Sea, the Greek merchants gained important advantages in these regions. Moreover, Greek shipowners had the right to carry goods with the Russian flag through the sea. Increasing commercial activity with Western Europe put the Greek merchants into an important position. Greek became the language of trade. After the industrial revolution, Western Europe and Central Europe needed Balkan raw materials to use in their factories. In addition, agricultural goods like cotton and maize had particular importance for Western Europe.[438] In other words, as the population and industrial activities increased in Western and Eastern Europe, the rural production of the Balkans became important in supplying agricultural goods and raw materials for the West. Therefore, the demand for the rural Balkan products increased, and at the same time, a

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[437] Dakin Dougles. *The Unification of Greece, 1770-1923*, p. 44.

[438] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 179 and 181.

rapid rise occurred in the price of rural commodities.[439] This paved way for the emergence of new Balkan merchants throughout Europe and began to integrate them with Western economies. Although the economic and geographic conditions of the Balkans were not suitable to promote the rise of Balkan merchants, certain professional ethnic groups emerged. Among these groups, the *Phanariote*s of İstanbul, the Greeks of the Danubian Principalities, the Orthodox Greco-Albanian merchant-adventurers of the smaller Aegean islands, the Greek and Bulgarian traders of Rhodope, and the Serbian cattle-traders can be counted.[440]

Intellectuals also played an important role in the uprisings. However, in some cases, as in the Bulgarian national awakening, intellectuals were divided into two different groups. While the moderates (big merchants and industrialists) were the advocates of unity of the Orthodox Church under the Greek Patriarchy of İstanbul, the extremists (minor traders, guildsmen, and petty-bourgeoisie) aimed to create an independent Bulgarian Church.[441] Meanwhile, teachers were very active in the Bulgarian uprising of 1876, since teachers were able to integrate and unite the Bulgarian society culturally and ideologically. On the other hand, the Greek clergy members and teachers were deliberately sent to Crete to provoke a rebellion against the Muslim overlords.[442]

While in many cases the rebels were Christian Orthodoxes, Albania had a totally different character. As approximately 70 % of the population was Muslim in Albania,[443]

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[439] Traian Stoianovich. "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchants," *Journal of Economic History*, No. 20 1960, p. 255.

[440] *ibid*, p. 269.

[441] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 151.

[442] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," p. 104.

[443] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Balkans*, p. 69.

the rebels could be Muslim or Catholic. As mentioned earlier, Albania was divided into two groups: the Gegs and the Tosks. The Muslim Gegs belonged to the *Sünni* sect of Islam, on the contrary, the Tosks were both *Sünni* and *Bektaşi*. This indicated that, among the Muslims, there were two sects living in Albania.[444] In this sense, it should be noted that, there was a conflict between *Sünni*s and *Bektaşi*s. Although *Bektaşi*s shared the liberal doctrine of the Young Turks, the *Sünni* Muslims were much more conservative. For instance, the *Bektaşi*s, having a well-established tradition of egalitarianism and freedom, played an important role in assisting the Albanian guerilla bands in Görüce and Gjirokastër.[445] This showed that *Bektaşi*s were very active in organizing the rebelling forces against the Ottoman Empire. On the contrary, the Kosovars collaborated with the absolutist regime of Abdülhamid II, since Abdülhamid II allowed them to carry arms and pay low taxes.[446] In addition, the Muslims of İşkodra were also Hamidians and they strongly opposed the Young Turk regime.[447]

III. L. Relations with other minorities

Although the Balkan peoples had conflicting interests in obtaining their independence, they generally united their power against the Ottoman Empire, since, their primary aim was to establish independent nation-states of their own. They generally shared the same religion, and they came from some ethnic and cultural backgrounds, so they combined their powers against the Ottoman Empire, during their uprisings and afterwards. For instance, during the Greek revolt in the Danubian Principalities, there were Serbs,

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[444] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 222.

[445] Stavro Skendi. *The Albanian National Awakening: 1878-1912*, pp. 420-422.

[446] *ibid*, pp. 338-339.

[447] *ibid*, pp. 390-391.

