

VICTIMS AND VOLUNTEERS:
RELIEF TO OTTOMAN SOLDIERS
DURING THE BALKAN CRISIS OF 1875-1878



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Victims and Volunteers:

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ABSTRACT

Victims and Volunteers:

Relief to Ottoman Soldiers During the Balkan Crisis of 1875-1878

This dissertation focuses on the relief to Ottoman soldiers during the Balkan Crisis of 1875-1878. By analyzing the donation campaign, the formation of voluntary units and international aid, this dissertation reveals the social, cultural and political characteristics of the aid to the Ottoman army. Relying on archival sources and the newspapers of the period, this study positions the aid mechanisms within the power structures of the period and contributes to the field of research on the state-society relation of the late nineteenth century Ottoman history. Coinciding with the declaration of the First Constitution, the notions of volunteering and consent are interpreted in relation to the increasing patriotic rhetoric. Additionally, this research also elaborates on the international humanitarian networks and their dealings in the Ottoman Empire by analyzing the workings of two prominent British aid institutions (Stafford House Committee and National Aid Society) and the Ottoman Red Crescent Society to situate the aid efforts within the context of the phenomenon of modern humanitarianism.

ÖZET

Mağdurlar ve Gönüllüler:

Balkan Krizi Döneminde (1875-1878) Osmanlı Askerlerine Yapılan Yardımlar

Bu tez, Balkan Krizi döneminde (1875-1878) Osmanlı ordusuna yapılan yardımlara odaklanmaktadır. Osmanlı askerlerine destek amacıyla yürütülen iane kampanyasına, bu kampanya ile eş zamanlı olarak gönüllü askeri birliklerin kurulmasına ve uluslararası yardım ağlarının Osmanlı askerleri için yürüttükleri çalışmalara odaklanan bu tezde, devlet ve toplumun eşgüdümlü olarak yürüttüğü seferberlik halinin sosyal, kültürel ve politik veçheleri ele alınmaktadır. Arşiv belgeleri ve dönemin gazeteleri ışığında yardım kampanyasının detaylarına odaklanan bu çalışmada, yapılan yardımlar ve kurulan gönüllü birlikler, dönemin iktidar ilişkileri bağlamında ele alınmaktadır. Yurtdışında görevli Osmanlı bürokratlarının, bu dönemde kurumsallaşan uluslararası insani yardım ağları ile ilişkilene biçimlerine de odaklanan bu çalışma, yükselen Osmanlı karşıtı söylem karşısında geliştirilen mağduriyet imajının Osmanlı lehinde kampanyaların üretilmesinde ne şekillerde kullanıldığını analiz etmektedir. Son olarak, Osmanlı askerlerine yapılan uluslararası yardımlara ve bu dönemde kurulan Osmanlı Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti'nin faaliyetlerine değinen bu tezde, iki İngiliz yardım kuruluşunun (Stafford House Committee ve National Aid Society) faaliyetleri de ele alınarak, askerlere yapılan yardımların, küresel yardım ağlarındaki rolü irdelenmiştir.

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To Yalın and Ada

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ABBREVIATIONS

ATASE	Milli Savunma Bakanlığı Askeri Tarih Arşivi
BOA.	Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri
BRCA.	British Red Cross Archives
OSKH.	Osmanlı-Sırp Karadağ Harbi
ORH.	Osmanlı-Rus Harbi
ORCS.	Ottoman Red Crescent Society
NAS.	National Aid Society
SALT.	SALT Archives
SHC.	Stafford House Committee
SHC. Coll.	Stafford House Committee Collection
SRO.	Staffordshire Record Office

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Empires fasten upon creating a sense of authority and justice and their legitimacy is rooted in their capacity to impose order, create a predictable and secure system and sustain economic and military ties. It requires creating diverse relations with various powerholders to maintain such order and cooperation, co-optation, negotiation and coercion are ways that define these relations. All these methods are inherently linked with the impetus to establish legitimate ties between the rulers and their subjects.¹

One of the practices which has the potential to shed light on the relation between the state and the subjects is the practice of giving. Identified as the prevalent modes of giving; charity, relief, philanthropy and social welfare are crucial concepts in understanding the building blocks of any society.² The preference of one form of giving over another in a specific context, the complexity inherent in each of these practices and the different trajectories they follow in time underpin the larger societal transformations.³ By looking at the ways in which donors and receivers of any form of giving are identified and how these practices are performed, it is possible to trace socio-political transformations, elucidate cultural patterns, pinpoint forms of political and economic leverages, and understand the formation of subjecthood, imperial obligations and imperial identities.

Focusing on the aid to Ottoman soldiers during the Balkan Crisis, this dissertation aims to reveal the ways in which the Ottoman state tried to create new and efficient ways of mobilizing Ottoman society through utilizing specific forms of

¹ This formulation takes its inspiration from Burbank and Cooper's influential study. For the discussion on the characteristics of imperial rule, see Burbank and Cooper, "Imperial Trajectories."

² Singer, *İyilik Yap Denize At*, 15.

³ Singer, *İyilik Yap Denize At*, 15.

giving, exemplify how Ottoman society engaged with the relief campaign through new mediums and how this process reflected the larger transformations pertaining to imperial identities and the means of creating legitimate ties between the Ottoman state and the subjects. Additionally, by focusing on international aid, this dissertation situates relief to Ottoman soldiers within the newly developing international humanitarianism.

With the impact of modernity, building blocks of imperial legitimacy have begun to change. The spread of liberalism, European imperialism, expansion of the capitalist system and the rise of nationalism, forced the Ottoman Empire to come up with new ways of defining the relation between the state and the subjects throughout the nineteenth century. Defined as one of the most important characteristics of modernity, centralization meant new means of controlling the peripheries and changing the role of the intermediaries in a time when military duties and economic relations were transforming.

One tendency in discussing imperial legitimacy is to view it as a concerted action by the ruling cadres. This view sheds light on state mechanisms and reveals the impetus behind the official discourse. Notwithstanding the importance of state craft, looking beyond these practices prove beneficial in understanding the interaction between the state and society and the ways in which state craft was experienced by society. While defined and constrained by the official ideology and state mechanism, the need to create legitimacy is simultaneously expanded and transformed by the power of the actors that are positioned outside and around the central state authority.

Moments of armed conflict impose a redefinition of the relations between the state and society and periods of crisis prompt a patriotic rhetoric highlighting the role

of the custodians of the public. Aid practices of the Balkan Crisis (1875-1878), a period which initially witnessed rebellions and revolts, followed by two wars, had social and political ramifications and required a readjustment of the definition of imperial subjecthood. The transition from internal unrest to wars required different ways of conducting relief and resulted in the production of a specific patriotic rhetoric, reflecting the culmination of the Tanzimat ideals. Analyzing the aid to Ottoman soldiers during the Balkan Crisis, this dissertation aims to show that among the many ways of defining and experiencing imperial identities, the government sought to mobilize Ottoman society by incorporating a supra-national ideology with shared commitments. The rhetoric of this commitment varied depending on the ethno-religious characteristics or the gender of the target groups, yet the notion of protecting the empire and proving the loyalty of the subjects was an important drive which linked the different practices of aid during the period.

Whether defined in an Islamic language or within the confines of a multi-ethnic imperial language, the participants of the mobilization campaign were all defined as *hamiyyetli* (patriot) and the term *gönüllü* (volunteer) dominated both the state rhetoric and the public discussion. Tanzimat Reforms had sought to transform imperial relations and the Ottoman handling of mobilization during the Balkan Crisis is both a reaction and a continuation of the Tanzimat ethos.

As discussed throughout the dissertation, the phenomenon of defining a legitimate course of action for society's involvement in the relief campaign during the crisis necessitated a nuanced rhetoric which incorporated a specific vocabulary and emphasized imperial duties. This campaign reveals that the course of action and the rhetoric of relief required an alignment between the state and society. Rejecting the framing of the relation between the state and society as opponents, this

dissertation will argue that the mobilization of the Balkan Crisis turned out to be a specific historical conjuncture which created a moment of patriotic alignment between the two actors. Relief turned out to be a mediated process, which incorporated an emphasis on consent and the Tanzimat ideals, allowing for the formation of civil initiatives.

This process was not just a top-down mechanism. Examples of relief practices, which were both local and imperial, will showcase that the Ottoman government and the Ottoman intellectuals sought to create and emphasize an Ottoman community with shared commitments. These commitments predominantly relied on the shared history of the Ottoman rule and were formed as expressions of allegiance. The Ottoman community came to be defined by the willingness of each community to act in support of the continuation of this rule. This support could take the form of donations or volunteering to protect the empire.

The convergence between the state and society allowed for a mutually transformative experience. The initial impetus to aid the Ottoman soldiers started as a product of civil initiative, without the involvement of the government. These civil initiatives, which were defined within a rhetoric of patriotic giving, were later taken on by the government due to various reasons, such as the increasing financial burden of war effort, the increasing pressure from international actors and the decreasing rate of contribution in the campaign. What started as a civil campaign in different localities around the empire ended up incorporating compulsory forms of aid during the war with Russia. However, even the compulsory forms of relief (*iâne*) had social and cultural ramifications and were made part of a larger aid campaign which incorporated various practices shaped by the participants' socio-cultural status.

Focusing on the practice of donating, in the form of money, materials and one's life, this study claims that the relief efforts of the period reflect the larger transformation of the period, which can be labelled as a transition from traditional modes of giving to modern humanitarianism. Aid practices were not confined to the traditional Islamic philanthropic sentiments, they were patriotic efforts and thus a general trend of secularization need to be underlined. This secularization, however, did not entail the exclusion of religious motifs. Due to military mobilization, religious sentiments were articulated with reference to martyrdom, ghaza and jihad. However, the practice of giving differed from traditional Islamic charity. The establishment of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society during the Russo-Ottoman War marked a turning point in the execution of relief activities in the Ottoman domains. This society allowed the government agents and the elites to engage and actively participate in the international humanitarian networks. Even though modern humanitarian efforts would be consolidated as of 1890s, the Balkan Crisis stands out as a precursory case. The experimentations of the period served as examples for the future practices of humanitarianism and the basis of philanthropic networks. In other words, the roots of Hamidian philanthropy lie in the aid practices of the Balkan Crisis.

This is not to argue that Ottoman society and the ruling elites were immune to the suffering of its people and others until this period. On the contrary, during various earlier cases, methods for ameliorating the suffering of people and aiding the army existed, which were sometimes utilized for international recognition⁴ while others served to mobilize society during unrest or natural disasters.⁵ However, the crucial

⁴ For an overview of the relief to Irish Famine, see Çelik, "History of Humanitarianism."

⁵ The *iâne* campaign of the Cretan events and the earlier famine relief campaigns are just two examples among the many *iâne* campaigns. See chapter 3 for details.

importance of the Balkan Crisis is that relief to Ottoman soldiers was larger in scale, was integrated into the international relief networks and the alignment of the state and society resulted in civil initiatives some of which reflected the political rivalries.

The Russo-Ottoman War has been identified as a watershed moment in Ottoman history, marking the end of Tanzimat Era and the beginning of the autocratic Hamidian regime. The financial burden of the war effort and the disastrous defeat resulted in the further deterioration of the Ottoman finances. The Treaty of and the subsequent political developments opened a new chapter in Ottoman history, marking the beginning of a series of conflicts around the empire, resting on ethno-religious tensions and resulting in experimentations with demographic engineering. This dissertation aims to reveal the ways in which relief efforts were conducted right before a momentous breaking point. Aiming to strip the analysis from retrospective interpretations, this dissertation situates the analysis within the framework of the Tanzimat period and reveals how the Tanzimat ideals were put into effect to “save” the empire through an aid campaign which aimed to incorporate the various groups of the Ottoman society. Such an analysis necessitated extending the research into the earlier period of the conflicts and including the aid efforts during the uprisings and the Serbian War. These events have generally been treated separately, leaving obscure the continuities. Thus, this dissertation will trace a specific practice throughout the Balkan Crisis and highlight how the relief to Ottoman soldiers was transformed and how the accompanying rhetoric allowed for instigating new mobilization mechanisms.

One of the traumatic outcomes of the Russo-Ottoman War was the mass migration from the Balkans. Thousands of refugees left their homes in the Balkans during the conflicts. The migration of the Russo-Ottoman War, known as *93 Harbi*

muhacereti, had serious consequences for the Ottoman Empire. The difficult condition of the refugees was also taken up by the international humanitarian committees. Studies of the 1877 War refugees and the relief to refugees have been analyzed in literature from various aspects.⁶ On the other hand, relief to the Ottoman soldiers, which built up patriotic rhetoric and witnessed the interconnected actions of domestic and international actors, have not received adequate scholarly attention. Hoping to fill this gap partially, the main framework for this dissertation has been limited to relief to Ottoman soldiers.

Due to the location of the earlier conflicts and the revolts, the analysis focuses predominantly on the Western regions of the Empire. The unrest in the Balkans dominated both the discussions and the activities of humanitarian efforts. Most of the international aid efforts were also concentrated on the Western provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The domestic relief efforts also took on a specific form in the Western port cities. Therefore, analysis of the domestic and international relief efforts mostly focuses on the Ottoman capital and the Western regions, referring to the Eastern front only in passim.

Adaptation of cultural practices into relief work and the redefinition of legitimacy through patriotism materialized in a period which witnessed economic bankruptcy, deposition of a sultan, establishment of a constitutional regime, rebellions and wars. Intervention loomed over the Ottoman governments bringing about discussions of reform, questioning of Ottoman legitimacy in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean, and the increasing activities of international humanitarians, all of which circumscribed Ottoman political rhetoric.

⁶ For a brief over of the existing literature on the aid to refugees please see the section “Literature Review.”

These developments were neither unique to the Ottoman Empire, nor to this specific moment in history. Certain developments had paved the way for the establishment of new relief practices and the transformation of older methods of giving throughout the nineteenth century in the Ottoman domains. They eventuated within the larger context of the transformation of power relations between different political actors. Concurrent with the Tanzimat reforms, humanitarianism, in close cooperation with colonialism, was in the making around the globe and its impact differed in each region. For the Ottoman Empire, the larger framework was the “Eastern Question” which dominated the international discussion, and which threatened the Empire’s sovereignty due to interventions in governance on grounds of humanity.

The relationship between humanitarianism and the Eastern Question has been increasingly scrutinized in recent years and the growing emphasis on this relationship resulted in fruitful studies on the history of the nineteenth century. Hoping to contribute to this field, this dissertation will analyze the ways in which the Ottoman state and society engaged with international humanitarianism of the period. It is imperative to underline that this engagement was not solely an imposition or mimicking the established practices. On the contrary, as the research on donations and the formation of volunteer units will exemplify, the domestic dynamics of the period resulted in the production of a specific state rhetoric and particular social practices. These practices acted as the basis upon which modern philanthropic acts were built in the following decades. The initial experimentations with civil aid formed the basis of philanthropic networks and these networks were utilized through the newly established Ottoman Red Crescent Society.

The challenge of researching humanitarianism and aid efforts of the nineteenth century lies in the multiplicity of the actors involved and the diverse relations that result from relief work. Foreign and domestic actors perceive and utilize aid in different ways, with diverse motivations. The practices evolve as the context in which they are constituted changes, creating manifold justifications, implementations and ways of engaging. Additionally, the motivation and the expectations of the individuals were not static. The shifting imperial arrangements, emergence of new modes of thinking and living all affect the subjectivities of the individuals involved in relief work. The main difficulty lies at the heart of understanding these subjectivities while at the same offering generalizations.

Does a wealthy Jewish industrialist in Salonica have the same motivation and expectation when participating in the *iâne* campaign with that of a state officer from Konya? Does Atiye Hanım from Hobyar district in Fatih share the same vision with the high-ranking state bureaucrats when donating money to help the Ottoman soldiers? What was the reason for Dimostini Efendi in enrolling Christians in the volunteer units during the Serbian War, instead of just donating money? What motivated Yorgi Efendi, Kirkor Efendi and the softas to enroll in the volunteer units? Is it possible to trace a shared understanding of patriotism and relief work among these individuals? Would it suffice to view their participation as compulsory, imposed by the state, applying in the same way to each and every individual? No matter how heterogeneous and complex these processes may be, the advantage of selecting one historical phenomenon and delving into its details is to pinpoint certain tendencies and exemplify the ways in which individuals engaged with it.

One of the major criticisms of modernization theory has been the rejection of a binary opposition between the traditional and the modern. This branch has also

underlined that notwithstanding the impact of centralization and modernization, states continued to rely on intermediaries and tried to consolidate their sovereignty by creating a constellation of relations. These systems of ruling, a phenomenon which Eric Lohr defines as “separate deals paradigm” implies that states had separate deals with different ethno-religious communities in establishing sovereignty.⁷ A similar proposition has been put forth by the recent studies on late Ottoman history. This approach articulates that creating different bonds with communities did not necessarily exclude the imposition of imperial identities upon the subjects. The formalization and legalization of the communal system during the Tanzimat Period rested on constructing separate deals with the communities.⁸ Recent scholarship has also underlined a “dual reasoning” in the 1856 Reform Edict, which identified equality of Muslims and non-Muslims as Ottoman subjects while at the same time guaranteeing the privileges of the religious communities.⁹ This reasoning was expressed once more in the First Ottoman constitution by defining *Osmanlı* as an inclusive category of belonging while at the same time upholding the religious privileges of the non-Muslim communities.¹⁰

⁷ Eric Lohr traces the origins of “separate deals paradigm” to eighteenth century Russia and identifies Russian governmental practices which attached importance to defining an imperial citizenship, at the same time which “codified and regularized the ‘separate deals’ approach to defining the status, rights, and duties of ... nationalities of foreigners.” Analyzing the mechanism of naturalization Lohr proposes that the estate system - Russian legal system which was based on differentiating and regulating the relation between legally separate groups - was the basis upon which this system was built. This practice was later extended to the annexed populations during the Russian expansion. This process was not without transformations. The drive towards a common subjecthood, which envisioned unified regulations for subjecthood also existed, particularly after the reforms during 1860s. However, the notion of providing exemption and privileges prevailed even in the acquisitions of the Eastern Ottoman provinces in 1878. Lohr, *Russian Citizenship*, 20-29. While Lohr’s study is based on Russian annexation policies, the paradigm offers a nuanced understanding of the coexistence of general rules of subjecthood and negotiated and differentiated modes of belonging in a modernizing and centralizing empire.

⁸ Koçunyan, “Millet System.”

⁹ Ueno, “For the Fatherland,” 95.

¹⁰ Ueno, “For the Fatherland,” 103.

One of the ideological venues in which such complex imperial arrangements were crystalized is patriotism. Patriotism creates an aura of sacrifice and imperial belonging. It makes possible the “imagining” of an imperial community and it offers an opportunity for the different ethno-religious communities to express their allegiances. Patriotism also legitimizes power.¹¹ Patriotic sentiments could bring together Atiye Hanım, Dimonstini Efendi and the softa in an imaginary companionship and this companionship was realized through diverse cultural and linguistic articulations. The various forms taken on by patriotic rhetoric not only reveal the interactions and tensions among society, but also the ways in which both the state and the society envisioned the imperial bonds.

The patriotic campaign of the Balkan Crisis resonated with the ideology of Ottomanism. The emphasis on the unity of different ethno-religious groups of the empire was constantly underlined in the press. The utilization of Ottomanism needs to be situated within the Tanzimat heritage in which a certain form of Ottomanism was defined at the imperial center and later reconfigured by each community. This dissertation focuses on the imperial center and interprets the policies of the Ottoman government in relation to internal and external dynamics.

An important characteristic of Ottomanism, as underlined by recent scholarship, was that there were different versions of Ottomanism as perceived by different communities, existing simultaneously and in interaction. Regarding the Helleno-Ottomanism as a Greek version of Ottomanism, Anagnostopoulou situates this ideology within the framework of assimilation and activation in a transforming system.¹² According to the author, Ottomanism was not the totality of Ottoman citizens but the totality of Ottoman millets. Thus, the basis of Ottomanism was the

¹¹ Mestyan, *Arab Patriotism*, 3.

¹² Anagnostopoulou, “‘Nation’ of the Rum,” 83.

totality of the patriotisms, which each *millet* created within their own community.¹³ Mestyan also posits a similar framework for patriotism in the late Ottoman Empire. He argues that there were different patriotisms in the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century and analyzes the relations between the imperial patriotism and Arab patriotisms.¹⁴ This perspective proves useful in explicating the fact that different patriotic and philanthropic circles existed during the Balkan Crisis. As will be discussed below, communities could take concerted action in defending the empire and in aiding the Ottoman soldiers, while utilizing communal, vocational, regional and economic ties with respect to the logistics of aid.