Bulgarians, and Montenegrins in the army of Ypsilantis. It is evident that, there was relatively fair cooperation between these ethnic minorities in fighting the Greek War of Independence.[448] On the other hand, in the Vidin uprising, Serbian support should be taken into consideration, since various Serbian revolutionaries provoked the Bulgarian national feelings in order to create the Pan-Slavic unity.[449] Similar to the Vidin uprising, the relationship between the Cretan Greeks and Greeks on the mainland was much more clear, because there was an organic relationship or kinship between them. This meant that after obtaining its independence from the Ottoman Empire, Greece actively supported the ideal of "*Enosis*."

Although Greece supported the Cretan uprisings openly, the Christian population of Herzegovina rebelled against the Ottoman rule. The Montenegrin tribes actively, but at the same time secretly, participated the rebelling forces in Herzegovina in 1858.[450] In this sense, Montenegrin support for the Herzegovinians resembled the Serbian support in the Vidin uprising. Montenegrins not only played an important role in the Herzogovinian uprising of 1858, but also gave their full support to the uprising which occurred in northern Albania in 1911.[451]

The Balkan peninsula was a relatively small geographic area and it was densely populated by different ethnic groups. These ethnic groups had economic, social, and political relationships with each other. This meant that these relationships paved the way

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[448] Dougles Dakin. *The Unification of Greece, 1770-1923*, pp. 36-37.

[449] Halil İnalcık. *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*, p. 58.

[450] Enver Ziya Karal. *Osmanlı Tarihi*, Vol. VII, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1995), p. 4.

[451] Stavro Skendi. *The Albanian National Awakening: 1878-1912*, p. 411.

for political affiliation and contact. So the ethnic minorities established cooperative relationships with each other during and after the Balkan uprisings.

III. M. Finance

As the ethnic uprisings in the Balkans were generally started by the peasants, financing the uprisings was a great problem. For example, in the first Serbian insurrection, having difficulty financing ammunition for their troops, the Serbs tried to contact with the economically advanced part of the Serbdom.[452] However, different from the Serbian revolts, the case of the Greek revolt in the Danubian Principalities, it can be argued that, this uprising did not need much financial assistance from external powers. This revolt was organized by Philike Hetairia, which consisted mainly of rich merchants.

When the Cretan revolt of 1896 started, the European public began to act in favor of the Cretan Greeks. Thus, Europeans gave their financial and material support to the Cretan insurgents.[453] Hence, the ethnic uprisings in the Balkans were not only financed by their neighbours and themselves, but also by the external powers. The common element between all these ethnic uprisings and independence movements was that they all mobilized their own ethnic masses and mainly relied on their financial, political, and ideological support. Besides, generally due to their strategical interests, Slavic background and diplomatic strategy, Russians were always in forefront to provide financial and political support to the rebelling forces.

[452] Micheal Boro Petrovich. *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1918*, pp. 41-43.

[453] A. Nükhet Adıyeke. "Girit Sorunu Karşısında Avrupa Basın ve Kamuoyu," p. 26.

III. N. Arms

The Ottoman Empire began to use firearms effectively in its early periods, but the exact date of this transition is not yet known. But, it should be remembered that the Ottoman Empire adapted itself to the newly emerging firearms through the Serbs, since the Serbs had contacts with the Central European countries during the fourteenth century. On the other hand, firearms were produced in Serbia and Bosnia starting from the middle of the fifteenth century. The use of firearms must have transferred into the Ottoman Empire through these peoples.[454] This indicates that the Ottoman Empire was familiar with the usage of firearms in warfare. Besides that, although there is no evidence of the usage of cannons by the rebelling forces, it would not be wrong to assume that the Ottoman troops used cannons extensively against the rebels during the uprisings.

The tactics of the uprisings showed differences from one another in terms of their mass mobilizations and strategy. The Balkan peninsula had a mountainous character, the rebelling forces preferred guerilla warfare. According to them, guerilla warfare was more effective against the crowded, but heavy, Ottoman army. The Serbian revolt was the typical example for an organized guerilla warfare. This peculiarity both came from the mountainous character of Serbia and the fact that the insurgents were composed mainly of peasants. On the other hand, in order to achieve their mutual interests, some countries cooperated with each other. For example, Montenegro and Serbia provided weapons to the rebelling forces during the Herzegovinian revolt of 1875.[455]

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[454] Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu. *Osmanlılar ve Batı Teknolojisi*, (İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi; 1992); p., 124.

[455] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, pp. 38-39.

III. O. Intervention of the Great Powers

Hellenism played the key role in the history of Balkan nationalism due to the cultural and historical background of Greek political culture. Two contradictory aspects should be mentioned here: ideology and the culture of Greece had a provocative impact in the formation and development of Slavic nationalism. And, the attitude of the Patriarchate towards the national awakening of the Balkan peoples was extremely negative.[456] In Central and Western Europe, Hellenism became popular both among the intellectuals and in the eyes of the ordinary public. In spite of the differences between the European governments, the Greek revolution evoked enormous popular sympathy in Europe.[457] This sympathy was combined under the banner of "Philhellenism."

In most of the ethnic uprisings, the hands of major powers can be seen both openly and secretly. For example, during the Serbian revolt, although the great powers were engaged in the Napoleonic wars, Austria preferred to support passively the Serbian uprising against the Janissaries.[458] Different than the Serbian uprising, Russia intervened into the Greek uprising openly. Although the British government was willing to protect Ottoman territorial integrity, after the awakening of Philhellenism, the British government changed its attitude towards the Greek uprising.

Although there were series of events which led to the outbreak of the Crimean War, the main reason for the war can be defined as the Russian demand to establish a proctorship over the Orthodox Christians of the Ottoman Balkans. Besides, Britain also feared that Russia would establish its predominance in İstanbul. For that reason, British

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[456] İlber Ortaylı. "Formation of National Identity Among Balkan Peoples," p. 44.

[457] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Balkans*, p. 49.

[458] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 204.

and French troops landed in Crimea. After a long and severe war, France and Britain gained victory and forced Russia to accept the Treaty of Paris of 1856. Under this treaty, Russia lost its direct political power in Balkan affairs. Moreover, Russia abandoned most of the advantages that it had obtained during the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca.[459] From this point on, Russia could not act freely in the Balkan affairs, but rather it tried to revive Pan-Slavism throughout the Balkan peninsula.

As mentioned above, the strategy of Russia changed toward the national movements in the Balkans, since its movements were hindered by the Treaty of Paris. However, Russia never gave up its interventionist policy towards the ethnic minorities living in the Ottoman Balkans. The era of national awakening and the struggle for individual ethnic states within the Ottoman Empire affected negatively the international relationships of the great European powers. However, various states supported the ethnic minorities that were closer to their own political and economic interests and favored their position within the changing international political arena. Throughout this period, it seems that, despite its aggressive policies, Russia, after the Ottoman Empire, was the second big loser in the international arena.

Meanwhile, the defeat of Russia in the Crimean War (1855-1856) was a turning point for the diplomatic policy of the Russian government. For example, in the case of the Cretan revolt of 1866, Russia tried to regain its position as the "protector of all Orthodoxes living in the Ottoman Empire." For that reason, the attitudes of Russia and France coincided towards the Cretan question. In contrast to Russia and France, Britain did not intervene in the first wave of the Cretan uprising, since Britain was in favor of protecting temporarily the Ottoman territorial integrity. On the other hand, the attitudes of the great

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[459] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Balkans*, p. 52.

powers of Europe changed completely towards the second wave of Cretan uprising. Their attitudes against the Ottoman Empire can be considered as the "orchestrate of great Christian European powers."

A similar position occurred during the Herzegovinian revolt of 1875. At this time, the governments of Russia, Germany, and Austria joined forces under the Three Emporer's Alliance, in order to end this revolt peacefully. In this sense, the defeat it faced in the Crimean War was also a determinative factor for Russia to join this alliance. Otherwise, the major powers of Europe could act against Russia and this paved the way for overturning the balance of power in Europe.[460]

In some cases, the great powers of Europe intervened in the ethnic uprisings through international conferences. As the Greek government did not accept the Ottoman ultimatum of 1868 with regards to the Cretan question in 1868, the signatories of the Treaty of Paris participated in the Paris Conference. At the end of the conference, the Cretan problem was regarded as solely an internal problem of the Ottoman Empire.[461]

The European press also played a crucial role in awakening public opinion. It is noteworthy to say that, after the suppression of the Bulgarian revolt of 1876, detailed stories of the massacres were printed in the newspapers.[462]

Missionary activity was another way of supporting the Balkan national awakenings against the Islamic rule of the Ottoman Empire. Balkan monks played an important role in awakening the national feelings of the Balkan people. In the first phase of the rebellious activities, monasteries acted as the centers of emerging national language and cultural

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[460] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 146.