Another factor which needs to be highlighted is the relation between constitutionalism and relief. Ottoman aid efforts were not restricted to moments of armed conflict, there were earlier local donation practices and imperial aid campaigns initiated during times of natural disasters. The aid campaign of the Balkan Crisis on the other hand, was part and parcel of a larger mobilization campaign which witnessed the proclamation of the first Ottoman Constitution. The earlier discussions on and the expectations about the declaration of a constitutional regime was a contributive factor in the aid campaign. Influential figures and local representatives sought to take part in the patriotic campaign to secure a beneficial position in the new political configuration. As the examples will evince, the celebrations of the constitution could be made part of the relief campaign, and the Ottoman parliament discussed relief efforts during the sessions. The political transformation was the important framework in which the communities and the governmental agents defined and articulated their patriotism. Thus, this dissertation argues that the practices of *iâne* and forming of volunteer units were integrated into

¹³ Anagnostopoulou, “‘Nation’ of the Rum,” 84.

¹⁴ Mestyan, *Arab Patriotism*.

constitutional excitement and contributes to the literature by revealing how the populations utilized the relief efforts in engaging with the political developments. Of particular importance, is the leading role of the constitutionalists. As will be discussed below, the public enthusiasm during the Serbian War and the victory of the Ottoman army, which included the volunteer units, was praised and encouraged by the constitutionalist clique. War jingoism was framed in such a way as to ward off international pressure and mobilize various groups through a patriotic campaign, which emphasized equality in service to the fatherland. The quick governmental change, that is the enthronement of Abdülhamid II, however impacted the relief campaign in short time. The volunteer units underwent a transformation with limitations on the power of constitutionalists. Patriotic symbolism also underwent a significant change, which now carefully tiptoed around the concept of a religious war.

Both the practice of *iâne* and the forming of volunteer units had historical antecedents. Originating in the traditional taxation system, the *iâne* had multiple meanings and usages. Analysis of the *iâne* of the Balkan Crisis reveals that the practice was embraced by the populations and was not just an extraordinary tax imposed by the state. The contribution of the people and the state's need to emphasize the voluntary nature of giving points to the fact that society embraced this practice, and that the state regarded it important to emphasize the consent of the donors. The incorporation of traditional and modern artistic genres into the relief campaign also underlines a transitory characteristic of the relief work during the period.

A patriotic campaign is necessary in times of armed conflict because it serves to create an atmosphere of sacrifice, and this was propagated through the press

publications. No matter how vivid and lively the initial aid campaign seems, the monetary contribution was, in the end, very little when compared to the military spending in a war but participation in the campaign mattered, it was publicly discussed and the ways in which it was discussed served specific purposes for the government and society.

Similarly, when the *başıbozuk* units became the epitome of Ottoman barbarity against the Christian populations of the Balkans, the government sought to transform these units and adopt them into the new political order. The reconfiguration of the auxiliary units was related to the increasing international pressure, and it was also part of the domestic patriotic campaign. Volunteering during the Balkan Crisis became a far-reaching phenomenon. Non-Muslims and religious school students volunteered to fight for the empire and the involvement of the constitutionalists in forming and aiding these units led to tensions between different inner elite circles. While the state hoped to counter allegations of mistreatment of non-Muslims by advertising these multi-confessional units, the participants sought to demonstrate their allegiance to the state and secure favorable positions for their communities.

The domestic relief campaign was conducted simultaneously within a diplomatic campaign and efforts in rehabilitating the image of the empire exceeded correction articles. Humanitarian intervention was a serious threat and the increasing anti-Ottoman agitation in the diplomatic arena forced the Ottoman government agents to execute various measures to secure a justified position. Some of these measures rested on older forms but as the analysis will reveal the preoccupation with public opinion in European countries forced the Ottoman diplomats to create new methods in image management. These methods included surveying and controlling

information and knowledge along with the implementation of different soft power tools to enforce legitimacy for the state actions. These efforts were taking place within a diplomatic language which rested on morality, humanitarian sentiments and the notion of victimhood. Thus, both the government, the Sultan and the diplomats considered it important to articulate humanitarian sentiments and claim to be the real victims of internal unrest initially and in the later phase of the crisis, the victims of Russian aggression. In addition to soft power measures, humanitarian actions and involvement in humanitarian circles were promoted.

However, advertising aid to Ottoman soldiers posed a serious challenge. It was related to the larger question of defining the victim. Who had the power to define the victim and where was this legitimacy rooted? Could the “perpetrators” be defined as victims? The pro-Ottoman campaign in Britain which favored aiding the Ottoman soldiers rested on a rhetoric which displayed the empire as a weak entity and identified the Ottoman soldiers as victims. Although functional in raising donations, this imagery was not favorable to Ottoman legitimacy. The Ottoman state commenced setting up a new rhetoric and a new institution, the Ottoman Red Crescent Society. This society worked in close cooperation with international humanitarian institutions, and by resting on the international codifications, the Ottoman state strove for a more neutral rhetoric, one that legitimized aid to Ottoman soldiers not as a dire necessity but more of a requirement of the international codifications. With the establishment of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society, Ottoman elites and diplomatic personnel became legitimate actors in the newly emerging humanitarian circles, the state could claim a legitimate position in the humanitarian and civilized club and receive aid. Thus, this dissertation will posit that the Ottoman

government adopted changes in the diplomatic arena and could create solutions to the immediate and pressing legitimacy crisis.

Defined as the heyday of modern humanitarianism, political discussions of the nineteenth century were dominated by humanitarian intervention, relief work and the Eastern Question. In his frequently cited study on the origins of humanitarian intervention, Gary J. Bass, sets out to trace “the major themes of today’s heated debates about humanitarian intervention” and argues that these were “voiced loud and clear throughout the nineteenth century.” According to Bass, the activism of early humanitarians “was not just a matter of imperialism” and that there was “genuine humanitarianism at work.” He rejects the claim that nineteenth-century humanitarianism was “only a matter of pan-Christian solidarity” and argues that “freedom at home [could] help promote freedom abroad” linking the increasing European involvement in the conflicts elsewhere with a genuine interest in human suffering born out of nineteenth century liberalism in Europe.¹⁵

Bass’s book, a timely publication,¹⁶ has received both applause and criticism. In his groundbreaking book on the nineteenth century humanitarian interventions, Davide Rodogno brilliantly shows that “nineteenth century humanitarian interventions were not necessarily products of increasing democracy, a free press and the increasing importance of the principle of self-determination.”¹⁷ By exemplifying cases of non-intervention and the limits of intervention, Rodogno offers a nuanced interpretation. In another powerful study, Luke Kelly proposes that humanitarianism

¹⁵ For his arguments see the introduction in Bass, *Freedom’s Battle*.

¹⁶ The book was first published in August 2008 when the American military authorities were publishing reports claiming that violence in Iraq was diminished by 40% to 80% since the second round of deployment in 2007 in the Iraq War. See “Pentagon: Violence down in Iraq since ‘surge,’” CNN, <https://edition.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/meast/06/23/iraq.security/>. Bass’s study on the historical roots of humanitarianism fitted well within the divided American public on the justifications and limits of humanitarian intervention. For Rodogno’s critique of Bass and the timing of his publication, see Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 16.

¹⁷ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 16-17.

was seen as a “way to ameliorate destruction” and that it was an “outgrowth of a more civilized, or more Christian society.” The diversity of the practices turned it into a phenomenon larger than a philosophical attitude.¹⁸

The recent scholarship on nineteenth century humanitarianism eschews overarching generalizations and instead emphasizes the diverse motivations of groups involved. The actors were both the products and the agents of a period which witnessed socio-economic transformations around the globe during the age of high imperialism. Some scholars even go so far as rejecting an “objective definition of humanitarian action” and claiming that major questions relating to aims of humanitarians are rhetorical.¹⁹ The motives of the humanitarians, the political goals of the states involved, and the requirements of the victims of violence were all intermingled, making it hard to construe the phenomenon in its entirety. Yet rhetorical questions are crucial in investigating episodes of humanitarian aid and offering a fresh understanding of the ways in which aid work and the related discourses were created and experienced by individuals.

One of the defining discussions on nineteenth century humanitarianism is whether the humanitarian efforts of the period reflected the liberal attitude or whether they ought to be regarded as products of colonialism. Recent historiography tends to break away from this dichotomy and expands the discussion by underlining that both dynamics were at work simultaneously. This dissertation agrees with this revisionist approach and hopes to contribute by revealing that both the international and the

¹⁸ Kelly, *British Humanitarian Activity*.

¹⁹ Craig Calhoun argues that three questions haunt humanitarians. These questions are linked with the motivations of the humanitarian agents. Do they aim to improve the human condition, or do they only aim at alleviating the suffering at a specific instance and preserve a neutral attitude on larger questions relating to the conditions of living? Or are they just responding to humanitarian emergencies in which suffering may be dehumanized. All three are rhetorical, according to Calhoun because “they do not require a precise answer, but they are not without consequences.” Calhoun, “Imperative to Reduce Suffering,” 73.

domestic relief to Ottoman soldiers were multi-faceted. The international actors, especially the British doctors need to be contextualized in relation to the colonial context however, their experiences during relief work cannot only be reduced to political engagements. The realities of the battlefield forced the agents to act out of the boundaries of their defined duty. Additionally, the humanitarian agents filled a critical position in policy making. Labelled as eyewitnesses, the knowledge they produced was regarded as genuine and authoritative and acted as the basis of state policies and campaigns. The varied individual motivations and different political inclinations of the humanitarian actors affected their work and shaped their narratives.

Additionally, relief work of the period became a defining case study for most of the international humanitarian institutions. By referring briefly to the formation of the British and Russian Red Cross societies, and the key issues that surround their dealings, the aim of this dissertation is to situate the Ottoman efforts in the international context. There were differences to the ways in which British and Russian aid work had evolved prior to the Balkan Crisis however, it is important to emphasize that institutionalization and codification had not reached its ultimate form during the period of analysis. Thus, the relief to Ottoman soldiers was part of a wider sphere of activity which involved contestations, experimentations and ambiguities.

Issues such as the competence of the foreign doctors, their selection and integration into the Ottoman military system resulted in tensions and forced the Ottoman government to implement emergency war time measures. The matter was further complicated when the British doctors and surgeons, who were stationed with the Ottoman army, were taken as captives by the Russian forces. In addition to creating diplomatic tensions, the captivity of the British doctors illustrates that the

realities of the battlefield did not correspond to the international codifications and that the legal and political definitions of humanitarian work was still in the making.

Linking the emergence of nineteenth century humanitarianism with the Eastern Question, recent historiography underlines the lack of historical analysis of the target states' experiences during the nineteenth century.²⁰ This dissertation aims to partially fulfil that gap. By looking at the details of aid to Ottoman soldiers, this dissertation aims to contribute to the literature by offering an understanding of the Ottoman experience during the Balkan Crisis

The multifaceted interplay between international actors, the Ottoman state and society, requires a holistic approach which highlights heterogeneity. Such an approach ought to emphasize the rhetorical, the social and the institutional aspects and to situate them within an international network. To this end, this dissertation is structured around three themes, each of which will be discussed in the following chapters and each of which highlights different actors and policies. The three levels of analysis are as follows: (1) The state rhetoric and state craft need to be analyzed in relation to the international actors. The involvement of various states and international agents in the so-called question of "the future of the empire" urged the Ottoman governments and their representatives to form a specific rhetoric as a tool in their international dealings. This rhetoric was "victimhood" which emerged both as a reaction to and as part of international humanitarian sentiments and it was utilized in such a way as to ensure the continuity of Ottoman sovereignty. This will be the focus in chapter two. (2) Chapter three will deal with the domestic relief efforts. By juxtaposing state mechanisms of mobilization and the ways in which Ottoman

²⁰ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 2; Ozavci, *Dangerous Gifts*, 4. Ozavci's study is an important contribution to this void in the literature. He traces the Ottoman response to the international interventions to the Levant between 1798-1864 and offers "security" as a new paradigm as the impetus behind the socio-political transformations. Ozavci, *Dangerous Gifts*, vii.

society participated in it, the third chapter aims to highlight the dynamics of a patriotic campaign through an analysis of two specific practices: volunteering and donating. Even when forcing its subjects to donate money for the war cause in prescribed amounts, the state found it important to phrase the process with the notion of consent and invited its subject to volunteer for the war effort. Thus, the image of victimhood, which was assumed to be a conducive state strategy in diplomacy, was turned into its very opposite in the domestic sphere. Lastly, aid practices had their limits, both rhetorically and practically, and the limitations are important in revealing the entirety of the phenomenon. (3) The complexity of humanitarian action, especially during its institutionalization and codification, was a double-edge sword for the Ottoman Empire. Participating in the international aid circles rested on yet another rhetoric, one that defined the Empire as weak and in need of help. This proved challenging for the implicit hegemony during the age of high imperialism. The fourth chapter will thus look at the complexities of being involved in international humanitarian networks throughout the Balkan Crisis and focus on the British subject in the service of Ottoman army and the newly established Ottoman Red Crescent Society.

1.1 Literature review

The Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 has received much attention, particularly from scholars who focus on the political and military aspects of the conflict. Political studies either focus on the diplomatic aspects and the treaties of the War of 1877,²¹ or elaborate on the war from the framework of the Eastern Question.²² Military histories

²¹ Yavuz and Sluglett, *War and Diplomacy*.

²² Frary and Kozelsky, *Russian-Ottoman Borderlands*; Yasamee, *Ottoman Diplomacy*; Yavuz and Sluglett, *War and Diplomacy*; Jelavich, *Balkan Tarihi*; Jelavich, *Ottoman Empire, the Great Powers*; Jelavich, *Russia's Balkan Entanglements*; Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*.

of the War of 1877 do not touch upon relief to Ottoman soldiers.²³ Two phenomena, which offer insights into the social aspects of the 1877 War are prisoners of war and refugees. Studies on the prisoners of war, particularly the Ottoman POW's, offer detailed analysis of the phenomenon by offering social and cultural interpretations.²⁴ Some of these studies focus on the medical aid provided to the Ottoman War prisoners however, these studies trace the prisoners in their journeys in foreign lands. Therefore, they do not illustrate the aid provided to them prior to their imprisonment.

The second major field of study is the aid to refugees. Nedim İpek's study focuses only on the refugees and relies almost exclusively on Ottoman sources.²⁵ Analyzing the British Relief to refugees of War of 1877, Hatip Dinçyürek's study offers a wider framework by incorporating British sources into her research.²⁶ Studies which focus on the social and cultural aspects of the War of 1877 in particular and the Eastern Question in general offer insights into the workings of the press, the ways in which the Ottoman and Russian empires perceived and experienced the events and how intellectuals engaged with the crisis.²⁷

²³ For the treatment of the War from the perspective of the earlier military reforms, Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*. For a strictly military chronology of the War, see 1877-1878 *Osmanlı-Rus Savaşı Zaman Dizini*. For a military history of the War of 1877, see Süer, *1877-1878 Osmanlı-Rus Harbi Rumeli Cephesi*; Süer, *1877-1878 Osmanlı-Rus Harbi Balkan Cephesi*. For the military history of the Russian Army during the War of 1877, see Menning, *Bayonets before Bullets*; Greene, *Sketches of Army Life*.

²⁴ Of particular importance to these studies is Vitaly Poznahirev, who published extensively on the Ottoman war prisoners of the Russo-Ottoman War. See the following publications by Poznahirev: "эволюция положения турецких военнопленных в России в конце XVII – начале XX в." (Evolution of the status of the Turkish Prisoners of War in Russia in Late XVII and Early XX. Centuries); Poznahirev, *Османские военнопленные в России в период Русско-турецкой войны 1877–1878 гг. (Ottoman Prisoners of war in Russia during the Russian-Turkish war of 1877–1878)*; Poznahirev, *турецкие генералы и адмиралы в русском плену, XVIII – XX вв. (Turkish Generals and Admirals in Russian Captivity)*. Other studies on the Ottoman war prisoners, see Ürkmez, "Savaşın Öteki Yüzü"; Karakulak, "93 Harbi'nde Esir Olmak." For a treatment of the category of war prisoners in the Russian-Ottoman conflicts, see Smiley, *From Slaves to Prisoners*. For an general analysis on the notions of sovereignty, subjecthood, slavery and freedom, see Smiley, "Let whose people."

²⁵ İpek, *Rumeli'den Türk Göçleri*.

²⁶ Hatip Dinçyürek, *A "Compassionate" Episode*.

²⁷ Phillips, "Eastern Crisis"; İşçi, "Wartime Propaganda"; Arslanov and Linkova, "Evolution of the perception"; Boldyrev, "The Eastern Question and the Russian Society"; Çiçek, *The Young Ottomans*; Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*.

The existing literature, which incorporates Ottoman documents, on the aid to Ottoman soldiers during the Balkan Crisis is limited. Studies, which are directly linked with the topic predominantly focus only on the Russo-Ottoman War, without analyzing the developments of the earlier phase of the conflict.²⁸ Focusing on the Ottoman Red Crescent Society, Ada looks at the development of aid work through the lens of this Society, without elaborating on the earlier aid initiatives which fall outside the scope of his research.²⁹ Yurdakul's study on the other hand treats the subject from a wider perspective which focuses on the Ottoman military medical services during the War of 1877. These two studies, which elaborate on medical aid, including both the imperial and the domestic effort, however, rely on different, and somehow limited sources on the topic of foreign aid. Other studies, which focus on specific aspects of medical aid during the Russo-Ottoman War, offer more nuanced and detailed analysis of certain medical practices of the Russo-Ottoman War.³⁰ The literature on the foreign aid to Ottoman soldiers, which use foreign archival sources to illustrate the international efforts have been particularly useful in revealing the general framework of foreign aid mechanism, particularly the British aid.³¹

Of particular importance and an influential source for this dissertation has been the recently evolving literature on humanitarianism and humanitarian interventions of the nineteenth century. These studies trace the particularities of the transformations of humanitarianism from various perspectives; political and

²⁸ Ada, "Osmanlı;" Yurdakul, "1877-1878"; Macar, "Foreign Medical Aid."

²⁹ Ada, "Osmanlı."

³⁰ Macar, "Transportation of the Wounded," and Macar, "Foreign Medical Aid."

³¹ One of the seminal works on the British aid during the Balkan Crisis is Anderson's *Balkan Volunteers*. This study, despite the lack of any references, has proven to be a milestone in analyzing nineteenth century British aid efforts. Rebeca Gill, who has published extensively on British relief of the nineteenth century offers a fresh and nuanced understanding of the British aid efforts in the Balkans. For Gill's contribution to the literature, see Gill, *Calculating Compassion*; Gill, "Rational Administration." For British relief to the Russian Empire, see Kelly, *British Humanitarian Activity*; Kelly, "British Humanitarianism." For a political analysis on the British Aid to Middle East during the nineteenth century, see Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire*.

diplomatic accounts of the various humanitarian interventions, their significance for the Eastern Question, the making of international institutions and practices and emerging networks.³²

Lastly, the literature on the Ottoman philanthropic efforts and the studies on the public and public opinion have been instrumental in defining the domestic dynamics of the relief to Ottoman soldiers. These studies provide an understanding of the relation between the Ottoman state and society and situate this within the larger framework nineteenth century humanitarianism.³³ Engaging with these studies and bringing together research on the domestic and international relief to Ottoman soldiers, this dissertation hopes to contribute to the literature by revealing the details of the relief efforts from the beginning of the Herzegovinian revolt until the end of the Russo-Ottoman War. By doing so, this dissertation will shed light on some of the civil initiatives of relief during the initial phase of the crisis and attempt to show how the roots of certain future aid practices can be traced to the Balkan Crisis. To put it differently, this dissertation hopes to historicize and contextualize the earliest examples of aid practices which became dominant in the latter part of the nineteenth century and continued to be practiced in the twentieth century. A similar case applies for international aid work. Defined as the heyday of humanitarianism, nineteenth century relief work prepared the ground for the establishment of international humanitarian activities. By prioritizing the Ottoman experience and situating it

³² Skinner and Lester, "Humanitarianism and Empire"; Barnett and Weiss, *Humanitarianism in Question*; Heraclides, "Humanitarian Intervention"; Heraclides and Dialla, *Humanitarian Intervention*; Watenpugh, *Bread from Stones*; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*.

³³ Özbek, "The Politics;" Özbek, "Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism." For the major studies on the Ottoman public sphere and public opinion, see Kırılı, "The Struggle;" Kırılı, "Coffeehouses," Mardin, "Power, Civil Society;" Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*; Çiçek, *The Young Ottomans*; Alkan, "*Osmanlı'da Cemiyetler Çağı*."

within the global context, this dissertation aims to show that the process was mutually constitutive.

To achieve this aim, the analysis is situated at the intersection of imperial history and humanitarian studies. This field, as scholars suggest, needs studies that highlight the “mutually constitutive histories” of the two phenomena, humanitarianism and imperial ambitions.³⁴ Another important point that scholars have underlined is treating the long history of humanitarianism and humanitarian intervention as a link between the attempts at consolidating modern empires and the emergence of nation-states.³⁵ This approach proves useful for scrutinizing the connected nature of relief work and imperial identification within the Ottoman domains and the emerging nationalist movements which attracted the attention of international humanitarian agents. The research on Ottoman aid practices and the dominance of “voluntariness” in the public discussions showcases that the whole process may be interpreted as an outcome of the burgeoning philanthropic, pan ideologies and proto-nationalist discourses, highlighting the complex relation between the state and the society.