[461] Roderic H. Davison. "Ottoman Diplomacy and the Question of the Rebellion in Crete, 1866-1869," *10. Türk Tarih Kongresi*, 22-26 IX 1986, pp. 1195-1196.

[462] R. J. Crampton. *A Coincise History of Bulgaria*, pp. 82-83.

activities.[463] For the Bulgarians, Paisii, a Bulgarian monk, was the first figure to arose the Bulgarian national consciousness. The monks not only traveled in their own country, but they also went to other countries for missionary activities.

Until the eighteenth century, the relationship between the Balkan Christians and Western Europe had been irregular and limited in scope. The Orthodox Church argued that "so long as Western Christian was essentially Catholic and Protestant, it was unacceptable to the Orthodox people."[464]

On the other hand, the Papacy felt itself in-between the interests of Christianity against Muslims. This led to its intermediary role between the Ottoman Empire and specific religious interests of Orthodoxes. There were certain reasons for the indifference and reluctance of the Papacy to directly sympathize with the ethnic uprisings. *Firstly*, it could trigger a confrontation between the Catholics and Orthodoxes in the Balkans and throughout Europe. *Secondly*, it would directly politicize religious missions and provoke irreversible religious confrontation with Islam. *Finally*, its ethnic principles were limited.

Interestingly, in 1911, an uprising occurred in the mountains of İşkodra in Albania, and it was led by the Catholic Chieftain of Hot Ded Gjo Luli. Their main aim was to resist the orders of the Muslim Ottoman governor of İşkodra.[465] Most interestingly, the pope acted on side of the Montenegrins during the Montenegrin uprising and interfered in the conflict. This action of the pope created an atmosphere as if there was a direct confrontation between the Muslims and Christians.[466]

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[463] William W. Haddad & William Ochsenwald. (eds.). *Nationalism in a Non-National State*, pp. 81-82.

[464] *ibid*, p. 80.

[465] Stavro Skendi. *The Albanian National Awakening: 1878-1912*, p. 409.

[466] Enver Ziya Karal. *Osmanlı Tarihi*, Vol. VII, p. 4.

In the nineteenth century, the decline of the Ottoman Empire, the revolts of its subject peoples, and the frequent European intervention in these problems led to further aggravation of the Eastern Question. This problem became the most important problem in the international arena. Most importantly, international conflicts of hegemony over the Ottoman Balkans led to two big wars: namely the Crimean War in the nineteenth century and World War I in the twentieth century. This question had prime importance due to the conflicting interests of the great powers of Europe.[467]

As Russia extended its control over Central Asia, Khiva, Bokhara, and Kokand, Britain began to be suspicious about Russian expansion, since the Russian border reached Afghanistan, which was under British control. But, the key question to the entire situation lay in İstanbul and the Straits. Britain was willing to support the *status quo*, therefore maintaining the temporal integrity of the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, France paid special attention to North Africa and Syria. However, France also dealt with the Mediterranean.[468] Moreover, the so-called Eastern Question was, in fact, definitely the question of sharing the Ottoman Balkans. Although ethnic awakening led the European powers to develop a covert policy of sharing the Ottoman Balkans, the very complex ethnic dynamic turned things upside down for these powers and even to the further disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, which led to the Young Turkish Republic.

III. P. Ottoman position against the uprisings

When the Ottoman political position regarding the ethnic uprisings is analyzed, it seems that the Ottoman Empire did not directly and openly accept the legitimacy of the

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[467] Barbara Jelavich. *History of the Balkans, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, p. 186.

[468] *ibid*, p. 188.

uprisings. Therefore, the Ottoman Empire did not engage in direct communication with the rebels, even in cases where the Sublime Porte thought that the situation was actually getting worse or the rebels should be given economic and religious rights. The Sublime Porte took its own action and gave economic and religious concessions to the local population, as if it was a favor. So its political position was to have the local population accept the Ottoman central authority as the only legitimate authority in its peaceful and military efforts to solve the current ethnic problems. The Ottoman Empire did not compromise its principle of not accepting the local leaders as the legitimate representatives of the ethnic population. However, when the Sublime Porte felt that it was to its advantage to make a compromise with the local leaders as in the case of the Bulgarian uprising, it tried to find ways to make some reforms for its benefits. The Ottoman Empire was struggling with its own internal problems, and at the same time, it was also dealing with continuous wars against Russia.

The Ottoman Empire was not in the position of developing strict diplomatic measures and backing up its decisions militarily. Mainly, it was trying to maneuver one great power against the other. Therefore, conflicts of interests between the European powers was very important for the international relations of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire was trying to separate these powers from each other and was trying to prevent a situation, where these conflicting interests of the great powers could be united against the Ottoman Empire.

The reaction of the Sublime Porte against the ethnic uprisings in the Balkans differed from one uprising to another. In these changes, internal and external conditions of the Ottoman Empire were the determinative factors. In some cases, like in the Cretan revolt of 1866-1868, the Sublime Porte issued an ultimatum to subdue the Greek government and

to force Greece accept that the Cretan problem was an internal issue for the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, the Ottoman army also decided to surround Crete with a naval blockade in order to protect the island from any outside interference and assistance.[469] Another ultimatum was sent to Greece during the second wave of the Cretan uprising. This one was not accepted by the Greek government either.[470] This indicated that the ultimatums of the Sublime Porte were meaningless for the Greek government. They did not incline to give up their policy of uniting Crete with Greece, as there was a significant Greek population on the island.

Although in some cases the Sublime Porte wanted to suppress the revolts by spiritual measures (tedâbir-i maneviyye), this would not prove to be successful. Since the rebelling forces were generally engaged in severe wars against Ottoman troops. For that reason, the Sublime Porte used regular army forces (kuvve-i nizâmiye) to suppress the uprisings.[471] The Vidin revolt can be given as a specific example. In this uprising, the attitude of the Ottoman Empire can be defined as being turbulent, since at the beginning, Ali Paşa was sent to Vidin to suppress the revolt by spiritual measures. He was not successful. Thereafter, the revolt was suppressed by the Ottoman regular army forces within a very short time period.[472] But, it should be noted that, in most of the cases, the Sublime Porte preferred to suppress a revolt by military measures. However, in the nineteenth century, the Ottoman army was no longer powerful.

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[469] Ali Haydar Emir. *Girit İhtilali, Gamsız Hasan Bey*, (İstanbul: Deniz Matbaası, 1931), p. 13.

[470] Yuluğ Tekin Kurat. "The Cretan Question (1866-1912)," p. 114.

[471] Mark Pinson. "Ottoman Bulgaria in the First Tanzimat Period: The Revolts of Nish (1841) and Vidin (1850)," p. 124.

[472] Mercia Macdermott. *A History of Bulgaria, 1393-1885*, p. 177.

Differences in the Ottoman approach to the uprisings were related to internal and external political situations. Especially, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Janissaries became a serious problem for the Ottoman administration. Meanwhile, the Napoleonic wars had an important impact on the Ottoman Empire. At the end of these wars, France was occupied by Russia. This meant that Russia had become more powerful. Therefore, the Sublime Porte decided to grant a general amnesty for the Serbs in 1813 and 1815.[473] The Ottoman Empire thought that the time was ripe to grant a general amnesty, because both the Janissaries and Russia had become threats against the Ottoman administration.

In contrast, in some cases, the Sublime Porte took actions other than peaceful measures. For instance, in the Bulgarian revolt of 1876, irregular detachments were used against the rebels to suppress the uprising. In the meantime, both sides were engaged in massacres. At the end, the death toll on both sides was very heavy.[474]

III. Q. Reasons of Ottoman inability to control

The socio-economic structure of the Ottoman Empire could not react to the industrial revolution, which began to shape the economic and social life of Europe in the nineteenth century. Moreover, the Ottoman Empire could not follow the Renaissance and Reformation and the consequences of the Enlightenment and French Revolution. Its social structure could not absorb these cultural changes. The Ottoman Empire was removed from technological changes, therefore, it could not adopt its economic structure to that of Europe. Meanwhile, the Janissaries were one of the most important problems of the

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[473] L. S. Stavrianos. *The Balkans since 1453*, p. 248.