1.2 Methodology and sources

Aiming to reveal the relationship between the state, society and the international sphere, this dissertation is situated at the intersection of social and cultural history. However, scrutinizing the state conduct and inquiring into the diplomats’ dealings necessitated some engagement with diplomatic history. To this end, the recent developments in diplomatic history have been particularly insightful for this dissertation. The new diplomatic history or also labelled as “cultural history of

³⁴ Skinner and Lester, “Humanitarianism and Empire,” 731.

³⁵ Skinner and Lester, “Humanitarianism and Empire,” 731

diplomacy” has proved useful for its emphasis on the individuals who perform diplomacy. Challenging the conception of a monolithic state, the new diplomatic history calls for attention to “the elite worlds inhabited by diplomats.”³⁶ Analyzing the correspondence between the consular agents and the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this research aims to reveal the activities of Ottoman diplomatic agents in acquiring or enhancing their positions within the growing philanthropic circles. Tracing the transformation of state rhetoric and the dealings of the diplomats proves useful for revealing the changes in state rhetoric and the engagement of the state representatives with humanitarian actors. The increasing discourse of morality in the diplomatic sphere was crystalized by the philanthropic efforts. As scholars of humanitarianism agree, philanthropic efforts stood at the center of political developments and the aid to Ottoman soldiers was surely not isolated from this interaction.

The second layer of analysis, that of the Ottoman domestic sphere, on the other hand, required a different approach. A social-historical approach proves useful to decipher the relief work during the Balkan Crisis. By analyzing the relations between the state mechanism and social responses to mobilization, this dissertation sheds light on the social ramifications of relief to Ottoman soldiers. Due to the fact that civil initiatives transformed the state conduct and rhetoric throughout the aid campaign, the social-historical approach was tuned to incorporate an understanding of the ways in which relief work was labelled, described and articulated. To this end a culturally sensitive analysis was consulted, which underlined the terminology of aid and how it was incorporated into the urban fabric and the emerging cultural and

³⁶ Alloul and Auwers, “New Diplomatic History?”

literary genres. Particular attention is given to the vocabulary of aid and how it was instrumentalized by the intellectuals of the period.

While the archival sources provide the backbone of the research, the newspapers of the period provided ample evidence to relief work which could not be traced through archival documentation. Analyzing the newspapers, however, necessitated an analysis of the discourse surrounding relief work. This discourse is significant primarily because it reflects how civil actors perceived and articulated the act of giving. Of these actors, newspaper editors and writers have been voiced loud and clear throughout the dissertation due to the abundance of sources. To compensate for this imbalance, memoirs have also been consulted. Deconstruction of the rhetoric of relief was crucial in identifying the different patriotic circles. It was also important in identifying the main tenets of a collective action. This collective action came at a time when the political order was being challenged and the Tanzimat reforms had scaled new heights.

The aid practice touched upon many societal issues, but the dominant framework of relief to Ottoman soldiers was the duty of subjecthood. The duty – which included donations and promoted volunteering for the war - was accompanied by new practices embedded in the sociological and cultural paradigms of the period. Attempting to get as close as possible to individual experiences, while at the same tracing their interaction with the state, this dissertation hopes to contribute to the field by revealing the multilayered ties that connected the Ottoman society and state during the period of reforms.³⁷ The end result is however, not without limitations.

³⁷ Toksöz underlines the importance of incorporating the Ottoman society into the analysis of Ottoman modernization, thus turning the focus from the state to the relation between the state and society. Toksöz, “Reform ve Yönetim,” 211-212.

The major limitation is the fact that this study relies on only Ottoman language and European language newspapers. Therefore Jewish, Christian and Armenian experiences are only referred to either through Ottoman sources or – if available – through secondary sources. Hopefully more investigation into the newspaper publishing of the period will help to portray a more complete picture. Another limitation of this dissertation is that it focuses predominantly on the Ottoman capital. While there are references as to how different cities experienced the donation campaign and the formation of volunteer units, much of the evidence at hand fails to provide a nuanced and detailed understanding of the local complexities. Therefore, this dissertation serves as an example of how the capital and – to a certain extent major port cities – experienced the phenomenon. Further studies which focus on the localities are certainly needed.

Apart from the Ottoman archives, the archives of two other institutions are consulted: The Stafford House Committee archives located in the Staffordshire County Record Office and the British Red Cross Archives. Both archives provided valuable material to better understand how the British aid work to the Ottoman soldiers was conducted and articulated. The reports, and the narratives of the British doctors prove important as to understand how the relief in the Balkans functioned within the global/imperial setting. Thus, this dissertation hopes to humbly contribute by revealing the “simultaneous[ly] domestic and global nature of violence in the Levant”³⁸ and how it became an important component of claiming hegemony and justifying future interventions in the Eastern Mediterranean by the notion of humanitarianism.

³⁸ Ozavci, *Dangerous Gifts*, 14.

1.3 Outline of chapters

The second chapter defines the context in which the Ottoman state was caught up with during the Balkan Crisis, underlines the shift in the state rhetoric and exemplifies how the Ottoman government and the ruling elite instrumentalized international codifications, positioned against the increasing pressure of intervention and coped with internal unrest. This section highlights the methods and discourse deployed by the Ottoman state and the diplomatic personnel in their struggle to portray a specific image vis-à-vis the international actors and to solve the urgent financial and logistical problems in a period when humanitarian intervention loomed over the diplomatic sphere. In such an atmosphere the governments and the high-ranking bureaucrats looked for alternative methods, combining traditional ways of providing support with “modern” philanthropic practices. Executing various soft power techniques in the international arena, Ottoman ruling elite aimed to establish a secure position in international politics, with a justified claim to sovereignty. This was not an easy task, for it meant to reconcile international codifications and regulations with a jihad campaign – without officially declaring it - accommodate and channel the demands of multi-ethnic and multi-religious subjects into mobilization without opening the way to more nationalist uprisings.

Prior to the beginning of hostilities in Herzegovina, the Ottoman government had already initiated methods to influence the international sphere. Close investigation into the European press and public opinion continued throughout the Balkan Crisis, and the Ottoman diplomatic personnel made use of every opportunity to secure a position in the international sphere. Aiming to bolster internal mobilization and create the image of a benevolent ruler, Abdülhamid II propagated a specific image through aid work and publicized these in the press. In addition to the

image of the benevolent sultan, the Ottoman government also utilized another mechanism, targeted particularly at international audiences, the politics of victimhood. This policy was closely related to the international conventions, and it aimed at reversing the image of the “Terrible Turk” with that of a victim.

Highlighting different examples, the second chapter reveals how these policies were put into work by providing an analysis of political discourse and how the consular agents in foreign lands instigated emergency measures.

The third chapter focuses on the Ottoman society to explicate the bilateral relation between the Ottoman government and the society in the making of the relief campaign. Focusing on the *iâne* practice and the formation of voluntary units, this chapter delves into the details of how Ottoman society assumed aid campaigns. Participation of different groups required diverse mechanisms, and the Ottoman press served as the main medium in tracing the discursive and practical multiplicity. Standing at the intersection of mobilization and humanitarianism, this campaign serves as an interesting case study for elaborating on how the Ottoman state discourse, *Osmanlılık*, was shaped and used by various actors.

Inspired by the concept of “imperial situation”³⁹ this section posits that aid campaigns and the formation of voluntary units serve as examples in tracing the imperial identities of various groups, and how this was juxtaposed with state demands. Underlining the various discourses and highlighting examples from different localities, this section problematizes the dichotomy between compulsory and voluntary participation and claims that Ottoman subjects were able to transform the demands coming from the state and shape them according to their priorities and

³⁹ “Platform ’24: Common Scholarly Field.”

expectations. Thus, this section juxtaposes the state discourse with how the campaign was executed.

This chapter also seeks to highlight the different ways in which the imperial state tried to maintain its control over mobilization through symbolic and non-coercive ways. Thus, this dissertation aims to exemplify the beginnings of a transformative change in matters of aid and donation by looking at the tug-of-war for power and prestige during the turbulent years. By looking at the ways in which different groups articulated their patriotism through public declarations, this chapter elaborates on the rivalry between different groups in the mobilization, with the aim of claiming power and position in the imperial network.

Another aim of this chapter is to reveal how political transformations were deeply related with domestic mobilization. While the promulgation of the constitution is interpreted in relation to the growing international pressure and the imminent war with Russia, the fact that the first Ottoman constitution was promulgated during a mobilization campaign is often overlooked. The celebrations of the declaration of the constitution were merged with the mobilization campaign and served as a mechanism to create patriotic belongings among the subjects of the empire. Lastly, this chapter delves into the phenomenon of volunteer units during the period and situates them within the context of mobilization and patriotic giving. The problematic image of the irregular soldiers was juxtaposed with the necessity of using these units in the war effort, resulting in the creation of a new outlook for the irregular soldiers. Aiming to restore the image of the Ottoman soldiers and mobilize the subjects of the empire, the practice of forming volunteer units was later curbed down and reshaped due to internal power struggle among the Ottoman ruling elite.

Chapter four highlights the dynamics of international aid. The aim of this chapter is to situate the Ottoman experience of relief within the international context. By revealing the dealings of the international institutions, showing how the Ottoman Red Crescent Society's foundation was linked with the historical context and elaborating on the humanitarian agents' experiences, this chapter seeks to highlight the discursive and practical heterogeneity of the process. Situated within the expanding Red Cross movement, "pan" ideologies of different kinds, and the rationalization and professionalization of international aid, the chapter first delves into the major topics of discussion in matters of aid. Revealing the discussions on terminology such as neutrality and impartiality, the chapter discusses the limits of these definitions and hopes to contribute to literature by revealing that agents in the fields did not follow the definitions of their duty blindfolded.

Focusing on the two major institutions of aid to Ottoman soldiers, The National Aid Society and the Stafford House Committee, this chapter posits that these institutions acted mostly in cooperation in aid work. Yet, the rhetoric of aiding the Ottoman soldiers was quite often challenged by the British public opinion or other aid initiatives. The Ottoman government agents, on the other hand, tried to mold this rhetoric into one which would not damage the empire's prestige. Lastly, the chapter concludes by exemplifying the various other forms in international aid to Ottoman soldiers during the period of analysis and the imperial concern with presenting the Sultan as a benevolent ruler, sensitive to the requirements of civilization and humanity.

CHAPTER 2

RELIEF, DIPLOMACY AND IMAGE MANAGEMENT

This chapter opens with a brief overview of the historical context leading to the Balkan Crisis. Some of the international and domestic developments will be discussed by pointing to continuities and underlining the role of the historical antecedents in the relief work of the late 1870s. The chapter then focuses on the dealings of the Ottoman state in the turbulent years by exemplifying various methods of image management. The Ottoman bureaucrats instigated different diplomatic and philanthropic measures to present a specific image of the empire in a period in which morality and humanitarian sentiments were becoming increasingly important. Hoping to achieve high ground in the diplomatic arena, Ottoman agents sought to present the empire as a civilized entity, abiding by the requirements of the period. This required controlling information and enforcing pro-Ottoman narratives to influence public opinion. Equally important was the utilization of philanthropic networks for the benefit of the Ottoman empire and the requirement for increasing expressions of compassion was the claim to being the real victims against Russian intrigue and aggression.

2.1 Background of the Balkan Crisis

2.1.1 Setting the stage: The Eastern Question and humanitarianism of the nineteenth century

The aim of this section is not to provide an analysis of the Eastern Question nor cover a survey of the vast literature on the Balkan Crisis but rather to exhibit the intricate relation between humanitarianism and the political context of the nineteenth

century. The Eastern Question dominated the political discussions, decision making processes and public opinion throughout the nineteenth century in Europe, and in the Ottoman Empire. Intrinsically linked with the expansion of global capitalism and the European colonial rule, this concept provided room for diplomatic maneuvers, humanitarian interventions and shaped the identities of groups and imperial subjects. By looking at the intersection of humanitarianism and the political context, this section will highlight the major turning points in the Eastern Question throughout the first half of the century, emphasizing the continuities in practices and ideas into the Balkan Crisis period.

The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, which was signed at the end of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774, is regarded as the beginning of the Eastern Question in literature.⁴⁰ Ozan Ozavcı, in his recent study however, traces the history of this phenomenon well into the sixteenth century and argues that the vast European literature which depicted the Ottoman Empire as a danger to the stability of the European order acted as a historical antecedent. This depiction formed the basis of the arguments which contextualized the Ottoman and Western antagonism within a religious context, Ottomans being the Islamic other. Despite the antagonistic rhetoric, the Ottoman Empire, however, was an integral part of the European geopolitical strategy from the beginning.⁴¹ The image of the Ottomans, particularly in English

⁴⁰ Mathew Anderson's book has dominated the literature from the 1960s and regards the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-74 as the beginning of the Eastern Question. Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*. Macfie, for example refers to Anderson's chronology in his narrative, remarking the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca as the opening of a new era. Macfie, *The Eastern Question*. Frary and Kozelsky also underline that the general tendency to identify the beginning of the question to the Russian expansion into the Ottoman territory and the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca. Frary and Kozelsky, *Russian-Ottoman Borderlands*, 8.

⁴¹ Ozavcı describes how the literature on the Turks depicted the Ottoman Empire as the oriental other or the "wrath of god towards Christians" however comments that the Ottoman Empire was an integral part of the socio-economic and diplomatic concerns of the European powers. Ozavcı, *Dangerous Gifts*, 24-25. Frary and Kozelsky start their analysis by incorporating a narrative of Ottoman decline and the suggestion of partitioning the Ottoman lands in 1736, underlining the heritage of the European "political and moral obligations to manage the Ottoman collapse" in the early eighteenth century. Frary and Kozelsky, *Russian-Ottoman Borderlands*, 4.

literature was one equated with tyranny and strangeness resting on religious formulations, yet at the same time this representation included “images of strength, [and] the picture of an empire in its zenith.”⁴² Following the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, Napoleonic invasion of Egypt marks the second instance in which the European threat to Ottoman rule increased. The eighteenth century also witnessed the expansion of Russian influence over the lands under Ottoman rule.

Alexander Bitis, in his important study, identifies four periods in the evolution of the Eastern Question, and regards the events between 1815-1833 as the early, and less known period⁴³ of the Eastern Question. Growing Russian influence in the Balkans was an important outcome of this early stage and it signaled the increasing tension in Anglo-Russian relations. By the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the Eastern Question had been established in its classical form.⁴⁴ The key features of the matter were as follows: (1) Attempts at internalizing the Ottoman affairs through a Congress system. (2) The increasing claim of Russia as the patron of the Christian Ottomans in the Balkans. (3) Increasing nationalism among the Christians living under Ottoman rule in the Balkans. (4) Internalization of the Black Sea and the issue of the status of the Straits. (5) “[A]bility (rather the inability)” of the Ottoman government in the rule of the regions.⁴⁵ Providing a slightly different account, Jelavich delineates the Russian interests in the Eastern Question on three levels: Geopolitical, ideological and economic, the latter receiving the least of attention in Russian diplomatic correspondence.⁴⁶

⁴² Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 90

⁴³ According to Bitis, the main events which affected the Eastern Question in this period were: the Greek War of Independence, Russo-Ottoman War of 1828-1829, the Treaty of Adrianople, Crisis of Mehmed Ali, the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi and the Russian occupation of the Danubian Principalities. Bitis, *Russia and the Eastern Question*, 1.

⁴⁴ Bitis, *Russia and the Eastern Question*, 1.

⁴⁵ Bitis, *Russia and the Eastern Question*, 1.

⁴⁶ Jelavich posits that if the economic considerations had occupied a central place in Russian foreign policy making as opposed to strategic considerations, Russia would not have participated in any of the

Analyzing the Eastern Question from the perspective of the Balkan nationalisms, Dimitris Stamatopoulos defines three phases in the evolution of the Eastern Question. Stamatopoulos identifies the first dominant narrative, that is the Eastern Question, as an articulation of the colonial discourse of the Great powers within the framework of determining the end of the Ottoman rule. Analyzing this discourse within the context of the “Ottoman decline” and the “classical orientalist phase of Western colonialism”, Stamatopoulos labels the period between the Crimean War and the Balkan Crisis as the heyday of Eastern Question. According to the author, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century this narrative was challenged by the growing nationalist aspirations.⁴⁷

The question of Balkan nationalism has been influential in the historiography concerning the nineteenth century Ottoman rule in the Balkans. These explanations lent themselves to the formulation of the Ottoman rule in the Balkans as stagnant and decaying, celebrating the success of the nationalist/revolutionary ideologies. Vying these approaches, other studies focus on the details of the socio-economic transformations to belie the misconceptions of the dominance of nationalism in the region. During the Tanzimat Period, the Ottoman government exerted reforms in the Balkans, prominent figures such as Ahmed Cevdet Paşa and Mithat Paşa were positioned in the region to execute reforms under official directive. These efforts were part of a larger framework of centralization and modernization of the Ottoman rule, transforming the relation between the state and the subjects.

wars throughout the nineteenth century. The financial setbacks rested on the economic burden of war and the fact that Russia did not compete over controlling market relations and resources, particularly in the Balkans. Jelavich identifies a lack of emphasis on the commercial importance of the Black Sea grain trade and the economic relations of the Black Sea shores in the diplomatic documents. Jelavich, *Russia's Balkan Entanglements*, 26. Challenging the above-mentioned approaches to the Russian policy, Van der Oye argues that despite the general perception of Russia as adventurous, Russian foreign policy was conservative during the nineteenth century and the main aim was to maintain the status-quo and to keep the Western borders in control. Van der Oye, “Russian Foreign Policy,” 554.

⁴⁷ Stamatopoulos, *The Eastern Question*, 17-18.

The arguments about the disintegration of the Ottoman system and the rise of nationalist ideologies have rested on the decline paradigm. Classical versions of this perspective underline the inability of the Ottoman state and analyze the Eastern Question within the framework of the Ottoman decline.⁴⁸ Scholars who reject the decline paradigm shifted the narrative from a steady and inevitable decline to a process which involved reforms and reactions and thus opposing a static and linear perception.⁴⁹ What this revisionist approach offers, among others, is the fact that the Eastern Question was never a fixed paradigm and that it had different significance and priorities in different periods.⁵⁰

Discussion of the revolutionary unrest begins with the discontent towards Selim III's military reforms, and they were expressed predominantly by the military circles around the Danube region at the end of eighteenth century.⁵¹ During the "Age of Revolutions" the Ottoman Balkans witnessed continuous unrest,⁵² particularly between 1790s and 1830s, which stemmed from the Ottoman efforts to extract more resources for the modernization of the Ottoman army.⁵³

⁴⁸ Tracing the roots of Eastern Question, Anderson proposes that the Ottoman state was in decline and that in many aspects, the governments failed to successfully rule. Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*, 14-19.

⁴⁹ Ozavci's revisionist approach to Eastern Question claims that the phenomenon was surrounded by a trans-imperial security culture. European powers understood "security as a public good" which could be best obtained through cooperation and in every event which fell under the title of Eastern Question, the European powers deemed it necessary to convene a diplomatic event to "resolve" the issue, or not to fight with one another. Ozavci, *Dangerous Gifts*, 8-9. This cooperation, which was in effect during the Balkan Crisis, resulted in the concerted action of the Powers not only in resolving the crises but also in defining the characteristics of the humanitarian efforts.

⁵⁰ For a summary of the foci of the Eastern Question from 1789 to 1860s see Ozavci, *Dangerous Gifts*, 9-10.

⁵¹ Anscombe, "Balkan Revolutionary Age."

⁵² Unrest among Christians and Muslims were different from each other, but they also shared common characteristics. They neither had coherent programs, nor were they justified through "a modern ideology." Communities resisted the developments imposed by the Ottoman capital and they expressed an anger towards the government for failing to fulfill the expectations, leading them to resort to violence. Anscombe, "Balkan Revolutionary Age," 585.

⁵³ Anscombe, "Balkan Revolutionary Age," 572.

In defining the reasons behind the recurrent military conflicts, unrests⁵⁴ and resistance to military reforms in the Balkans, two approaches are evident in the historiography. According to one perspective, the underlying reason for the unrest was the disintegration of the Ottoman system and the rise of nationalist aspirations and ideologies. According to the second view this period is defined by the Ottoman reforms and the various reactions to these reforms.

While the supporting ideology of the Eastern Question rested on the perception of a rational, civilized and enlightened Europe and a stagnant Ottoman Empire, economic considerations stood at the center of the problem. Expanding global capitalism required the maintenance of trade routes and market relations between the imperial west and the colonies. The economic significance of the Mediterranean and the Balkans never waned during the nineteenth century since this was the period in which global capitalism expanded into the Levant.⁵⁵

2.1.2 The Greek Revolution (1821)

The Greek Revolution of 1821 was a turning point for the Eastern Question⁵⁶ not only for its artistic and literary heritage but also as the first example of an armed humanitarian intervention in the Ottoman domains.⁵⁷ The initial Greek revolt started

⁵⁴ The first revolt of the nineteenth century happened in Serbia, in 1804. The roots of the Serbian revolts lied in the discontent towards the Janissaries. After the suppression of the Janissaries, the revolts were directed against the Ottoman government. Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*, 65. The Serbian revolt would later resurface in 1815 under Milosh Obrenovich.

⁵⁵ Ozavci, *Dangerous Gifts*, 6.

⁵⁶ European intellectuals and artists were deeply influenced by the Greek Revolution, producing works of literature and art which became literary tropes and visual centerpieces in the decades to come. Lord Byron, who participated in the Greek War of Independence was regarded as a hero of the fight against the Ottomans. Byron's literary legacy can be traced in the works of famous romantic writers, such as Victor Hugo's *Les Orientales* and it continued to affect the literary production during the Balkan Crisis period. Using Byronic characters in his novels, Benjamin Disraeli admired Lord Byron greatly, so much so that he managed his daily affairs following Byron's legacy. For Byron's influence on Disraeli, see Bass, *Freedom's Battle*. Delacroix's famous painting, *Massacre at Chios*, became the visual epitome of Ottoman barbarity, deeply influencing the visual propaganda materials of the Balkan Crisis.

⁵⁷ Heraclides, "Humanitarian Intervention."

in the Danubian Principalities, which was followed by the subsequent independence movement, partly possible due to the unstable situation in the Greek mainland resulting from the Ottoman suppression of Ali Paşa's increasing autonomy and power.⁵⁸ Greek merchants living in the trade colonies around the Black Sea and the Mediterranean – who initially formed and supported the revolutionary organization Philike Hetairia⁵⁹ - Greeks living in the Principalities, Phanariots, Greek notables and upper clergy⁶⁰ from mainland Greece all participated in the revolution, and they were followed by peasants and military men.⁶¹ During the initial phase of the Greek uprising, European powers regarded the events as an Ottoman domestic affair and the Russian Tsar and his foreign minister had denounced the dealings of the *Hetairia*.⁶²

After suppressing Ali Paşa's revolt, the Ottoman forces were then caught up in fighting with the Greek rebels, which came to an unresolved issue.⁶³ The initial violence towards the Muslim population resulted in the killing of at least ten thousand Muslims in a few weeks.⁶⁴ The news of atrocities towards Muslims and the

⁵⁸ Jelavich and Jelavich, *Balkan National States*, 39.

⁵⁹ Russian support to this organization was widespread. Russian consuls in the Balkans were members of this organization but Russian government refrained from openly supporting the organization once the rebellion started in the Principalities. Jelavich and Jelavich, *Balkan National States*, 40-42. Ioannis Capodistrias, who was a Philhellene and a high-ranking bureaucrat to Tsar Alexander I, had rejected the proposal to lead *Philike Herairia*. Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*, 69.

⁶⁰ Greek notables and the clergy were not willing to participate in the rebellion initially. Notables had ties with the Ottomans and the clergy was hesitant against the revolutionary groups and viewed them as a possible ideological threat. Jelavich and Jelavich, *Balkan National States*, 43.

⁶¹ Jelavich and Jelavich, *Balkan National States*, 38.

⁶² Ozavci, *Dangerous Gifts*, 118.

⁶³ Scholars underline that the Ottomans were caught off-guard and that their initial reaction lacked efficiency when faced with the Greek revolt. Jelavich and Jelavich, *Balkan National States*, 44. However recent research suggests that the Ottoman rulers may have been anticipating the events. Ozavci, "Ottoman Imperial Gaze," 5. As Ozavci shows, The Ottoman government had received intelligence from diplomatic agents and had seized documents revealing the plans of *Hetairia* supporters. Ozavci, *Dangerous Gifts*, 119.

⁶⁴ Initial violence was targeted towards Ottoman civil servants, but it quickly turned towards civilians. Villages were burnt and the populations of entire villages were massacred despite their surrender. Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 65-66.

alleged participation of Phanariotes in the revolutionary conspiracies created a furious reaction in the Ottoman capital.⁶⁵

The repercussions of the violence against the Muslims in Greece had tragic consequences for the Ottoman Greeks living in major centers such as the capital, Smyrna and Chios. The violence against Ottoman Greeks rested on the instrumentalization of Islamic sentiments and the mobilization of religious figures.⁶⁶ The increasing violence towards the Ottoman Greeks resulted in the brutal killing of Greek Orthodox Patriarch. European representatives in Ottoman lands and European press had remained silent during the initial wave of violence, and the massacres in the three centers did not result in a military intervention on the basis of humanitarian ideals.⁶⁷ Mehmed Ali of Egypt⁶⁸ who later participated with the Ottoman forces in 1824, intervened in the armed conflict, and the Ottomans gained an upper hand.⁶⁹ The Egyptian forces' participation changed the course of events, with brutality and yet another wave of violence.

The reasons behind the uprisings and the motivation of different groups in leading and/or joining the uprisings have been discussed in literature from various perspectives. Much ink has been spilled over whether nationalism was the driving force behind the insurgencies. Nationalist historiography emphasized the predominance of nationalist ideology, while others proposed that nationalist drive

⁶⁵ Muslims of the capital were armed by an official order which also called for the confiscation of arms of the Greeks and Armenians. Ozavci, "Ottoman Imperial Gaze," 6.

⁶⁶ Ozavci, "Ottoman Imperial Gaze," 6; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 66-67.

⁶⁷ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 72-73.

⁶⁸ Mehmed Ali (c.1770-1849) was the governor of Egypt between 1805 and 1848. Originally a member of the mercenary forces in the Ottoman Army, Mehmed Ali's rise to power as the governor in 1805 opened the way for the establishment of his dynasty as the rulers of Egypt thereafter.

⁶⁹ Mehmed Ali's involvement in suppressing the Greek revolt proved useful in terms of fighting but had also brought an internal weakness due to hostilities between Hüsrev, İbrahim and Mehmed Ali. See Ozavci, "Ottoman Imperial Gaze."

was not the dominant impetus,⁷⁰ it was limited to elite circles and that it was not the main ideology behind the mobilization of the masses.⁷¹

Under the influence of romanticism and having received a classical education, intellectuals from the West glorified the Greek heritage. Poetry, literature and visual arts of the period supported the growing philhellenism. This sympathy towards the Greek heritage and the classics allowed the statemen and the intellectuals to view the Greek uprising as a political and social struggle against the Muslims.⁷² In addition to the increasing public pressure, over a thousand individuals volunteered to join the Greek cause.⁷³ Philhellenic committees collected donations and propagated for the Greek cause in European cities.⁷⁴

The formation of volunteer forces and their representation in arts and literature played a crucial role in triggering a public objection to events and exerting pressure on governments. But this was not the only motivation behind the European intervention in the “Greek Question.” Mehmed Ali’s son İbrahim Paşa occupied Morea in February 1825. This occupation threatened the British interests in the region and had the potential to damage British trade with India. Another concern for the British government was the establishment of a Greek satellite state, backed by Russia.⁷⁵ As a result of these developments, the British policy makers opted for

⁷⁰ Anscombe argues that in most of the rebellions, initial impetus was a reaction to the lack of trust in Ottoman government for maintaining order and justice. Anscombe, “Balkan Revolutionary Age.”

⁷¹ Biondich proposes that nationalism in the Balkans was an elite phenomenon, and nationalist identities were the products of nationalist movements, not the cause. Biondich, *The Balkans*, vii. Mark Mazower notes that nationalist ideology was limited to the intellectual and elite circles and the masses were mobilized along religious lines. See “Introduction” in Mazower, *The Greek Revolution*.

⁷² Jelavich and Jelavich, *Balkan National States*, 48; Bass, *Freedom’s Battle*, 34.

⁷³ The are differences of opinion as to the impact of these volunteers in the conflicts however, it is certainly true that they boosted the public sentiments, and they established artistic patterns which would be revisited in the upcoming episodes. Heraclides, “Humanitarian Intervention,” 221.

⁷⁴ Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*, 77.

⁷⁵ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 78-79.

standing by the Russian Empire, aiming to create a solution which would include some degree of compromise, instead of an alliance with the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁶

What prompted the humanitarian intervention was indeed the alleged “barbarization project”. This project, which was proven to be fabricated, became the main driving force for the intervention⁷⁷ and provided legitimate grounds for British Russian cooperation in resolving the Greek issue, underlining sentiments of humanity and the need to establish tranquility of Europe.⁷⁸ The naval battle of Navarino (1827), according to Rodogno, was not an intervention based on humanitarianism. It was not the battle but the relief efforts, which were executed by private charities that had alleviated the suffering of civilians. Following the battle and the subsequent Russo-Ottoman War, during which French soldiers landed in Peloponnese,⁷⁹ the conflict was resolved with Ottoman defeat, the signing of the Treaty of Edirne (14 September 1829) and Greek autonomy.⁸⁰ “The humanitarian plight and the identification with the fighting Greeks among the educated publics”⁸¹ was an important factor, which made intervention possible, despite the initial reluctance of the Powers during the earlier phase of the conflict.

The Greek independence and the formation of the Greek state set the example for future nationalist revolts, making Greece the model state.⁸² It is regarded as a

⁷⁶ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 78-79.

⁷⁷ For the details of this project and its consequences see Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 78-80.

⁷⁸ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 82.

⁷⁹ The three Powers signed a protocol on July 1828 authorizing the French to initiate an armed intervention, and to remove the Egyptian forces out of Greece on behalf of European powers. From the perspective of the Powers, this was not an act of war, and the target was Egypt, not an independent polity but a vassal of the Ottoman Empire. Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 85. Rodogno is careful to underline this fact, which would be a recurring theme throughout the century on issues of humanitarian interventions and aid. How the target entity was defined, mattered in the diplomatic discussions. It was at the same time a concept that could easily be manipulated according to the aims of the European Powers.

⁸⁰ One of the outcomes of the French intervention was the relocation of 2,500 Muslims from Morea to Smyrna to prevent further massacres, setting a precedent for future demographic movements. Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 85.

⁸¹ Heraclides, “Humanitarian Intervention,” 222.

⁸² Frary, *Russia and the Making of*, 1821-18544, 2.

turning point in the history of the Eastern Question and its impact on the notion of humanitarianism is multifold. “Human” denoted Christians in discussions of alleviating the suffering of civilians. Religious rationale was just as important as a humane cause.⁸³ Intervention in the Greek case provided European powers with “the moral high ground that allowed them to intervene for humanitarian purposes in the Ottoman Empire.”⁸⁴ Lastly, public opinion took on a new form as a driving force and the moral claims of public opinion were utilized by states to legitimize intervention and enhance “the moral capital.”⁸⁵

Traditional Ottoman historiography claims that the Greek revolution relied on Russian intrigues⁸⁶. Danişmend, rejects the claims about the Russian Tsar’s direct involvement as the leading figure in *Heteira* but writes that the revolutionary secret society’s treasury (*kasası*) was in Munich, it’s headquartered (*kafası*) in St Petersburg, and the center in Istanbul.⁸⁷ Danişmend then lists the leading figures of this committee and their relations with the Russian Empire. Implying the involvement of both national and international actors, the main reason for the Greek rebellion was the spread of nationalist ideology after the French Revolution and the European fascination with Greek culture.⁸⁸ Financial interests dominated the British foreign policy in the period, resting on the possible danger to the trade routes and the danger of the increasing Russian influence. The British were engaged in financial relations with the Greek revolutionaries. Equally important for the British concerns were the fear of Russian capture of İstanbul.⁸⁹

⁸³ Heraclides, “Humanitarian Intervention,” 223; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 89.

⁸⁴ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 90.

⁸⁵ Heraclides, “Humanitarian Intervention,” 223; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 90.

⁸⁶ The theme of Russian intrigue continued to dominate the Ottoman historiography on the nineteenth century conflicts.

⁸⁷ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi*, 105.

⁸⁸ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi*, 105.

⁸⁹ Çiçek, *The Young Ottomans*, 65.

Russian Ottoman relations were already jeopardized when the Greek uprising began. However the Tsar was not willing to support the Greek independence and wage war on the Ottoman Empire due to his reservations about disrupting the balance of power.⁹⁰ Yet, the Greek independence would later be treated as an example of the historical duty of the Russian state to liberate the rest of the Balkan geography from Ottoman rule.⁹¹ The notion of self-proclaimed duty to liberate groups and geographies, forms the backbone of humanitarian interventions of the nineteenth century and it was contextualized within the Ottoman borderlands and the “Ottoman barbarity” quickly turned into a buzzword. “Ottoman barbarity” relied on two notions, Islam and despotism both of which fell outside the category of civilization⁹² and this exclusion along with the belief in European supremacy paved the way to Europe’s self-acclaimed obligation to work out the Ottoman problem and to control the disintegration of the Ottoman rule.

2.1.3 The Crimean War (1853-1856)

Defined as a proto-world war or an All-out European War,⁹³ the Crimean War was a turning point in nineteenth century history. The alliance between the British, French and the Ottoman forces against Russia resulted in the diplomatic isolation of the Russian Empire and the inclusion of the Ottoman Empire in the European diplomatic system.⁹⁴ It acted as a catalyst for the implementations of series of reforms in the

⁹⁰ Anderson, *Doğu Sorunu*, 81.

⁹¹ Heraclides and Dialla, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 171-172.

⁹² According to Davide Rodogno, these two notions were the main factors for excluding Ottoman Empire from the European Family of Nations. Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 24-25, 70-71.

⁹³ For the naming of the War see, Badem, *Ottoman Crimean War*, 3. See also “Introduction” in Figes, *The Crimean War*.

⁹⁴ Badem argues that this inclusion existed only in theory. In reality the Empire had become a European protectorate. Ottoman Empire became a part of but not an actor in the European system. Badem, *Ottoman Crimean War*, 403.

Ottoman and Russian empires⁹⁵. Both the Romanovs and Ottomans proceeded with projects of modernization to strengthen their position and their rule. For the Romanovs this was particularly important due to the disastrous outcome of the war.

The war terminated the reign of peace which was dominant since the Napoleonic War in Europe. Two nationalist movements emerged in Europe after the war: German and Italian. The disruption of the European system also made possible revolutionary actions.⁹⁶ It also instigated the age of modern warfare, witnessing experimentation with new technologies, such as telegraph, photography and war journalism. Equally important for the topic of this dissertation was the emergence of the notion of helping the combatants.

The war started because of a Russian unilateral declaration to protect the persecuted Christians. This declaration rested on a dispute between the Ottoman and Russian governments about the rights of the Latin and Orthodox priests in Palestine, and the holy places.⁹⁷ These disputes were taking place within a historical context, which witnessed the disintegration of the political system in Europe because of the revolution of 1848. The lengthy diplomatic crisis which the rulers failed to resolve, resulted in the Crimean War.⁹⁸

As for the Ottoman Empire, the War resulted in the declaration of the Reform Edict, *Islahat Fermanı*, which was a turning point in Ottoman history. The expression of equality among the subjects of the Empire and the emergence of Ottomanism is of particular importance for this research. These notions developed over time and continued to function as an important imperial policy until the end of

⁹⁵ The Reform Edict (*Islahat Fermanı*) in the Ottoman Empire and the reforms of Alexander II in the Russian Empire.

⁹⁶ Jelavich, *Balkan Tarihi*, 359-360.

⁹⁷ Rich, *Why the Crimean War*, 48-49.

⁹⁸ Rich, *Why the Crimean War*, 47.

the Balkan Crisis. During the war, the Ottoman government resorted to European loans, a process which continued thereafter and resulted in the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the European financial system.⁹⁹ The violence attributed to irregular troops, *başıbozüks*, received a global attention and would set an example in the following conflicts, both as a method of war and as the main reason for atrocities. The cultural effects of the war, such as the increasing importance of public opinion, and the literary production about the war contributed to the enhancement of Ottoman patriotism and created an atmosphere out of which the Young Ottoman intellectuals would be born.¹⁰⁰

The Treaty of Paris resulted in curbing the power and influence of Russia in the Danubian region and opened the question of the condition of the Christians in the Ottoman Empire to all the other European powers. The Russian claims to protectorate the Christian populations would have to wait until the emergence of the pan-Slavic movement. Two women are particularly renowned for their contribution to the amelioration of the wounded during the Crimean War: Florence Nightingale and Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna. Florence Nightingale turned into a legendary figure due to her work in the Scutari Hospital and Elena Pavlovna was championed for organizing the Sisters of Mercy to aid the wounded Russians in the military hospitals. The contribution of these two women, and the realization that the military structures necessitated medical facilities came to occupy an important position in the discussion about the sanitary services of the armies in Britain and in Russia.¹⁰¹ This was also possible with the new communication technologies, which allowed the

⁹⁹ Badem, *Ottoman Crimean War*, 408.

¹⁰⁰ Badem, *Ottoman Crimean War*, 408.

¹⁰¹ Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*, 26.

societies to be informed about the battlefield and the conditions of the soldiers.¹⁰²

The Crimean War also marked a turning point in the nineteenth century warfare for the inclusion of civilians in the war effort. The Russian government relied on civilian participation, both voluntary and involuntary, in provisioning, fighting and providing sanitary support to the army. The war also resulted in the forced migration of thousands of Crimean Tatars from the region, resulting in major demographic changes in the region.¹⁰³

2.1.4 The Cretan revolt (1866-1869)

The event which triggered the Cretan revolt was a petition complaining about the high taxes, problems in matters of law and justice, and the malpractices of the Ottoman local administration. The dissidents submitted the same petition to the European consuls located on the island. Their intention was to present themselves as victims of Ottoman oppression.¹⁰⁴ The Cretan revolt was, indeed, an international event from the beginning. Emphasizing a misinformed victimhood, Danişmend underlines the effects of Greek independence and the Russian intrigues as the main causes behind the Cretan events. The Ottoman response, which threatened the locals who submitted the petition, resulted in revolt.¹⁰⁵ The Ottoman attempts at resolving the issue through negotiation failed and eventually Ömer Lütfi Paşa was sent to the island to deal with the unrest.¹⁰⁶ Rodogno identifies the Ottoman military response to

¹⁰² For the comments of Thomas Longmore, who was a surgeon-general who fought in the Crimean War, about the changing nature of warfare in relation to press, see Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*, 27-28. It was not only information about the war that affected the public, but the fact that wounded soldiers jeopardized the fighting capacities was an equally important factor for states to implement medical measures.

¹⁰³ Kozelsky, *Crimea in War*, 9. Kozelsky's study focuses on the Crimea region during and after the war and analyzes the relation between the Russian military and civilians from a wide perspective.

¹⁰⁴ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi*, 209.

¹⁰⁵ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi*, 209-210.

¹⁰⁶ The initial Ottoman response was to establish committees which included Muslims and non-Muslims to discuss and resolve issues. Aktepe, "Önsöz," 8.

the region as an attempt to prevent the accusation of being indifferent which would result in intervention.¹⁰⁷ However, it is important to underline that the Ottoman government refrained from direct military intervention initially. Recent literature on the Balkan Crisis also points out that initial response of the Ottoman government to the Herzegovinian uprising was not military but it sought to calm the situation by establishing a committee. This shows that the Ottoman governments did not resort to violence directly in some of the unrests of the nineteenth century.

Discussing the justifications and mechanisms behind the humanitarian interventions, Rodogno regards the Cretan uprising as a case of humanitarian intervention in which the European powers were involved in sending rescue ships to save the women, children and elderly and transport them to safer locations by relying on a humanitarian discourse.¹⁰⁸ Rodogno argues that the Cretan uprising was not regarded as an important turning point in analysis of the humanitarian interventions in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century discussions, because the attempts were not aimed at stopping the violence. However, he illustrates that the diplomatic negotiations rested heavily on humanitarian discourse. While the international debates revolved around rescuing the families, “*sauvetage des familles*,”¹⁰⁹ the Ottoman government resorted to a similar formulation when describing the aid efforts.

The Ottoman response was to establish an aid committee to ameliorate the suffering of the people. Fuad Paşa, Minister of Foreign Affairs informed the Ottoman representatives in the major European cities with a telegram about the situation. He explained that two Ottoman bureaucrats from the Foreign Ministry were sent to Crete

¹⁰⁷ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 118-119.

¹⁰⁸ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 126-127.

¹⁰⁹ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 138.

to start distributing aid in the region. The committee would work under Server Paşa and would aid the suffering families (*düçar-ı sefalet olan familyaların tamir-i hallerine*).¹¹⁰ Additionally, the aid committee used a similar language in their report and expressed that they aided the affected families (*muaheren ahali-i merkumeden düçar olan familyaların, muhacirin-i İslam ve Hristiyan familyaların*).¹¹¹ Other correspondence, however, differentiate among the civilians by underlining the families who were not involved in the rebellion (*Girid ahali-i mutiasından musab olanlara ita kılınmak üzere*) as the target group in the donations.¹¹² While the events in Crete triggered a civil donation campaign with the participation of Young Ottoman press, the government hoped to utilize aid to civilians as a method to ward off foreign intervention.