[474] Charles and Barbara Jelavich. *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, p. 139.

Ottoman Empire, because it became difficult for the Ottoman Empire to control the actions of the Janissaries. On the other hand, lack of private property, and the lack of a bourgeoisie class were two important factors in this process. Besides that, most of the bureaucratic cadres in the administrative structure lacked the necessary qualifications of personal management. This led to the development of an unproductive and reactionary administrative structure. The inefficiency of the Ottoman central administration created extremely favorable conditions for the Ottoman governors in the various provinces to amass excessive power.[475]

During the period of ethnic uprisings in the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire was faced with serious economic and financial problems. As mentioned above, the Ottoman Empire did not increase the productivity and efficiency of its economic structure. When this was combined with huge financial expenses stemming from continuous wars against Russia and the need to suppress various uprisings in the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire was faced with the potential bankruptcy of its treasury. To overcome these financial problems, the Ottoman Empire tried to secure loans from abroad, but this was not a good economic policy, since extra interest had to be paid for the loans. The Ottoman Empire would also lose its bargaining power in its international activities.[476] So, it was more effective and safer to squeeze the ethnic minorities in the Balkans through extra taxes and more intensive control of trade. This meant more social pressure on the ethnic minorities.

On the other hand, it should be noted that, not only internal and financial problems of the Ottoman Empire led to the inability to control the Balkan Peninsula, but geographical distance also played an important role in this process. It was not a surprising

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[475] Oral Sander. *Siyasi Tarih: İlkçağlardan 1918'e*, (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 1994), pp. 212-214.

[476] *ibid*, p. 215.

event that the very first revolt took place in Serbia, located at the outskirts of the Ottoman Empire.

III. R. How did the uprisings end?

The ethnic uprisings in the Balkans ended in different ways. Although most of the rebels reached their goals, some of them had to wait. Here, it should be noted that, the reaction of the Ottoman Empire, the interests of the great powers of Europe, internal conditions within the Ottoman Empire, the international atmosphere, coordination of the rebelling forces, the strategy of the leaders or organizations of the uprisings, and the timing of the uprisings were fundamental factors determining the failure or success of the ethnic uprisings in the Ottoman Balkans.

Whether the rebelling provinces or rebelling governors reached their goals of autonomy or independency, the most important thing to be mentioned here is that: throughout the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Ottoman Empire had to deal with all these ethnic uprisings. The Ottoman Empire spent its human and financial sources, and its time in order to overcome this problem. On the other hand, the nineteenth century was "a very long century" for the Ottoman Empire in terms of its internal and external problems. In other words, the Ottoman Empire hopelessly fought against too many problems at the same time.

Although after each successful ethnic uprising, a new nation-state was established in the Balkan Peninsula, the ethnic problems never came to an end. The Balkan War (1912-1913) and the World War I (1914-1918) indicate this. From my point of view, the failure or success of the uprisings was not very important, since the important thing to be mentioned here is the fact that the problems of the Balkan peninsula could not be solved by

these revolts. When we came into the twentieth century, the Balkans was still considered as a "powder keg" in the arena of international relations.

In the first instance, the Ottoman Empire lost some of its strategic lands and at the same time, inherited an ethnic problem, since there were various ethnic groups within the central Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, acquiring independence or autonomy was not very favorable for the ethnic groups in terms of economic wealth in the short run. In time, they were able to increase their economic efficiency by changing the landholding and the commercial system. Also, they were neighbours with the developed Western countries and could benefit from the economic developments in those countries.

Epilogue

The Balkan peninsula has a very specific character of being a multi-ethnic and multi-religious geographic area. With its specific character, it could preserve its local and ethnic traditions, cultures and social relations due to being settled in these lands for centuries and having established close ties with each other. In time, these different ethnic groups have developed a tradition of ethnic solidarity against the external powers. This also meant that one ethnic group could take advantage of the uprising and look for a suitable time to act against the external powers. Sometimes this solidarity was explicit and sometimes it was implicit.