The Cretan event was equally important for its effects on the Ottoman domestic realm. It was the earliest example in which intellectuals openly criticized the Ottoman government and acted as a catalyst for establishing civil aid initiatives. The Cretan revolt played a formative role in the Young Ottoman thinking.¹¹³ It served as a moment at which the Young Ottoman intellectuals assessed political development to construct and publicize their ideas and influence public opinion. The Young Ottoman impetus in creating aid networks was picked up by the Muslim merchants and thus relief practices took public form during this period.¹¹⁴ The donations to Cretan Muslims, which was initiated by the intellectuals and was made public through press publications, served as an example for the later aid campaigns.

¹¹⁰ Quoted in Aktepe, “Önsöz,” 10.

¹¹¹ BOA. İ. MTZ. GR. 12/352.

¹¹² BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 386/78.

¹¹³ Çiçek, *The Young Ottomans*, 76.

¹¹⁴ For the Cretan donations and the role of the Young Ottomans in relief practices, see chapter 3.2.3

The island witnessed riots, migration of its residents, the declaration of the Cretan assembly on the unification with the Greek state, a blockade and an eventual suppression by the Ottoman government. The Cretan uprising was an international event from the beginning. The European states were involved in aiding the refugees, and volunteers had come to the island carrying with them money and guns to join the revolt, which was eventually formulated in a nationalist discourse, demanding that the island would unite with Greece.¹¹⁵

The uprising initiated certain diplomatic measures by the Ottoman government, particularly in relation to image management. It forced the Ottoman government to create new diplomatic missions, to counter the negative Ottoman image and combat the biased reports of Ottoman brutality against the islanders. Edouard Blacque Bey was appointed as the first permanent Ottoman representative to the United States in 1867. Previous attempts in 1850s and 1866, at establishing a permanent mission in the US had been rejected but the impact of the Cretan events in Western public and press required the Ottoman government to instigate new measures for having a stronger hand in international arena.¹¹⁶

During the Cretan revolt, part of the Russian press, particularly those backed by Aksakov, the prominent pan-Slav, published articles supporting the Cretan revolt, reported on Cretan demands to unite with Greece and underlined the need to help the Cretan martyrs.¹¹⁷ This campaign triggered a growing interest in the Eastern Question particularly among the pan-Slavs and conservatives.¹¹⁸ Yet, despite the growing public interest, the Russian government was not ready to respond to the

¹¹⁵ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 119.

¹¹⁶ Kuneralp, "Last of the Phanariots," 100.

¹¹⁷ Boldyrev, "Eastern Question and the Russian Society," 27-28.

¹¹⁸ Boldyrev, "Eastern Question and the Russian Society," 31; Jelavich, *Russia's Balkan Entanglements*, 158; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 120.

request of the Cretans for support. During the revolt, the Greek diplomats had approached the Russian representative for the cession of the island. Unable to finalize the international action, the Russian influence among the Orthodox populations was thus damaged.¹¹⁹

2.1.5 The Balkan Crisis (1875-1878)

By the time of the Herzegovinian uprising, the Balkans had witnessed various instances of violence and crisis. Three interrelated dynamics need to be identified when discussing the unrest which started in 1875. Ottoman centralization and modernization attempts of the Tanzimat Period resulted in a major transformation, which affected the region in its entirety. This transformation, among other things, led to confrontations and discontent. However, as recent historiography shown, the local societies did not always resist the reforms categorically.¹²⁰

The revisionist approach to the history of the late-Ottoman Balkans critiques the view that the century was marked by growing nationalism, decaying Ottoman rule and the eventual and inevitable success of the nation states. Instead, the emphasis is switched to viewing the period through the lens of appropriation, social integration, competing loyalties and relationships of power.¹²¹ While these categories are prioritized for allowing more nuanced understandings of the individuals and groups involved, it should also be underlined that these concepts were not fixed and could change during times of conflict. One after another, conflicts build up historical precedents and they could turn social and political relations upside down.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Jelavich, *Russia's Balkan Entanglements*, 152.

¹²⁰ See Saraçoğlu, *Local Governance in Ottoman Bulgaria*; Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*; Petrov, "Tanzimat."

¹²¹ For this recent approach see Grandits et al, "Introduction."

¹²² Grandits et al, "Introduction", 6.

Additionally, these changes did not happen in isolation, they were situated in global transformations, particularly the expansion of liberal capitalism. Market relations and the growing regional influences of various governments in the Balkans were crucial in defining the local dynamics and the relations between the regional powerholders and the central government. Ideological pan movements and missionary work in the region were other contributing factors which need to be considered. Coinciding with this, there was the increasing diplomatic presence in the region and the interventions of the European states. Complicated power relations thus dominated the Balkans, both in times of peace and during conflicts. Contrary to the traditional Ottoman historiography, Russian intrigue and nationalist struggles are neither the only defining characteristics of the period, nor the only reasons for the unrest.¹²³ The Russian agents did act with aspirations of increasing their influence, and backed up certain groups yet this was not the sole dynamic in the region throughout the nineteenth century and their activities were not conducted in absolute secrecy.¹²⁴ In addition to Russians, British agents acted according to their own apprehensions and the Austrian attempts to expand their influence complicated the situation. Yet, the regional actors were not without their agency. The local elites, power holders, state representatives and non-elites in the region could act in compliance and negotiate with different power holders.¹²⁵

¹²³ For an example of such a narrative, see Aydın, *Şarkî Rumeli Vilâyeti*.

¹²⁴ Walter Baring, in his report on the Bulgarian Uprising, underlines this fact and argues that the Porte was indifferent to the “revolutionary” ideas which have been brought into the region through the emissaries of the Bulgarian Bucharest committee since the time of the Cretan Uprising. FO. 424/43, no.602.

¹²⁵ For an example, see Petrov, “Everyday Forms of Compliance.”

2.1.6 The Herzegovinian uprising or the spark that set off a revolution¹²⁶

In October 1874 an incident happened in Podgorica (Podgoriçe), located in the Scutari (İşkodra province), which ignited revolts, mass killings, assassinations and mass migration, all of which resulted in the War of the Principalities and the Russo-Ottoman War. Yusuf Ağa, a powerful merchant of Podgorica was assassinated due to financial disputes. The killer, who shot Yusuf Ağa in the middle of the market, was lynched by the crowd. The crowd then searched around the town for conspirators, in the end, nineteen Montenegrin men were killed.¹²⁷ It did not take long for the news to travel to neighboring regions, and Montenegrins were engaged in retaliations, by killing Ottoman soldiers in guard duty. Diplomatic negotiations followed, with the formation of a committee composed of Montenegrin and Ottoman officials. Tensions arose when the Montenegrin government rejected the extradition of the guilty, resulting in an Ottoman ultimatum. War was omitted by the mediation of European powers.¹²⁸

By spring 1875, banditry resurfaced in the Montenegrin borderlands¹²⁹. While the local Ottoman authorities hoped for the calming of the situation, a caravan was raided in Nevesinje (Nevesin).¹³⁰ This event was later called the “Nevesinje Rifle” and became a symbol of independence.¹³¹ Shortly after the arrival of the members of a temporary commission, which was vested with the duty to ease the situation, another revolt happened. In Gabela, near Nevesinje, Christians revolted against the

¹²⁶ Ahmed Cevdet labelled the Nevesinje event as a spark that set off a revolution (*bir küçük şerare-i ihtilal*). Ahmet Cevdet, *Ma'rûzât*, 224.

¹²⁷ For the details of this event see Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 88.

¹²⁸ Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 89.

¹²⁹ Cross-border banditry was a prevalent phenomenon in the region during warmer seasons. Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 91.

¹³⁰ Danişmend writes that a couple of gendarmeries were killed, and the local Ottoman representative fled due to the increasing tensions. Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi*, 247.

¹³¹ One of the reasons for the disputes between the Muslim landowners and Christian peasants was the recent drought which had affected the region very seriously. Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 84.

Ottoman authorities.¹³² With the contribution of Muslim and non-Muslim local notables, the situation calmed down once more. Ottoman efforts in negotiation were followed by military operations led by the local Ottoman forces in July 1875 in the Nevesinje village.¹³³ Sixty villagers were killed in the operation and violence dominated the region from then on. Retaliations by either the villagers or the bandits were followed by Ottoman military operations. As a result of these, a mass migration into the Montenegrin border started.

Narrating the recent events in the Balkans upon the request of Abdülhamid II, Ahmed Cevdet Paşa chronicled that the Ottoman government did not respond to the revolts in Herzegovina and Bulgaria immediately and the matter was not even discussed in a proper manner in the Ottoman council. An additional development was the shift in European public opinion due to the financial crisis of the Empire. The situation therefore lend itself to be manipulated by the Russians, particularly Ignatiev.¹³⁴ Mahmud Paşa was the leading figure in the worsening of the situation due to his close relationship with Ignatiev and the ruling elite were preoccupied with the financial matters, ignoring the developments in the Balkans.¹³⁵ European public opinion was the main force keeping the pan-Slavic movement in control and the bankruptcy of the Empire resulted in the loss of this control mechanism and paved the way for the pan-Slavs to enhance their sphere of activities.¹³⁶ The Russian politicians blamed different parties, Gorchakov blamed Germans and Ignatiev

¹³² The reason for the unrest in Gabela was a dispute between Catholic villagers and the local landowners. Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 94. For the details of this event, see Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 93; Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 30.

¹³³ Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 95.

¹³⁴ Ahmet Cevdet, *Ma'rûzât*, 225. Ignatiev was an ardent supporter of pan-Slavic ideas and his role in supporting this cause throughout the Balkan Crisis is frequently underlined. For the importance of his dealings see Jelavich, *Balkan Tarihi*, 374.

¹³⁵ Ahmed Cevdet's emphasis on the preoccupation with financial matters is reflected on two level. The first one is the ruling elites attempts at finding a solution to the Empire's economic setbacks and the second was the interest in maintaining their personal wealth. Ahmet Cevdet, *Ma'rûzât*, 223-225.

¹³⁶ Ahmet Cevdet, *Ma'rûzât*, 223.

blamed Austrians. Montenegrins believed it was the workings of their government while the Serbians blamed Austrian authorities for the events.¹³⁷

Ottoman traditional historiography argues that the Herzegovinian uprising was essentially a political movement backed up by foreign powers. The international support to the insurgents, which had been going on for the past decade, was the reason for the prolongation of the conflicts.¹³⁸ The discontent of the people about the heavy taxation and the misconduct of the Ottoman gendarmerie is regarded as a cover for the underlying separatist agendas. The unrest is generally described as the result of Russian intrigue executed through the pan-Slavic committees and Ignatiev under “the pretext of taxation policies.”¹³⁹ Rejecting any foreign machination in the Herzegovinian revolt Mackenzie, on the other hand, argues that they were spontaneous protests of the Christian peasants and merchants against taxation policies and oppressive rule.¹⁴⁰ In his recent study, Grandits argues that there was no dominant nationalist rhetoric neither a revolutionary class involved in the initial phase of the Herzegovinian uprising. What made this local incident an international phenomenon was, according to the author, the flow of volunteers and revolutionaries into the region from early on.¹⁴¹ The notion of transnational volunteering had been a widely practiced phenomenon by the Balkan Crisis¹⁴² and “professional”¹⁴³ groups

¹³⁷ For the details of the diversity and differences of opinion about the causes of this event, see Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 31.

¹³⁸ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi*, 246.

¹³⁹ Aydın, *Şarkî Rumeli Vilâyeti*, 7; Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi*, 282.

¹⁴⁰ Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 31.

¹⁴¹ Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 83.

¹⁴² The origin of transnational volunteering is traced back to the French Revolution and the *soldat-citoyen*. Acciai, *Garibaldi's Radical Legacy*, 15. Throughout the nineteenth century, volunteering for various national causes had been a widely practiced phenomenon, such as the Greek War of Independence, the Italian unification and the conflicts in Spain. This phenomenon, however, differed markedly from the establishment of local militia units in defense of a certain locality. See 3.3 for this differentiation in the Ottoman case.

¹⁴³ Professional is used here to refer to groups and individuals who had previous experiences in either volunteering or organizing volunteer units, with unofficial support from people in governmental positions.

had been employed by various circles in supporting the revolts or aiming to aggrandize them for specific purposes.

An important insurgent and originally of Herzegovinian descent, Mihajlo Ljubibratic's role in the Herzegovinian revolt sheds light on the international connections at inflaming the already angry masses. With the news of the revolt, Ljubibratic, who had been actively involved in the uprisings in Herzegovina from the 1850's and was a follower of Garibaldi, moved out of Belgrade, where he was recently financed by the Serbian government, and arrived first at Herzegovina, then settled in Cetinje to organize volunteer units.¹⁴⁴ He initially recruited the rural population, and later when foreign volunteers, particularly Garibaldi's followers, began to arrive in the region, he was responsible for their organization.¹⁴⁵ The unrest also opened the way for widespread plundering in the region.

Serbia immediately backed up the revolt with press publications and sending volunteers.¹⁴⁶ Aid committees supported the volunteer units, but the Serbian Prince, Milan Obrenovic,¹⁴⁷ did not embrace these as an official policy. Support kept coming through unofficial channels. Upon his arrival in Belgrade, the Serbian Prince was welcomed by the volunteers which put him in a difficult position for he had assured the Austrian authorities of not sending volunteers.¹⁴⁸ Volunteers were of crucial importance for all parties, yet the European states feared any uncontrolled escalation of violence. Public opinion in Montenegro and Serbia, on the other hand, had peaked

¹⁴⁴ His first time in Herzegovina resulted in a conflict with the local insurgents. Later he went to Cetinje and started to organize volunteer units to fight against the Ottoman army. Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 99-101.

¹⁴⁵ Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 97-102; Terzuolo, "Garibaldini in the Balkans." For a brief analysis of the international volunteers during the Balkan Crisis and the difference between the international volunteers and the Ottoman volunteer units, see Chapter 3.

¹⁴⁶ Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 32.

¹⁴⁷ Milan Obrenovic was the Prince of Serbia from 1868 to 1882 and later the King of Serbia from 1882 to 1889.

¹⁴⁸ Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 32-34.

with enthusiasm and supported the uprising in Herzegovina. Similar developments took place in Croatia and Slavonia, aid committees and volunteer units were formed even though the authorities prohibited the enrolment of volunteers.¹⁴⁹

During the initial phase of the events Russian press was divided between supporters of non-intervention and those in favor of the south Slavic political ambitions. The pan-Slavic request to collect aid to Herzegovinian populations was accepted by the Tsar on the condition that aid would go directly to civilians. Pan-Slavs, however, were inclined to providing military support as well. The initial official reaction to Mikhail Grigorevich Cherniaev's¹⁵⁰ plan for forming a volunteer unit was rejected and he was placed under surveillance with limitations on his mobility.¹⁵¹

The unrest spread to Bosnia when paramilitary leaders started organizing incursions to the region in September 1875.¹⁵² They plundered and burned down villages and damaged communication lines. Yet the incursion proved unsuccessful for the paramilitary forces and the Serbian government received warnings for their unofficial support to these groups.¹⁵³ The revolts had limited reach, and they did not last long, yet they caused the suffering of a great number of refugees running away from banditry, plunder and violence. Despite the demands of Derviş Paşa, the governor of Bosnia, in sending troops to the region, the Ottoman government preferred to handle the situation without any military measure.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 37-38.

¹⁵⁰ Mikhail Grigorevich Cherniaev (1828-1898) had a military education and fought in the Crimean War. Later he participated in the Russian campaign in the Caucasus. Having been influenced by pan-Slavic ideology, Cherniaev offered his services in the Serbian War and in short time, he became very famous for leading the Serbo-Russian unit against the Ottoman Empire. Mackenzie, "Panslavism in Practice"

¹⁵¹ Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 56-58.

¹⁵² Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 106.

¹⁵³ Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 106-107.

¹⁵⁴ Grand Vizier Esad Paşa was hesitant in a military response and preferred to handle the situation by way of bargaining. Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi*, 247; Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*.

The literature on British humanitarianism underlines the fact that there was not much of interest in the Herzegovinian revolt in the British public. The event that triggered a major humanitarian campaign in England was the Bulgarian uprising. The Russian public, too, was not deeply troubled about the events in Herzegovina. However, humanitarian committees were formed around the bordering regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly in Habsburg Dalmatia and the military-border regions.¹⁵⁵ The Russian pan-Slavic committees were however very active both in the region and in Russia. In the Kingdom of Italy, committees were formed in support of Herzegovina and Bosnia and a great number of Italian volunteers, who were predominantly revolutionaries, came to the region from the very beginning.¹⁵⁶ In addition to volunteers and humanitarians, newspaper correspondents arrived in the region quickly and started reporting the events. Soon after the Ottoman government turned its attention to the European press and the ways in which these events were narrated.¹⁵⁷

According to Danişmend, the Herzegovinian revolt had military and political consequences. Military consequence was related to the spread of unrest throughout the region, particularly with the involvement of Serbia and Montenegro and the resulting difficulty of suppressing the event through military measures. The political consequences would lead to the Serbian and Russian Wars.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 111.

¹⁵⁶ Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 111.

¹⁵⁷ For the correspondence between Musurus Paşa and Safvet Paşa on the depiction of events in the European press throughout September 1875, see Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. VII, 105-110. The Ottoman consular agents kept an eye on European press and reported about these to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs throughout the Balkan Crisis. See 2.2 for the details of press management.

¹⁵⁸ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi*, 247.

2.1.7 The Bulgarian uprising

The Ottoman authorities were preoccupied with the unrest in Herzegovina and Bosnia, by the time another uprising happened in Bulgaria.¹⁵⁹ The first Bulgarian uprising in Stara Zagora was not successful, due to lack of support to the revolutionaries by the Bulgarian government.¹⁶⁰ The planning for a second uprising was in the making, when the revolutionaries had to execute their plans earlier, due to its disclosure by the Ottoman government. Local administration received news of the event through a guerrilla member and immediately proceeded with arresting people. The uprising was short lived and was suppressed brutally by the Ottoman irregular forces, which were mostly comprised of volunteers from the region. The event turned out to be a watershed moment, due to its impact on European public opinion and decision making. The event, however, did not receive support from the locals, particularly the peasants. The uprising was orchestrated by middle-class members and children of the wealthy families.¹⁶¹ These groups, and particularly the nationalist Bulgarian intelligentsia had not established organic and strong ties with the peasantry.¹⁶²

Located in the Rhodope Mountain, the village in Batak witnessed unprecedented atrocities. These atrocities were later incorporated into the Bulgarian nationalist rhetoric. The Batak massacre has lately been labelled as a nationalist “myth” to emphasize the ways in which the events were narrated and depicted in the

¹⁵⁹ For the Bulgarian uprising, see Jelavich, *Balkan Tarihi*, 375-378; Millman, “Bulgarian Massacres Reconsidered.” For the visual representation of the events, see Popek, “Manipulation of Photographs.”

¹⁶⁰ Jelavich, *Balkan Tarihi*, 376-377.

¹⁶¹ Jelavich, *Balkan Tarihi*, 377.

¹⁶² The peasantry occupied an ideal place in the Bulgarian nationalist rhetoric, yet they had not established ties with the peasants. For the emergence and development of the Bulgarian nationalist intelligentsia, see Meininger, “Formation.” For the discussion about the relatively late formation of Bulgarian nationalism, see Jelavich, *Balkan Tarihi*, 368-370.

later periods.¹⁶³ The Ottoman suppression of the atrocities was indeed brutal and resulted in the death of thousands of victims.¹⁶⁴ Initial reaction of the Ottoman government was a denial but soon it was attenuated, expressing that judicial measures would soon take place and a committee was formed to investigate the matter.¹⁶⁵

The Bulgarian rebellion in 1876, brought the Ottoman irregular violence into European politics in an ever-increasing anti-Ottoman campaign. The reports about the Ottoman atrocities were published in newspapers, creating an outcry in European public opinion. The tensions between the two opposing ideologies of the British politics, advocated by Gladstone and Disraeli, revolved around British support for the Ottoman Empire and whether to intervene on behalf of the Ottoman Empire or to stay neutral in the Balkan conflicts. Gladstone's campaign and pamphlet, which ends with cherishing Lady Strangford's relief efforts and calls on the British public to urgently provide aid and support for Bulgaria,¹⁶⁶ was influential in creating an anti-Ottoman public opinion, making it impossible for Disraeli to actively support the Ottoman Empire.

The events were published in the British press on June 23, 1876, with Edwin Pears's article in the *Daily News*, focusing on the cruelties on the Bulgarians by

¹⁶³ This approach is not denialist but aims to highlight how the events were constructed in the later periods. For the appropriation of the events into a national myth and the manipulations of the photographs of the Batak massacre, see Popek, "Manipulation of Photographs."

¹⁶⁴ The dispute about the number of deaths during the uprising cannot be resolved due to the lack of any reliable census before the events and the fact that different parties estimated the number with different motivations. The two individuals who publicized the events to the European public, Schuyler and MacGahan, estimated the total number as 15,000 but Millman's research suggests that the number was much lower. He proposes the total number to be 3,694 relying on Stoney. Stoney was a railway engineer who went from house to house after some time had passed. During his visits he observed that many who had been counted as dead had returned to their homes from their hiding places after the situation calmed down. For details, see Millman, "Bulgarian Massacres Reconsidered."

¹⁶⁵ For the details of the Ottoman response to the Bulgarian atrocities and the journal of Osman Hamdi Bey, who was a member of the Ottoman committee investigating the matter, see Eldem, *İzlenimler*, 81-248.

¹⁶⁶ Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors*, 39.

Muslims, which only briefly referred to the previous insurrection against the Ottoman government.¹⁶⁷ Pears's information had come from George Washburn and Albert Long, two American missionaries working at Robet College and who were renowned for their pro-Bulgarian and anti-Ottoman opinions.¹⁶⁸ MacGahan and Schuyler, a journalist and American consul general, toured around the violence ridden villages. Their report appeared in the British press at the end of July and continued to be published until the end of August.¹⁶⁹ News about Bulgaria created an outcry in Britain only in the beginning of autumn in the form of meetings, petitions, fund-raising activities, press coverage and Gladstonian campaigning.¹⁷⁰

Despite the earlier indifference to the uprising in Herzegovina, the events in Bulgaria turned out to be a centerpiece in the British public and the political discussions. In addition to the correspondent's involvement in spreading the news, the humanitarian agents were also consulted for their eye-witness accounts which were integrated into the political campaign. While these publications and the following campaigning against the Ottoman government rested on the notion of spontaneity, recent scholarship refutes these claims by pointing to the intermingled relationship between the newspaper editors, politicians and humanitarian agents and reveals how the moral obligation to intervene in Balkan affairs was created.¹⁷¹

Rodogno proposes that the most significant achievement of the campaign following the Bulgarian atrocities was "the fabrication of a coherent and teleological history of massacre and atrocities of Ottoman Christians."¹⁷² Some of the

¹⁶⁷ Çiçek, "'Bulgarian Horrors' Revisited," 529. According to Aydın, 400 Ottoman Turks and 3,000 Ottoman Bulgarians were killed brutally throughout the events, and a total of 8 villages were completely burnt down. Aydın, *Şarkî Rumeli Vilâyeti*, 8.

¹⁶⁸ Çiçek, "'Bulgarian Horrors' Revisited," 529.

¹⁶⁹ Eldem, *İzlenimler*, 90-92.

¹⁷⁰ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 77.

¹⁷¹ For the role of humanitarian agents, see 4.1.

¹⁷² Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 159.

campaigners even called for a second Navarino to end the Bulgarian massacres.¹⁷³

Yet, the campaign was also effective in bolstering the humanitarian spirit and strengthening the humanitarian endeavors in the region.

The Bulgarian Crisis acted as a catalyst in the creation of a specific discourse on the Ottoman Empire, which rested on the hegemony of the West over the atrocious Ottomans. This construction was precisely what the Ottoman governments sought to change. In the diplomatic sphere, the Ottoman state tried to create a counter image by stressing their “victimhood” and by claiming to abide by the international codifications. As will be discussed below, this was an image-management during a serious legitimacy crisis and the humanitarian discourse and philanthropic activities provided one way to combat the image of the Ottoman as the “other.” As for the irregulars, the Ottoman state continued to use irregular units during the Serbian War and the Russian War but with major changes. These changes were partly a response to the international outcry about the atrocities of the irregulars, additionally it helped to create a patriotic atmosphere which would unite the various denominators of Ottoman society.

2.1.8 The Serbian War

Between the Bulgarian uprising and the Serbian War, the Ottoman capital witnessed a series of dramatic events. Right after the murder of two diplomatic personnel in Salonica, the religious school students (*softa*) went out in the street for demonstration on May 8-9. These demonstrations are interpreted as an outcome of the growing “Muslim feeling” which had been culminating, among other factors, due the resentment towards the Tanzimat policies. This feeling was particularly evident

¹⁷³ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 89.

among the softas. Additionally, there was also growing demand for a constitution¹⁷⁴ and a growing resentment towards the nationalist movements and uprisings in the Balkans. Galvanizing the tensions were the financial situation of the Empire and the pressing foreign affairs. The agitation reached its peak on May 10, with a major demonstration by the softas¹⁷⁵ which resulted in the deposition of Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim Paşa¹⁷⁶ and Sheikhlislam Hasan Fehmi Efendi.¹⁷⁷ The events resulted in the deposition of Sultan Abdülaziz at the end of May with a coup de état, in which softas and military acted in cooperation.

The first half of June witnessed growing tensions between Serbia, Austro-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. Serbian government was preparing for the war, and the Austro-Hungarian government had suddenly stopped their support in the joint efforts on the return of the refugees. Montenegrin war preparations were also backed by Austro-Hungary.¹⁷⁸ Cherniaev, leading the Russian volunteers had already arrived in Belgrade and the pan-Slav aid continued to pour into the region, despite the lack of official Russian support. Russia's position initially rested on pacification and the Russian pressure on Prince Nikola, the Prince of Montenegro, delayed a Serbo-Montenegrin alliance.¹⁷⁹ The correspondence between the Ottoman government and Milan Obrenovic, the Prince of Serbia, regarding the war preparations, did not contribute to reducing the tension while in the meantime, before the official declaration of war, voluntary units composed of Christians and Muslims were on

¹⁷⁴ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876*.

¹⁷⁵ For the softas and their participation in the Serbian War as volunteers, see chapter 3.3.

¹⁷⁶ Mahmud Nedim Paşa (1818-1883) was a prominent statesman. He served in various ministerial positions. He was nicknamed as "Nedimof" due to his pro-Russian inclinations and close relations with the Russian representatives. He was appointed as Grand Vizier in August 1875 until his deposition in May 1876.

¹⁷⁷ Hasan Fehmi Efendi (?-1881) was appointed as Sheikhlislam for two times, first between 1868 and 1871, and later between 1874 and 1876. Kunalalp, *Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali*.

¹⁷⁸ Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 177-179

¹⁷⁹ Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 73.

their way to Sofia, indicating that the Ottoman authorities were also making their preparations for a possible war.

Serbian declaration of war came in June 30 and immediately the Ottoman government speed up war mobilization with the establishment of aid commission and the dispatch of regular and voluntary units to the region. Society was quick to respond to mobilization and a new type of volunteer formation was experienced in the capital. The initial Ottoman diplomatic response to the declaration of war was to inform the European states about the fact that Ottomans were on the defensive.

Shortly after the beginning of clashes, the Serbian offensive resulted in a failure. Cherniaev's plans had rested on a widespread Balkan uprising, but they proved useless.¹⁸⁰ The initial phase of the conflict was concentrated on three regions; Nish (Niš), Vidin and Novibazar. Cherniaev's units attacked from Nish, and the Ottoman forces fighting against Cherniaev were composed of Süleyman Paşa's and Hafız Paşa's unit. These units and particularly Süleyman Paşa's units included the volunteers. Christians and religious school students were fighting against Cherniaev's volunteers.¹⁸¹ After an easy battle for the Ottoman forces, during the initial offensive, Ottoman army pushed forward to Belgrade, to impose a quick withdrawal of Serbia.¹⁸² The defeat of Cherniaev's forces indeed laid open the road to Belgrade and this was a turning point for both the commanders on the battlefield and for the Russian authorities, leading to discussions on ceasefire.¹⁸³

During the Serbian War, the Ottoman society was caught up in an unprecedented patriotic campaign. Donations, volunteer units, press publication and

¹⁸⁰ Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 105.

¹⁸¹ For the volunteer units, see chapter 3.3.

¹⁸² Karal identifies this strategy as a move against any intervention before a ceasefire. Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, v. VIII, 21.

¹⁸³ For the differences of opinion about the ceasefire talks between Cherniaev, Ignatiev and Gorchakov, see Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 151-153.

integration of patriotic efforts into cultural forms were reflective of an enthusiastic mobilization. These diverse practices were crystallized in a particular rhetoric; that of aiding the Ottoman soldiers. Relief and support to the Ottoman military incorporated both voluntary and involuntary practices and as will be exemplified below it showcases how the state and society transformed throughout the turbulent years. Such an atmosphere owed its existence to various factors. The equality of subjects which was brought about with the Tanzimat reforms, the propagation of a patriotic Ottomanism, the flourishing press had allowed the society to actively engage with public opinion and political events, especially in the capital and the major urban centers.

2.1.9 The Russo-Ottoman War (1877-1878)

By August 1876, Serbia had appealed for a ceasefire and the Ottoman domestic atmosphere was turbulent. Murad V reigned for a very short time due to his health problems. Following the abdication of Murad V, Abdülhamid II was on the throne. The Çerkes Hasan incident, which took place in mid-June 1876 resulted in the death of Hüseyin Avni Paşa, who was opposed to constitutionalism. Thus, his murder by Çerkes Hasan is regarded as an incident which opened the way for the constitution.¹⁸⁴ Murad's illness was another major obstacle for the establishment of a parliament.¹⁸⁵

The ceasefire with Serbia did not last long due to disagreements over its conditions and the second phase of the Serbian War was concluded with Ottoman victory in late fall 1876. However, by autumn, European public opinion had turned

¹⁸⁴ Akşin, "Siyasal Tarih," 153.

¹⁸⁵ Zürcher, *Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi*, 113; Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 351; Eldem, *Selahaddin Efendi'nin Evrak ve Yazıları*, vol.1, 32.

against the Ottoman empire dramatically. The swift change, particularly in Britain led the Ottoman government to accept an international conference, Constantinople Conference, on the Balkan issue.¹⁸⁶ The declaration of constitution at the beginning of the conference was a clear indication that the Ottoman government sought to utilize it against European pressure.¹⁸⁷ However, the idea of a constitution had already prevailed among the ruling elite for some time, led by Young Ottoman movement and in particular Midhat Paşa.¹⁸⁸ As the following section will reveal, the social turmoil visible on the streets of the capital provided the government with the means to bolster a patriotic mobilization and the public support for the constitution coincided with patriotic expressions of mobilization. In addition to increasing pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism among the different intellectual groups, non-Muslim participation in the war with Serbia allowed for the continuation of Ottomanism.

During the Constantinople Conference, the articles put forward included administrative autonomy to Bosnia and Bulgarian provinces. The Ottoman government rejected the terms and thus the conference was halted. By the time a further protocol was offered by the European states at the end of March, some of the constitutionalist, most importantly Midhat Paşa were removed from their positions.¹⁸⁹ The removal of the constitutionalists revealed that the Sultan aimed to get control in his hands through appointments.¹⁹⁰ The London Protocol, which was

¹⁸⁶ The Constantinople Conference convened on December 23, 1876, in the Ottoman capital with the participation of the European representatives. The idea was put forth by England with the premise that the Ottoman rule in the Balkans was beyond saving. The prospect of a unilateral action by Russia was not favorable from the perspective of the British government and the Conference sought to impose reforms in the Balkans and autonomy for the Bulgarians. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 358; Yasamee, *Ottoman Diplomacy*, 16.

¹⁸⁷ The final version of the constitution was approved on December 18 and was announced in the newspapers.

¹⁸⁸ For Midhat Paşa's ideas about constitutionalism, a survey of other pro-constitutional intellectuals, the various drafts of the constitution prior to its promulgation and the discussion on the final version, see Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 358-390.

¹⁸⁹ Yasamee, *Ottoman Diplomacy*, 15-17.

¹⁹⁰ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 402.

composed in March by the European states to offer a diplomatic solution to the unrest, did not articulate autonomy and the vague tone of the protocol raised suspicions among the members of the Ottoman ruling elite.¹⁹¹ The protocol was rejected by the Ottomans with the knowledge that it would result in a war and on April 24, Russia declared war on the Ottoman Empire.

The Russian declaration of war rested on a humanitarian sentiment and as will be demonstrate below, throughout the Russian War, Ottoman government and diplomatic agents, sought to create mechanisms to combat the negative image about the empire and underline the state claim as a legitimate sovereign power. To this end, a language which combined humanitarianism and victimhood was consulted. With war on two fronts, the state needed to mobilize its sources and society, so the earlier patriotic efforts were centralized and institutionalized by the state. The establishment of the Ottoman Red Crescent, as will be demonstrated below, served a dual purpose. It helped the government to receive aid and participate in the humanitarian networks. It also helped the elites, both in the capital and in the provinces, to obtain new positions in these international networks. Although not supporting the Ottoman Empire against Russia, the anti-Ottoman public opinion in Britain was replaced by a war jingoism against the Russian expansion¹⁹² and two British institutions, the British National Aid Society and the Stafford House Committee, played a key role in aiding the Ottoman army.

¹⁹¹ Yasamee, *Ottoman Diplomacy*, 17.

¹⁹² For the details of the war jingoism in Britan see Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 80.

2.2 Legitimacy, humanitarian sentiments, and victimhood

Aristarchi Bey,¹⁹³ the Ottoman ambassador to Washington, had compiled news clippings, as was customary, and with the clippings he submitted a dispatch describing the overall picture of the American public opinion. His dispatch, dated May 1, 1877, provides insight into the Ottoman diplomats' dealings with foreign press and reveals the central preoccupation of Ottoman state conduct. How to preserve the Empire's prestige and establish a pro-Ottoman public opinion vis-a-vis an increasingly humanitarian and anti-Ottoman discourse. After listing the names of the newspapers which view the Empire with justice (*avec une certaine justice*), and others which attack the Empire, Aristarchi Bey writes:

I do my best to keep these feelings alive by maintaining discreet relations with the editors. I must confess, however, that public sentiment is rather misguided; but, whereas at the time of the Crimean War, everyone in the United States, I am assured, was favorable to Russia, the serious portion of the country judges the situation more sanely today. Philanthropic declarations always exert a certain influence on the popular imagination, but here they cannot provoke anything other than platonic manifestations.¹⁹⁴

Keeping track of foreign press and reporting on public opinion were among the duties of Ottoman diplomats, who, during times of crisis, had to perform these tasks under pressure. Russia had just declared war on the Empire with a humanitarian rhetoric and Aristarchi Bey's dispatch to Safvet Paşa¹⁹⁵ reveals his opinion about the ways in which the American public sentiment could be induced. The philanthropic declaration refers to the Russian Tsar's declaration of war which rested on a

¹⁹³ Aristarchi Bey (Ligor), (1839-1915) served as the Ambassador to Washington from July 1873 to March 1883. Kunalp, *Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali*, 67

¹⁹⁴ Translated by the author. For the original quotation in French, see Aristarchi Bey to Safvet Paşa, May 1, 1877, document number (no.) 8 in Kunalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

¹⁹⁵ Safvet Paşa served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs for the third time and curiously, during his service as the Ottoman Ambassador in Paris (1865-1866), he had submitted a petition to establish consuls in the United States which Âli Paşa refused, based on the possible economic burden of such a diplomatic mission. The proposal was accepted in 1867 upon the international outcry during the Cretan Crisis. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 352; Kunalp, "Ottoman Diplomatic and Consular Personnel."

justification through humanitarian sentiments. Aristarchi Bey accepts the impact of such language but assures the Ottoman authorities that the support to such rhetoric did not produce any realistic solution. What was to be done, then, according to Aristarchi Bey? He does not openly suggest any other solution than to keep close ties with the American press, but a close analysis on the conduct of Ottoman foreign representatives showcases the multitude of mechanisms.¹⁹⁶ The rest of Aristarchi Bey's dispatch highlights three cases which had discredited the Empire; alleged improprieties of Ahmed Vefik Paşa,¹⁹⁷ and the imprisonment of two journalist, Said Efendi and Theodore Kasap. For the first two cases, Aristarchi Bey sent denials to the newspapers and regarding the third issue, he requested that he should be informed, should Theodore Kasap be pardoned.¹⁹⁸ In addition to analyzing the American press, responding to allegations about the misconducts of Ottoman rule and encouraging pro-Ottoman pieces in journals, Aristarchi Bey also organized aid to the Ottoman soldiers during the Balkan Crisis. Such efforts were not unique to Aristarchi Bey, in fact, Ottoman bureaucrats in foreign lands instigated various measures in defending the Empire's prestige. Their dealings should also be regarded as contemporaneous with other states' policies in providing legitimacy to their actions – for example, the Russian declaration of war and its resonances in domestic and international spheres – in producing propaganda materials to spread their own version of what was taking place, declaring their acts as lawful, influencing public

¹⁹⁶ Aristarchi Bey indeed did not refrain from expressing his opinions openly throughout his diplomatic career and he was fond of resolving diplomatic conflicts through negotiation and resolution. His pro-constitutional publications caused him much trouble in the end. Kunalalp, "Last of the Phanariots."

¹⁹⁷ Ahmet Vefik Paşa (1823-1891) served in various positions throughout his career, including ambassadorial duties, ministerial posts, governorship and he was the Grand Vizier for a brief period in 1882. Kunalalp, *Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali*, 61.

¹⁹⁸ Theodore Kasap had established his own press in 1870, and he published numerous journals, adopted plays and novels. His publication of the caricature depicting Karagöz in chains in *Hayal* in February 1877, which criticized the censorship regulation, resulted in a three-year sentence. Yosmaoğlu, "Chasing the Printed Word," 16; Kut, "Teodor Kasap."

opinion and mobilizing their subjects through humanitarian sentiments and patriotism.

Organizing and participating in aid campaigns, keeping a close eye on the press and managing public opinion were the building blocks of diplomatic maneuvering in breaking down barriers between the anti-Ottoman camp and the imperial government. This section will exemplify the ways in which the Ottoman government coped with what Davison labelled as an “image problem”¹⁹⁹ and claim a position as an important actor, which would provide the empire with a strong hand against any intervention and foster international aid to Ottoman subjects.²⁰⁰ By looking at the details of image management and justification mechanisms, this section will manifest how Ottoman government bargained for a legitimate position through various mechanisms, how Ottoman bureaucrats defined and challenged the imposition of an unequal relationship vis-à-vis a growing Western economic and political hegemony and how the Ottoman government conducted a diplomatic struggle in an increasingly anti-Ottoman atmosphere.

2.2.1 Civilization versus barbarity: Legitimacy, moral sentiments and public opinion

Two important developments are situated at the roots of the humanitarian discourse of the nineteenth century: The notion of international law and its role in dividing the polities around the globe into two categories, the civilized and the non-civilized. This was closely related to the strengthening of colonial rule. The evolution of international law during the nineteenth century has contributed to the enhancement of the idea of a civilized West, utilizing discussions on law to construct a hegemonic

¹⁹⁹ Davison, “Ottoman Public Relations.”

²⁰⁰ The “image problem” was not unique to the Balkan Crisis period, the Ottoman governments struggled with derogatory depictions of the Empire in European circles throughout the century. Davison, “Ottoman Public Relations.”

world view in international politics. Increasing role of positivism in international law, which had become a separate academic discipline, came to define a legal conscience which was attached to the notion of “civilized world.”²⁰¹ The attribution of civilizational characteristics to the definition and construction of international law supported the much-needed distinction between the West and the rest of world in the era of new imperialism.²⁰² Belief in the civilizing mission of the European states meant the delegitimization of the non-Western states’ sovereignty²⁰³ and the imposition of a moral obligation on the part of the Westerners to civilize while the rest had to wait in what Chakrabarty has called “the imaginary waiting room of history.”²⁰⁴

The civilizing mission and nineteenth century humanitarianism thus shared the same belief in the superiority of the West with respect to religion, morality which functioned in parallel to the dominance of military and technological developments. However there existed one difference. In the colonies, civilizing mission entailed the use of violence, while in the humanitarian context it called for ending the massacres inflicted on the Christians.²⁰⁵ Humanitarian intervention was indeed born out of the Eastern Question and the political discourse surrounding the Balkan Crisis had become strained over the vexed question of defining the victim.

The Crimean War and the subsequent Treaty of Paris had ratified the Ottoman Empire as a legitimate power in the European system however, as Deringil has pointed out, the shriveling geopolitical horizon, the ebbing away of the economic and diplomatic strength and the constant pressure of being depicted as either barbarous or

²⁰¹ Heraclides, “Humanitarian Intervention in International Law.”

²⁰² Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 12-15; Heraclides, “Humanitarian Intervention in International Law”

²⁰³ Heraclides, “Humanitarian Intervention in International Law.”

²⁰⁴ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 30.

²⁰⁵ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 14-15

as an element of oriental fantasy, forced the Ottoman government agents to conduct damage control and present a positive image.²⁰⁶ By offering examples of the various damage control and image management mechanisms, this section will situate these efforts within the context of the Balkan Crisis, expose how the Ottoman foreign representatives improvised in acute attacks on Ottoman prestige and how the state discourse was positioned within and in opposition to the humanitarian rhetoric of the period.

2.2.2 Opposing barbarity through victimhood

The Russian claims to defending the oppressed peoples through a justification that rested on the notion of the “law of the nations” stood at the center of Ottoman diplomatic language. Equally important was the fact that the Ottoman Empire was not one of the Powers but was a problem that needed to be solved, in the eyes of the Europeans. The varied reasons for such attitude were articulated along the lines of cultural tropes such as barbarity, polygamy, slavery and predominance of Islam and with reference to the alleged inability of Ottoman state to govern, with a special emphasis on corruption, despotism and unwillingness to reform or adapt to the requirements of modernity.²⁰⁷

From the perspective of European legal scholars, principles of sovereignty and non-intervention applied only to European states and the Law of Nations applied only to civilized nations. Entry into this exclusively European club required having achieved a degree of civilization and an internationally recognized respectability.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ Deringil, *The Well-protected Domains*.