The Ottoman Empire could not handle the problem of ethnic uprisings in the Balkans so easily, because the uprisings were not only too many, but also very distinct. So, whether or not the Balkan region was under the political system of the Ottoman Empire or any other state, the scenario would pretty much be the same. Until the French Revolution, it was relatively easy for the Ottoman Empire to deflect the ethnic claims and rule different

ethnic groups as the components of the Ottoman Empire. But the French Revolution ignited ethnic consciousness in the Balkans, and, after this, there were chain reactions until almost all of the ethnic groups acquired their independence. The major European powers acted as catalysts in this chain reaction. During the ethnic uprisings in the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire was very sensitive to trying to avoid religious antagonisms between the ethnic minority groups. This would have been a very serious political error, as the Ottoman Empire itself was a multi-ethnic empire. The only thing left for the Ottoman Empire was to postpone the independent ethnic consciousness of the ethnic groups and to develop an alternative ideology to stop extra action.

The leading figures of the Ottoman Empire developed a new ideology both to avoid direct ethnic and religious confrontation and to develop an all-encompassing ideology of Ottomanism. However, this tendency naturally accelerated the development of ethnic consciousness of major groups in the Balkans. Besides, it seems that this mature and experienced approach of the Ottoman administration prevented the possibility of a collective war in the Balkans. Of course, the penalty for maturity was the loss of the valuable Balkan peninsula and seeding of further deeper political and social conflicts in the Balkans. With their insistence on national empire interests, the other European powers also contributed in the Balkanization of the region.

V. CONCLUSION

The Ottoman Empire was founded by the tribal and militarily organized Turkish groups in 1299. There were various ethnic groups and multi-ethnic quasi-states in the heartlands of the Anatolian peninsula. The strong and justice oriented Ottoman approach to social engineering gave the opportunity to the Ottomans to conquer the heartlands of the Byzantine Empire. And, the Ottoman Empire soon established its social order in one of the most complex geographical regions of the world: Anatolia and the Balkans. From its establishment until the eighteenth century, ethnic groups living in the Ottoman Empire were treated with special care. However, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the industrial revolution in the West increased the pace of ethnic and national consciousness among the Ottoman subjects. This coincided with the weakening of the Ottoman Empire and, therefore, accelerated ethnic confrontation and demands for ethnic independence. Although the Ottoman Empire saw ethnic groups living on the outskirts of the Ottoman Empire as an integral part of its system, it could not resist the ever increasing demands for ethnic independence. This was combined with the economic decline of the Ottoman Empire and the increased struggle among the great powers of Europe for supremacy in the Balkans. So, the Balkan peninsula became the weak spot in the dissolution of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious structure of the Ottoman Empire. Hence, the general tendency for consolidation of national markets and ethnic states found its reflection in the Balkans.

Until the beginning of the ethnic uprisings, the Balkan peoples were living on their own, as closed and agrarian societies. If they could reproduce their social and cultural

needs, and if there was no hegemonic and coercive power on them, they could easily live within the Ottoman Empire. But the development of capitalism created an atmosphere of conflicting national and class interests, which took the form of ethnic and sometimes religious uprisings in the Ottoman Balkans.

The ethnic uprisings in the Balkans were further indicators of the disintegration of a multi-ethnic empire, whose last groups in rebellion were the Turks and the Kurds. All of the uprising ethnic groups of the Ottoman Balkans acquired their independence in time, although it took a short period of time for some of them, and a long time for most of the others.

The national uprisings, at least initially, did not seem to encompass a feeling of hatred on the basis of ethnicity. Rather, the problem was rebelling against the authority of the coercive and absolutist power of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire was a centrally administered, militaristic and *étatist* empire. In this sense, its administrative system was incompatible with the needs of the ethnic groups in the Balkans. Although the Ottoman Empire tried to reform its own economic system, the nature of the Ottoman system prevented the development of commerce and private property. Hence, pluralism in the political sphere blocked the way for a serious political consensus and compromises to be given to the ethnic groups.