²⁰⁷ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 71-72. For an overview of the European scholars’ perception of the Ottoman Empire within the framework of humanitarianism see chapter 2 in Rodogno, *Against Massacre*; for the evolution of this concept in relation to Eastern Question see Ozavcı, *Dangerous Gifts*, 24-27.

²⁰⁸ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 84-87.

These definitions legitimized intervention into the non-European entities, particularly with reference to humanitarian sentiments.²⁰⁹ The earliest example for such claims was during the Greek revolt, which eventually led to the independence of Greece. By the Treaty of London (1841) the Ottoman Empire had become a member of the Concert of Europe and with the Treaty of Paris (1856) the Empire managed to hold a position within International Law.²¹⁰ However the Ottoman governments had to struggle to maintain their position particularly during periods of political recalcitrance.

Until the Balkan Crisis, the Russian foreign policy had relied on *recueillement*, but the Serbian revolt set up a new discussion in the Russian Empire.²¹¹ The Russian official policy was to stay out of the conflict, led by the Russian Tsar Alexander II and the Foreign Minister Gorchakov. The Russian diplomat Ignatiev and the pan-Slavic circles, on the other hand, viewed the uprising from a different angle. While the decision-making elites relegated the Eastern Question, pan-Slavic circles aimed at disclosing the events and triggering an outcry in public opinion. The official Russian policy throughout 1876 was to prevent the escalation of events and not to trigger the involvement of other powers.²¹²

Contrarily, public opinion was in favor of an intervention on behalf of the suffering Christians and the Tsar had to respond to these demands, at least in rhetoric even though refraining from any direct involvement.²¹³ By the end of 1876, Russian

²⁰⁹ European legal scholars were not a monolithic group, some opposed the right to intervention claiming for the non-existence of the subjects' right vis-a-vis the sovereign, others claimed that it was incompatible with the notion of sovereignty. For an analysis of these groups see Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 95-96.

²¹⁰ Deringil, "Some Comments" 98.

²¹¹ Van der Oye, "Russian Foreign Policy," 561.

²¹² Heraclides and Diallya, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 174; Schulz, "The Guarantees of Humanity," 189.

²¹³ Russian Tsar's speech in Moscow is interpreted both as a response to Disraeli's previous speech and more importantly as a response to the growing public sentiment by underlining the Russian interest in the suffering of Christians.

decision makers and some of the British diplomats had started to resort to the humanitarian discourse. Arguing that the Ottoman Empire had failed to implement reforms to the Christian subjects, the possibility in interfering in Ottoman domestic matters on grounds of humanity was now on the table.²¹⁴

A crucial point that needs to be underlined in the discussion on the force of public opinion is that not all massacres mattered and occupied a legitimate place in public opinion. The violence towards the Muslim populations of the Balkans was not discussed in European press in the same manner. Public opinion could be mobilized on certain issues, and this selection rested on solidarity with the victims' identities. This solidarity could stem from religious ties (saving the oppressed Christians) or ethno-cultural ties (Slav brothers in the case of pan-Slavic circles). Thus, public opinion was not free from dominant political or ideological inclinations of the era.

Public opinion's pressure on foreign policy making was at the same time shaped by the political calculations of the states. Public opinion did matter to the governments but the degree of its role in shaping foreign policy should be contextualized with reference to the political developments. There is no doubt as to the fact that the role of masses was becoming more important in politics and the dissemination of knowledge and ideas was a crucial factor in the expansion of the public sphere. States had to calculate the reaction of the masses. However, as Davide Rodogno has shown, in certain periods, despite the mobilization of public opinion and press against certain massacres, humanitarian intervention did not take place, and it was the "conservative venues of the old Concert of Europe's diplomacy" that defined the limits of humanitarian intervention.²¹⁵

²¹⁴ Schulz, "The Guarantees of Humanity," 196.

²¹⁵ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 17.

The Bulgarian uprising marked the beginning of a fervent anti-Ottoman campaign, taking its justification from the barbarities of the Ottoman forces, particularly the *başıbozuk* violence. To counter the increasing uproar in the European circles, the Ottoman government created a commission to inquire into the events and the Ottoman foreign representatives sought to disseminate reports and opinion pieces favoring the Ottoman perspective. By mid-August 1876, various reports on the events were produced and began to be circulated.²¹⁶ In the meantime, the Ottoman Sultan declared an amnesty for the Bulgarian populations, and it was propagated with reference to the mercy and the solicitude of the Sultan.²¹⁷ Russian and Serbian propaganda about the Ottoman atrocities continued to be circulated during August.²¹⁸

When Serbia declared war on the Ottoman Empire, Ottoman government published an official statement to be circulated among the military personnel. This statement was later circulated among the Ottoman diplomatic representatives abroad. The statement differentiated between the Serbian populations and the Serbian administration, labelling the latter as responsible for the revolts. The statement also defined death and destruction as the natural consequences of war but underlined that acts which were contrary to religious law, conscience and humanity, were not desired by the Sultan. These acts included violence to civilians, war prisoners and refugees. The emphasis on the religious law along with conscience and humanity reflects the Ottoman government's need to counter the image of the barbarous Ottoman warrior

²¹⁶ Safvet Paşa send an informative dispatch to Musurus Paşa, underlining the violence to Muslims, labelling the events as a domestic affair and narrating that the Ottoman forces had protected the civilians on July 26, 1876. See no.117, in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. VIII. For the correspondence between Safvet Paşa and Musurus Paşa on the reports by Edib Efendi and Mr. Baring, see no.152 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. VIII.

²¹⁷ Safvet Paşa informed the Ottoman representatives about the amnesty on August 13, 1876. See no.153, Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. VIII.

²¹⁸ Serbian propaganda was defined as ridiculous by Safvet Paşa, in an informative dispatch to Ottoman representative and the Russian propaganda was labelled as invention in the Ottoman diplomatic correspondence. See numbers 151, 161 and 186 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. VIII.

and underline that the Sultan was against such acts, thus proposing the image of a just and civilized ruler.²¹⁹

By the time of the Russian War, the rhetorical formulation of the Russian war declaration was founded upon both the pressure of the public opinion, which had indeed decreased after the Serbian defeat, but also upon the political calculations of the ruling elites, exemplified by the convention between Tsar Alexander II and Francis Josef of Austria in January 1877. Decision making elites had to calculate the international ramifications of their actions along with the pressure of public opinion.

For the Ottoman representatives, having the support of European public was vital to both the prestige of the Empire and maintaining an upper hand in diplomacy so much so that İstefan Karatodori Efendi²²⁰ would regard it as a prerequisite for independence. Informing Safvet Paşa about the Russian war declaration, Karatodori Efendi suggested that the Ottoman government should immediately oppose to the Russian Tsar's allegations and make sure to have the support of European public opinion without which the independence of nations would be but an idle word.²²¹

Tsar's declaration of war, as published in *The Times*, rested primarily on Ottoman failure to "alleviate the position of the Christians in the Balkan Peninsula" and provide an "effective guarantee for the security of the Christians." Having exhausted all diplomatic possibilities, the Tsar declared that it was out of a "respect for equality and our [Russian] own dignity" that Russia declared war on the Ottoman Empire.²²²

²¹⁹ For the instructions see no. 197 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. VIII.

²²⁰ İstefan (Stefanaki) Karatodori Efendi (1836-1907) served as the Ambassador to Brussels between 1875 and 1900. Kuneralp, *Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali*, 86.

²²¹ Karatodori Efendi to Safvet Paşa, May 3, 1877, no.47 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²²² *The Times*, 25 April 1877.

To counter the narrative of the Christians suffering under the barbaric Turk, the Ottoman state aimed to turn the narrative upside down and present the Ottoman subjects as the real victims of atrocities and proposed that state's actions were legitimate. Thus, victimhood emerged as an important component of Ottoman image management. Appealing to the dominant humanitarian discourse, the Ottoman government positioned the Empire against the Russian discourse, which claimed the Russian Empire to be the "defenders of humanity and the law of nations"²²³ and its resonances in the European public, which galvanized after the publication of Gladstone's pamphlet. Thus, it was imperative to put the violence committed by the Russians and Bulgarians at the center of their discourse and providing evidence for the atrocities became highly critical in reversing the resentment towards the Empire. The suffering of the Muslim civilians was repeatedly highlighted, simultaneously with the claim that the Ottoman resort to violence was legitimate.

Acts such as the burning of merchant ships and the bombardment of the Rustchuk Hospital by the Russian army were protested by references to the Geneva Convention,²²⁴ to the law of war (*droit de la guerre*) and as attacks on humanity

²²³ Chedid Efendi to Aleko Paşa and later forwarded to Safvet Paşa by Aleko Paşa, on July 3 and 5, 1877 respectively, no. 439 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²²⁴ The Battle of Solferino which took place during the Second Italian War of Independence turned out to be the epitome of humanitarian aspirations with the publication of Henry Dunant's book on the sanitary conditions during times of armed conflict. Yet, as Hutchinson underlines, well before the First Geneva Convention, the European states were already preoccupied with taking care of their wounded soldiers. What triggered a concerted effort in ameliorating the sick and wounded in battles was the changing relation between the states and their armies by the introduction of conscription and the technological advancements. The Crimean War and the Italian War resulted in the fast and widespread dissemination of information about the wounded and the production of pamphlets and scientific inquiry into military medicine. As a result of these developments, the representatives of the European states convened a conference in 1863 in Geneva aiming to draft a codification which would apply to all the parties. During the conference, one of the disputes revolved around identifying how the civilian volunteers would function and under whose authority they would serve. Representatives of sixteen states came together in Geneva in August 1864 for the International Congress and finalized the Geneva Conventions which regulated the relief to wounded soldiers, established neutrality of medical services and defined the Red Cross sign. Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*, 24-52. For the articles of Geneva Convention see the ICRC website: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gc-1864?activeTab=historical>.

(*attentats à l'humanité et au droit des gens*).²²⁵ Linking the Russian justification for war with these acts, Karatodori Efendi underlined an illusion which presumed that the sentiments of the period would lead those who claim themselves as champions of liberty (*champions de la liberté et de civilisation chrétiennes*).²²⁶ The emphasis on the Geneva Convention and the notions of just war and civilization are clearly the buzzwords of the time among diplomatic circles and this is precisely the language that the Ottoman agents employed in their dealings with their European counterparts.

One concept that was utilized in defining the rules of war was the fundamentals regarding the morality of war (*adab-ı muharebenin esas-ı ahlakını*).²²⁷ Savage behavior of the Russians (*rusların hareket-i vahşiyaneleri*) was protested in diplomatic circles and in domestic press. One such correspondence coming from the Berlin Embassy illustrates the Ottoman expectations about the atrocities conducted by the Russian army. Upon the publication of a protest article regarding the Russian atrocities, Ottoman representatives informed the central government that a correction article by the Russians would not be sufficient to divert attention from the atrocities. This correspondence implies that Ottoman government eagerly waited for the imposition of regulations on the Russian Empire with the involvement of other governments.²²⁸ What could and could not be corrected through press publication changed according to the context, but the Ottoman authorities aimed to mobilize public opinion by popularizing the idea that the real victims were the Muslim subjects.

²²⁵ Karatodori Efendi to Safvet Paşa, June 28, 1877, no. 389 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²²⁶ Karatodori Efendi to Safvet Paşa, June 18, 1877, no. 389 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²²⁷ BOA. HR. TO. 127/49.

²²⁸ "... Rusya devleti yalnız işi tekzip ile iktifa edemez çünkü alem-i medeniyet adab-ı muharebenin esas-ı ahlakını izale eden bu misillü mazalimin men-i tekerrürü zımında..." BOA. HR.TO. 127/49, July 1877.

According to a confidential letter from Henry Layard²²⁹ to the Earl of Derby,²³⁰ written on May 16, 1877, Abdülhamid II had complained to Layard about the way the Empire was depicted in European press. Labelling the declaration of the war as “unjust and unprovoked” Abdülhamid II claimed that no concession by the Ottomans would have prevented Russia from initiating an armed conflict. Underlining the importance attributed to diplomatic manners, the Ottoman Sultan tried to delegitimize the declaration of war. Following on an explanation of the Russian support for Serbians and the Romanian cooperation with the Russians, the Sultan expressed his resentment about the portrayal of the Empire in European press: “We are accused by Europe of being savages and fanatics. We are not the savages who have brought on a dreadful war which will lead to the sacrifice of innumerable human lives.” He continued his speech by accepting the mistreatment of Christians which he was determined to put an end with dedication and the declaration of the constitution.²³¹

The same language and reasoning echoed in Ottoman diplomats’ correspondence throughout the Russian War. Emphasizing that the declaration of the unjust war rested on alleged principles of humanity and civilization, Russians had been conducting atrocities and were labelled as a barbarous and savage people. This was the way Ottoman diplomats send denials to the major European newspapers.²³² In fact Musurus Paşa²³³ informed Arifi Paşa²³⁴ that it was vital for the Ottoman

²²⁹ Sir Austen Henry Layard (1817-1894) was the British Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire between 1877-1880.

²³⁰ Edward Henry Stanley, 15th Earl of Derby, was the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1874 to 1878.

²³¹ FO. 424/53. Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby, no.613, May 1877.

²³² Karatodori Efendi to Safvet Paşa, July 19, 1877, no.507 in Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²³³ Musurus Paşa (Kostaki) (1807-1885) was the Ottoman Ambassador to London from 1851 to 1885.

²³⁴ Ahmet Arifi Paşa (1830-1895) was the Ambassador to Vienna between November 1875 and May 1876. After serving in the Chamber of Notables (*Meclis-i Ayan*) in 1877, he was appointed as the

officials to publicize the atrocities committed by the Russians in the newspapers in a similar manner. Having informed both Lord Derby and the leading newspapers about the situation, Musurus Paşa claimed that the atrocities needed to be published with the signatures of correspondents or official representatives to be credible.²³⁵

Foreign Ministry provided the Ottoman representatives with official documents to counter the Russian allegations and inform them about the details of the war.²³⁶ This practice was first implemented in 1858 against the “calumnies in the European papers” as declared by Fuad Paşa.²³⁷ The aim of the Ottoman government was to inform its foreign representatives in weekly bulletins; however, this practice did not continue for a long time, resulting in the publication of only seven.²³⁸ By the time of the Balkan Crisis, the Foreign Ministry was forced to inform the Ottoman representatives under severe pressure. Two documents that Server Paşa²³⁹ sent to the Ottoman diplomats reveals that the government did not just send “information” or explanations to accusations but indeed tried to provide its representatives with documents which would construct a specific discourse.

Server Paşa sent two documents as a measure against the Russian influence over European public opinion. Arguing that they would reveal the degree to which the Ottoman Empire abided by the laws of war and the precepts of humanity (*les lois de la guerre, et les préceptes de l'humanité*), these documents included the

Minister of Foreign Affairs in July 1877. He was appointed as the Ambassador to Paris in September 1877. Kunalalp, *Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali*, 55.

²³⁵ Musurus Paşa to Arifi Paşa, July 20, 1877, no.509 in Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²³⁶ For examples regarding informative dispatches on the conflict see nos. 575-576, in Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X. For documents that inform the Ottoman diplomats about the atrocities committed against the Muslims see no.586, in Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²³⁷ Davison, “Ottoman Public Relations,” 352.

²³⁸ Alexander Karatodori Paşa was to reestablish this practice in late 1878 possibly as an attempt to systematize a mechanism that was put to use during the Crisis. Davison, “Ottoman Public Relations.”

²³⁹ Server Paşa (1821-1886) was the Minister of Foreign Affairs from August 1877 to February 1878. Kunalalp, *Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali*, 120.

translations of a Russian war song and Muhtar Paşa's proclamation on the battlefield. Server Paşa asked the officials to give them great publicity.²⁴⁰ The Russian war song, which calls for the Russian soldiers to show no mercy to the Ottomans ("Le Turc" in the document) and kill them all, is contrasted with the proclamation by Muhtar Paşa prior to an attack.²⁴¹ This proclamation underlines how the Russians had committed barbaric and illegal acts (*des actes iniques, illégaux et barbares*) and calls for the Ottoman soldiers to show gentleness towards the oppressed inhabitants of Erivan (*le habitants opprimés d'Erivan*).

The second part of the proclamation lists all the acts that the Ottoman soldiers should and should not do, which revolved around the protection of the life, property and honor of the inhabitants, the wounded soldiers and the prisoners. Ottoman soldiers shall not mimic the Russian cruelty, and the fallen enemy shall not be mutilated.

Ahmed Muhtar Paşa narrates in his memoir that it was his utmost priority that war would be conducted with justice. This he defines as complying with the necessities of civilization, which was treating the wounded and the prisoners with compassion, without torturing them. To this end, he informed the people under his command about these matters. The aforementioned proclamation could possibly be his command about the matter. In his memoir, he adds that while he was sure the regular soldiers would abide by these principles, it was the auxiliary troops that concerned him much. His narrative is followed by the depiction of an instance in which he ordered that a man responsible of plunder would be hanged.²⁴²

²⁴⁰ Server Paşa to Ottoman Imperial Missions, October 31, 1877, no. 1074 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²⁴¹ BOA. HR. SFR. 3. 253/53.

²⁴² Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa, *Anılar 2*, 273-274.

Juxtaposing these two documents, the Foreign Ministry aimed to emphasize that the Ottoman generals wished to instill the notion of just war among their soldiers. It was imperative, yet not enough, to highlight these qualities when the Bulgarian atrocities had created such discontent. These documents, according to a correspondence between Aristarchi Bey and Server Paşa,²⁴³ was published in the American newspapers, the cuttings of which Aristarchi Bey had forwarded to Karatodori Efendi to be used in his project of an Ottoman publication against Russian allegations.²⁴⁴

2.2.3 Ottoman diplomats and foreign press

European public opinion mattered to the Ottoman government, and it turned out to be a serious conundrum for the Ottoman diplomats. Preoccupation with public opinion, however, was not unique to the Ottoman government. Public opinion and its relation to foreign policy received increasing attention by the European Foreign Ministries during the 1870's and the press coverage of Bulgarian atrocities was a turning point, allowing these diplomatic institutions to implement various methods in "press management."²⁴⁵

The Ottoman representatives were required to send reports about foreign press publications regularly. These reports would include news clippings and summary dispatches, which sometimes included commentaries. Foreign Ministry's

²⁴³ Aristarchi Bey to Server Paşa, November 30, 1877, no. 1252 in Kunalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²⁴⁴ See below for the details of this project.

²⁴⁵ Alloul and Markey, "Please Deny" 268. The concern about public opinion and press management was not unique to the Ottoman and Russian Empires. Geppert, in his study on the German and British ways of dealing with these phenomena at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, argues that there was a difference between the two examples. He regards the German method of press management as a "bureaucratic press policy" and labels the British attempts as "coordination by cliquism" and narrates how different techniques which range from secret funding to supervising, from surveying to manipulating were exercised by the diplomatic actors with increasing attention and effort. Geppert, "The Public Challenge."

staff had been surveying foreign press, keeping a close eye on articles regarding the Empire and contemporary diplomatic issues for a couple of decades by the time of the Balkan Crisis. An official department called *Hariciye Matbuat Kalemi* (Foreign Ministry Press Office) was established in 1869. This department was responsible for sending official reports and notifications to both foreign and domestic press.²⁴⁶ The concurrence of the establishment of this department with the Cretan revolt, is not a mere coincidence. Although Ottoman archives provide ample evidence as to the prior Ottoman efforts in surveying foreign press and creating mechanisms to counter-balance certain publications, the systemization of this practice highlights a growing preoccupation with active policy making.

In January 1875, before the beginning of the Herzegovinian unrest, Kamil Mehmed Paşa,²⁴⁷ the Ottoman ambassador to St Petersburg send a circular to several Ottoman embassies around the Black Sea²⁴⁸ and asked them to send press reports in every two weeks. Russian press reports were presented to the Foreign Ministry mostly on monthly basis earlier.²⁴⁹ Underlining the importance of learning the manifestations of public opinion through press, Kamil Paşa's circular signals the need of a more systematic approach to retrieving information about the Russian Empire.²⁵⁰

In a similar vein, Aristarchi Bey send a circular to Ottoman Consuls in Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, New Orleans and New York, asking to be informed about the movement of Russian ships, to receive cuttings from the local press about

²⁴⁶ Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform*, 217.

²⁴⁷ Kamil Mehmed Paşa (?-1879) was the Ambassador to St. Petersburg between 1873 and 1875. Kunalalp, *Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali*, 97.

²⁴⁸ Tiflis, Odessa, Poti, Kerch, Thodosie [Theodosie/Kefe], Eupatoria [Gözleve], Sokhommkalé. BOA. HR. SFR. 1. 54/13.

²⁴⁹ Most of the Russian press reports from 1874 were organized on monthly basis.