Insistence on the part of both the ethnic groups and the Ottoman Empire in solving their problems through force rather than mutual political understanding, marked the beginning of a bloody period in the Balkans. In time, the catalyzing affect of the great powers of Europe, especially Russia, found its way into the conflicts one by one. The ethnic groups in the Balkans entered into an irreversible track of revolutions. The first phases of these uprisings were less organized and the rebels had very naive claims, like the

demand for a change in a certain *paşa* or for further economic and ethnic rights. But, once the "revolution" was actually successful in Greece, the sensitive Balkan mosaic was upset, marking the beginning of a chain reaction of uprisings. Here, I must confess, that what was a "revolt", "rebellion" or an "uprising" for the Ottomans was actually a "revolution" from the point of ethnic minorities of the Balkans. This "uprising" and/or "revolution" process took almost a century. When evaluated and analyzed from the political and historical perspective, the Balkan ethnic uprisings should be seen as progressive, and yet nationalist struggles. Although the rebelling peoples demanded their basic ethnic cultural and historical rights, the rebellion also paved the way for further ethnic hatred, which is still confronted within the Balkan peninsula. Historical rivalry has taken a deeper form of hatred through the recent ethnic confrontations in the Balkans. The international situation in the Balkans today is a mirror image of the depth of ethnic problems throughout the world. World politics has difficulty in coping with it, and the world is striving for a fair and long term solution. When ethnic problems are evaluated from different perspectives, they could be handled as reactionary ethnic uprisings creating, nothing else, but ethnic hatred. At the same time, they can be seen as "national revolutions" by the rebelling people.

In a sense, the ethnic uprisings of the Balkan peoples were the forerunners of the "national revolutions" begun by the Russian revolution in the aftermath of the World War I. They were also the symbols of progressive reactions against absolutism. The ghost of history has come across the Ottoman Empire two times. In the first instance, the emerging empire was the savior of the oppressed people of Anatolia. In the second time, it was the victim of its own coercive rule. The over-application of political control on the rebellious ethnic peoples created a bad reputation for the Ottoman Empire in the eyes of the Western

public. Today, still, there is bias against the Turkish Republic due to the heritage of the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Empire was the major Muslim competitor of, and the real threat to, the European nations. This situation, when combined with Philhellenism of Greece, created a specific sympathy in Europe towards the Greek people. Intellectuals have exalted the Greek culture. Similarly, until the eighteenth century, economic and political confrontation of the Ottoman Empire and Europe had taken the form of an implicit religious confrontation with the advent of ethnic uprisings. Even today, there is discussion of whether the European Union is a club of Christians, and whether an Islamic country like Turkey could be accepted by those with Christian traditions and cultures. This mutually exclusive difference is inherited after the strict segregation of the Muslim and Christian ethnic groups in the Balkans. The ethnic uprisings in the Ottoman Balkans had a specific feature of hiding a religious aspect. Although ethnic compositions were quite different in places like Crete and Bulgaria, politicization of ethnic differences by the Western powers led to the use of ethnic identity as a political strategy. This was first done in Crete, by the major European powers, when their troops landed on the island. As the interests of the great powers of Europe changed, they took sides with different groups. However, as in the case of Pan-Slavism, ethnic differences have long been a very effective and useful political tool. In today's so called "globalized world", we still have deep ethnic confrontation in various forms, like in the case of the African tribes, and more political and reactionary consciousness forms like in the case of Serbia, and, highly conscious forms of ethnic differentiation like in the case of the Czechs and the Slovaks.

Both the Balkan peninsula and central Europe have a multiplicity of ethnic groups. The borders of today's developed European countries, like Germany, do not actually

coincide with ethnic composition. On the other hand, in some of European countries, like Spain coincide with ethnic problems. These countries have also had unpleasant experiences regarding their ethnic problems.

The ethnic conflict in the Balkans was frozen by the emergence of a bi-polar world and the prevalence of the Cold War. The axis of conflict shifted from a national and ethnic character towards a capitalistic and socialist one. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the real underlying conflict of ethnicity reemerged. The so called "new world order" was not in favor of the Balkan peoples, because of the economic and political inefficiencies of their systems. Hence, people were unrestrained in most of the Balkan countries, which opened the way for a direct ethnic oppression by the Serbs.

The Balkan peninsula has always been, and still now, is the *tabula rasa* of understanding the true character of the ethnic differences, and the confrontations which we are facing today, and will probably face in the future due to its historical roots, cultural complexity and geo-political setting.

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VII. APPENDIX

RELATED OTTOMAN SOURCES FROM SEYFEDDİN ÖZEGE CATALOGUES

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