²⁵⁰ Responses to Kamil Paşa's circular are interesting for some places replied negatively to this demand, due to lack of publications in their regions. BOA. HR. SFR. 1. 54/59.

the representation of the Empire and any issue relating to the War.²⁵¹ The Ottoman diplomats' efforts in inducing more systematic measures in gathering information and press management during the Balkan Crisis support the argument that these efforts were not necessarily top-down state mechanisms but were the "product of the improvisatory labor of the empire's diplomats" and were very much "dependent on international political circumstances."²⁵² These examples also support the fact that the Balkan Crisis was a period in which these mechanisms became more systematic, not only in Belgium but in other major Western cities as well.²⁵³

Ottoman representatives were required to send correction articles (*tekzip*) to the foreign newspapers about certain issues which were labelled as misleading. The most frequent terms used to describe such news were *eracıf* and *ekazib* (false rumors). These calumnies were to be corrected with an identical language (*elsine-i adide ile tekzibi*).²⁵⁴ The topics for correction articles included atrocities by the Ottoman irregulars, anti-Ottoman opinion pieces, allegations regarding the conscription of prisoners, maltreatment of wounded soldiers and POW's.

Writing from Trebinje (*Trebigne, Trebinje*) to the governor of Bosnia, Mehmed Rauf Paşa, and the commanders stationed in Trebinje, Dâniş Efendi²⁵⁵ reported his dealings with foreign correspondents to counter the Slavophile propaganda. His efforts resulted in the diminishing of Slavophile news emanating

²⁵¹ From Aristarchi Bey to Ottoman Consuls in USA, April 25, 1877, no. 128 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²⁵² Alloul and Markey exemplify their argument by focusing on the dealings of Ottoman diplomats stationed in Brussels and analyze their work with regards to Ottoman representation in Belgium press. Their analysis offers important clues as to the agency of the diplomatic personnel in creating mechanism to counter the allegations and the "false" image of the Empire in European press. Their findings are in line with the ways in which the Ottoman diplomats worked in different parts of the western world during the Balkan Crisis. Alloul and Markey, "Please Deny," 269.

²⁵³ Alloul and Markey, "Please Deny" 272.

²⁵⁴ Examples of such language may be found in the following documents: BOA. Y. EE. 44/35, BOA. HR. SYS. 1233/69. The same phrase was used in 1858 by Fuad Paşa, when he initiated the weekly bulletin system. Davison, "Ottoman Public Relations," 352.

²⁵⁵ Consul General at Ragusa.

from Trebinje and he claims to have close relations with European correspondents so much so that he could easily send dispatches to several European newspapers. He claims to have established close ties with agents from Britain and France and the only agent he was not able to develop acquaintance was the German commissioner in Mostar, who, according to Dâniş Efendi, was working closely with the Russian diplomat stationed in Trebinje.²⁵⁶ His dispatch evidences that the local governor and the Ottoman military authorities were also preoccupied with the ways in which events were narrated in foreign press.

Standard procedure for correction articles included the reporting of the allegations and the publication of the Ottoman version of what had happened. Correspondence regarding such correction articles could take place between the local Ottoman representatives at European cities and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or certain state institutions such as *Sıhhiye Meclisi* (quarantine council) could prepare detailed documents to serve as the bases of correction articles.²⁵⁷

During the initial phase of the Balkan Crisis, Safvet Paşa sent a circular to Ottoman diplomats stationed abroad and provided them with the liberty to immediately proceed with correction articles when they encounter false news, without feeling obliged to correspond with the Ministry.²⁵⁸ Nevertheless, certain issues that appeared in European papers required correspondence. News of alleged acceptance of prisoners, who had served two thirds of their service, into the Ottoman army resulted in the correspondence between Essad Bey²⁵⁹ and Safvet Paşa, in which

²⁵⁶ Dâniş Efendi to Governor of Bosnia and Ottoman generals in Trebinje, October 12, 1875, no. 163 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²⁵⁷ For a document mentioning the detailed report of *Sıhhiye Meclisi*, with regards to the accusations about the maltreatment of the wounded soldiers, see BOA. HR. SYS. 1233/69.

²⁵⁸ For an English translation of this circular see Alloul and Markey, "Please Deny," 273. For the document in French, see Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X, 130.

²⁵⁹ Mahmud Esad Paşa (1837-1895) was the Minister Plenipotentiary at Rome between June 1876 and September 1877 after which he served as the Ambassador to Vienna until 1879. Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X, 16; Kuneralp, *Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali*, 89.

Essad Bey is informed that these claims were false and that he should refute them in the strongest terms.²⁶⁰

Another method to counter the negative news involved conducting deals with foreign newspaper editors, which would range from having discreet relations to conducting contractual agreements. Aristarchi Bey reported that he maintained discreet relations (*des rapports discrets*) with newspaper editors in Washington.²⁶¹ A pro-Ottoman correspondent of the *Illustrated London News* was awarded with a fourth degree of Mecîdî Order (*Mecîdî Nişanı*) for his publications, to make sure his publications continued and could possibly serve to impress his colleagues.²⁶²

Subsidizing publications in Europe was not an invention of the Balkan Crisis, previous efforts in providing financial support for pro-Ottoman newspapers date back to the 1850s. In 1857, the Ottoman government supported the establishment of a pro-Ottoman newspaper, *Le Levant: Organe des intérêts politiques et industriels de l'Orient* in Belgium, to counter the increasing effects of *Le Nord*, which was supported by the Russian government and was a pan-Slavic propaganda publication.²⁶³ Not reaching the desired effect, this journal did not manage to challenge *Le Nord*. Another earlier example of sustaining ties through financial means goes back to 1846, when some European papers were provided with subvention by the Ottoman government.²⁶⁴

In a dispatch to Safvet Paşa, Kamil Paşa expressed that the sum of 10,000 francs was not enough to buy off a single newspaper and that he used his own

²⁶⁰ BOA. HR. SYS. 1242/10.

²⁶¹ Aristarchi Bey to Safvet Paşa, May 1, 1877, no.8 in Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²⁶² BOA. İ. HR. 275/16767.

²⁶³ Alloul and Markey, "Please Deny" 271.

²⁶⁴ One example from an earlier period, which exemplifies the Ottoman attitude towards people who supported the Empire, was James Lewis Farley. He had positive publications about the Empire's finances in 1850s and 1860s and eventually the Ottoman government had put him on payroll. Davison, "Ottoman Public Relations," 536.

contacts to convince some of the local papers about publications which would not obstruct Ottoman interests or at the very least kept silent. The matter in question was the financial matters of the Empire. Kamil Paşa, concluded his dispatch with expressing that he had transferred the amount to be spend for official dinners, which were of enormous use but required a lower budget.²⁶⁵

Another document shows that this practice continued to be instilled throughout the Crisis, even in a more structural manner. Revealing the contract between the Sadık Paşa²⁶⁶ and Jak (Jaques) Meyer, who agreed to publish pro-Ottoman pieces, this document sheds light on another example of Ottoman image management. The Ottoman Embassy in Paris had received a total of 30,000 francs to be spent on press expenses. It was customary for the Embassies to receive certain amounts to be spent on the yearly subscription fees of various newspapers but this amount, as the document reveals, was to be spent strictly on image management by way of influencing public opinion. The document indicates that the Paris Embassy would continue to receive a monthly subsidy to be spent on matters pertaining to European press. Mr. Meyer, on the other, was to receive a monthly payment of 350 Ottoman liras for his efforts in publishing pro-Ottoman articles in French and British press.²⁶⁷ This arrangement, which would be in effect for one year, from July 1876 to August 1877, aimed to influence public opinion during a period in which the publication of positive news was vital. These two examples show that the Ottoman state viewed such methods as important mechanisms to counter the negative image and sway public opinion.

²⁶⁵ Kamil Paşa to Safvet Paşa, 13/25 October 1875, no.181 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. VII.

²⁶⁶ Mehmet Sadık Paşa (Karavezir) (1825-1901) served as in ministerial and governorship positions. He was the Ottoman ambassador in Paris between 1875 and 1877, later he served as the Grand Vizier for two months in 1878. Kuneralp, *Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali*, 102.

²⁶⁷ BOA. İ. HR. 271/16320.

Yet another method in Ottoman image management was the promotion of pro-Ottoman events and their publication in newspapers. Dr. Hamlin of Robert College had given a pro-Ottoman lecture in Boston in October 1876, and this was published in the *New York Herald*, which did not generally provide much space for such publications. This was achieved through Aristarchi Bey's personal relations with the paper's owner. Aristarchi Bey had also worked for the publication of pro-Ottoman articles, written by a retired British diplomat, in the *New York Sun*.²⁶⁸

Some correspondents took the time and effort to inform the Ottoman officials about the opinions and activities of others. M. Drew Gay from the *Daily Telegraph* informed Safvet Paşa that the new representative of Paul Reuter's agency to the Ottoman capital, Dr. Engländer, was a supporter of the anti-Ottoman opinions and he was visiting the European centers with the aim of instilling his views.²⁶⁹

Perusing the dynamics of the international atmosphere, certain groups approached the Ottoman government, proposing pro-Ottoman publications and aid and asking for subsidies in return for their support. Aspiring to secure their own agendas and establish cross-border networks, Polish and Hungarian communities stood by the Ottoman government, offering aid, military support and organizing events which celebrated the Ottoman cause. All these initiatives were welcomed by the Ottoman government.

Aiming to increase anti-Russian propaganda in British press and public, representatives of The White Eagle Polish Society informed Musurus Paşa that they were collecting donations from the Polish populations living in London to finance an ambulance service for the Ottoman army²⁷⁰ and organizing public events supporting

²⁶⁸ Kuneralp, "Last of the Phanariots."

²⁶⁹ M. Drew Gay (Daily Telegraph) to Safvet Paşa, May 8, 1877, no.85, in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²⁷⁰ BOA. HR. SFR 3. 253/38.

the Sultan and his army.²⁷¹ Eventually, the society asked for a subsidy from the Ottoman officials for their Gazette. Proposing to publish articles opposing Gladstone's policies and describing the Russian atrocities and villainies, this publication eventually would be to the benefit of Ottoman empire.²⁷² These examples are important in revealing that humanitarianism and preoccupation with dissemination of knowledge and information were intertwined and various actors utilized this mechanism as a possible venue for enhancing their own agenda.

2.2.4 Foreign correspondents in the Ottoman capital

Sadık Paşa, the Ottoman ambassador to Paris, submitted a letter analyzing the ways in which the Ottomans were depicted in European press right at the beginning of the Serbian War. Appraising the situation, Sadık Paşa's comments show that he was very much aware of the problematic representation of the Empire within the context of the expanding European hegemony. The publication that triggered Sadık Paşa's well-informed response was an article published in *Le Figaro*, which was about the Ottoman Harem.²⁷³

Identifying the main characteristics of the orientalist perspective, Sadık Paşa is careful in relating the hegemonic attitude to the growing mass media, its position within capitalism and the accumulation of knowledge about the Orient. According to Sadık Paşa, European correspondents gathered their information from either the Beyoğlu hotels or Pera coffeehouses, which ended up being gossips full of calumnies. He identifies that the European correspondents do not differentiate

²⁷¹ BOA. HR. SFR 3. 253/46.

²⁷² BOA. HR. SFR. 3. 253/55.

²⁷³ BOA. Y. EE. 44/35.

between any of the Eastern civilizations when they utter the word orient.²⁷⁴ This attitude, what can now be easily labelled as the orientalist attitude, was a malady of the century (*garaib-i asriyye*). His discomfort about the use of the word “Orient” (written as “Oryan” in the document) as an umbrella term is striking. His reasoning is even more noteworthy.

Most of these correspondents were not informed about the particularities of the Ottoman Empire, he claims, and even those who were knowledgeable, chose to portray the Empire in line with the ways in which it was generally depicted in the novels or the travel writings of the period. The reason for such representation was two-fold. In addition to the malady of the century, Sadık Paşa, keenly observed, that the audience was ready to take any story similar to the *One Thousand and One Nights* as true, thus the correspondents continued to depict the empire in such manner due to their economic preoccupations.²⁷⁵ The rest of the letter narrates the alleged corruption of a certain correspondent from *Le Figaro*, detailing his possible motivations for coming to the Ottoman Empire and his ulterior motive.²⁷⁶ Sadık Paşa’s insightful letter not only exemplifies Deringil’s comments about the Ottoman perception of the Western hegemony in Saidian terms²⁷⁷ but at the same time depicts his intellectual preoccupation as a background against which he constructed specific

²⁷⁴ *Her ne vakit memalik-i şarkiye (Oryan) sözü olsa Çin ve Hind ile memalik-i Osmaniyyeyi fark etmeyip bir mertebede dona kaldıkları garaib-i asriyeden olarak meşhuddur.* BOA. Y. EE. 44/35.

²⁷⁵ *Binaenaleyh gazete muhabirlerinin keyfiyeti agreb ve a’ceb havadisler verdiği elf leyle ve leyle hikayelerine yakın şeyler yazar ise onu doğru itikadıyla kıraatına ziyade say ediyorlar ve bunu bildiklerinden gazeteciler dahi tedric-i ticaretleri için o yolda muhabir istihdam eyliyorlar.* BOA. Y. EE. 44/35

²⁷⁶ The correspondent, Ivan de Woestyne, was accused of malpractice and corruption in France and had travelled to the Ottoman Empire, to avoid accusations, according to Sadık Paşa’s letter. Woestyne was the first correspondent to travel to Bulgaria and report about the Bulgarian Massacres. His reports of the atrocities were published in *Figaro* at the end of July 1876. This must have been the main impetus behind Sadık Paşa’s trivialization of Woestyne. For Woestyne and his role in the publication of Bulgarian atrocities, see Eldem, *İzlenimler*, 89-91.

²⁷⁷ Deringil, *The Well-protected Domains*.

policies as a diplomat. He ends his letter by commenting that the employment of foreign correspondents and the Havas officers would not produce the desired result.

2.2.5 European correspondents with the Ottoman Army

Articles on Russian and Ottoman army, published in the British press served as a means of gathering military intelligence. Karatodori Efendi, by pointing to specific articles about the Ottoman army, underlined this fact and asked the Ottoman authorities to be more cautious about such news. He added that the measures taken by the Ottoman government to control both the domestic telegraphic communication, and the dispatches of the foreign correspondents could not be the object of any opposition since a state in war had to use all means to keep its secrets.²⁷⁸ The Ottoman diplomat even mentioned that this method of “espionage” was employed by the Russians during the Crimean War. Karatodori Efendi continued to survey the British press about the articles which reveal the position of the Ottoman forces and how Russian representatives used this information immediately as a military measure.²⁷⁹

The measures which Karatodori Efendi defended in his dispatch were not in fact unique to the Ottoman government and it was a means to control information and thus maintain an upper hand on the battlefield. Aware of the power of knowledge and the advantage of influencing the press, the Ottoman officials executed various measures to control information going out of the Ottoman domains. One way to establish such control over intelligence was the prohibition on the publication of war

²⁷⁸ Karatodori Efendi to Safvet Paşa, June 28, 1877, no 390 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²⁷⁹ This time *The Times* published an article on the position and the composition of Muhtar Paşa's forces. Karatodori Efendi to Safvet Paşa, July 1, 1877, no.411 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

news in the newspapers. The only source which was allowed to be reported was *Cerîde-i Askeriyye*, even the semi-official *Hakikat* was not authorized as a legitimate source for reporting on war news.²⁸⁰ All telegraphic communication in foreign languages to and from the stations in European provinces were suspended as of May 30, 1877, and only correspondence in Ottoman Turkish was allowed.²⁸¹

Another method in controlling the circulation of information was monitoring the telegrams of the foreign correspondents. European newspapers such as *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Standard*, *The Morning Advertiser*, *Sheffield Telegraph* (which is identified as a pro-Ottoman publication)²⁸² were authorized to send their correspondents to the Ottoman headquarters during the 1877 War, on the condition that they would present their telegrams to the Ottoman authorities before dispatching them.²⁸³

Commenting on the practice of surveillance over foreign correspondents' dispatches, Karatodori Efendi writes that the Russians were employing a similar strategy and that they were very careful in controlling foreign dispatches regarding their military tactics and the whereabouts of their troops.²⁸⁴ Ottoman representative's reference to a news article published in *The Times* supports this point. The *Times* correspondent in Bucharest complained, on July 3, 1877, about the Russian censorship on press regarding the ongoing campaign. The Russian officers in the

²⁸⁰ *The Levant Herald*, June 6, 1877.

²⁸¹ *The Levant Herald*, May 30, 1877. Initially only Pera Office would provide service for the internal communication and work in two other stations, Galata and Yeni Cami, was underway to accommodate telegraphs in Ottoman Turkish.

²⁸² Musurus Paşa to Safvet Paşa, May 19, 1877, no.159 in Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²⁸³ Safvet Paşa to Musurus Paşa, May 1, 1877, no.3 in Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²⁸⁴ Karatodori Efendi to Safvet Paşa, July 5, 1877, no.444 in Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X. During the Ottoman-Serbian War, the Russian General leading the volunteer units, Cherniaev had also deployed a similar mechanism of control over information. He had established a "Correspondence Bureau" to monitor news about the war and distributed false news to manipulate press. Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 294-295.

telegraph office underlined that only the *faits accomplis* could be telegraphed, in a discussion about the articulation of an artillery fire which had been going on for three days.²⁸⁵

F. V. Greene, the Military Attache to the U.S. Legation in St Petersburg, who followed the Russian Army in the Western front, does not narrate the surveillance of the European journalists' correspondence with their institutions explicitly²⁸⁶ but mentions that those who wished to follow the Russian army had to give a word of honor not to report about military tactics or numbers of soldiers which could jeopardize the Russian strategy.²⁸⁷ Other regulations, according to Greene, were imposed with the aim to differentiate these journalists from the soldiers by way of wearing a band around their arms with the inscription "correspondent." They were also required to always carry their photograph with them, on the back of which there was a written statement indicating permission to follow the army.²⁸⁸

Barbara Fedorovna Doukhovskoy, the wife of the second Military General in Erzurum, explained in her memoirs that after the establishment of Russian control in Erzurum, one of the first acts of her husband was to send a telegram to the Ottoman authorities revealing their power over the means of communication. Her husband, General Doukhovskoy, kept a keen interest in scrutinizing the Ottoman telegraphic communication, revealing the importance of establishing strict control over

²⁸⁵ *The Times*, July 3, 1877, p.10

²⁸⁶ There were indeed very few Russian correspondents who were stationed with the Russian army during its campaigns, most of the journalists were from European press. One major setback of the Russian correspondents was the difficulty in sending their news to their institutions on time. This was due to the high cost of sending information through express mail or telegram. The European correspondents had the economic means to transmit their word to their institutions in short time. Муминова, "деятельность российских и иностранных корреспондентов на Балканах в годы русско-турецкой войны 1877–1878 гг." (Activities of Russian and Foreign Correspondents in the Balkans During the Russo-Turkish War of 1877).

²⁸⁷ Greene, *Sketches of Army Life*, 163.

²⁸⁸ Greene, *Sketches of Army Life*, 163. Carrying of photographs was not limited to foreign correspondents. According to the interrogation reports published in *Hakikat*, the Russian volunteers serving in the Serbian War were also required to carry identification documents with photographs.

information.²⁸⁹ When news about armies' positions or maneuvers were published in the European papers, those correspondents were forced to leave their positions with the imperial armies. This happened both in the Ottoman and Russian Armies.

The Ottoman government indeed made use of the news about the Russian forces. Ottoman diplomats were required to send information about the composition and location of Russian forces to the authorities when they appeared in the foreign press, particularly the British press.²⁹⁰ Gathering recent information on Russian advance in Danube and the Ottoman forces as reported in various daily papers such as *Times* and *Daily News*, Musurus Paşa underlined that *Times* correspondent from the headquarters of Muhtar Paşa had been leaking information about the weaknesses of the Ottoman forces therefore suggested that this person be removed from his duty.²⁹¹ A similar situation happened in the Russian Army. Frederick Boyle from the *Standard* was accused of leaking information about the location of the Russian troops in Plevna and he was expelled from his duty with the Russian army.²⁹²

Skepticism about foreign correspondents and diplomats' relations with the press prevailed among the members of the Ottoman military. Ahmet Muhtar Paşa, in the Eastern front was also preoccupied with the dissemination of knowledge and anti-Ottoman opinion through various agents. His request to investigate the dealings of the English Consul in Erzurum and the Iranian representative, was rejected by the government because both states assured the Ottoman government that the allegations

²⁸⁹ Doukhovskoy, *Diary of a Russian Lady*.

²⁹⁰ Arifi Paşa to Musurus Paşa, July 29, 1877, no.556 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²⁹¹ Musurus Paşa to Arifi Paşa, July 30, 1877, no.564 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²⁹² For the details of this event as narrated in Russian sources, see Muminova, “деятельность российских и иностранных корреспондентов на Балканах в годы русско-турецкой войны 1877–1878 гг.” (Activities of Russian and Foreign Correspondents in the Balkans During the Russo-Turkish War of 1877). For Frederick Boyle's account of what had happened see Boyle, *Narrative of an Expelled Correspondent*.

were not true. Attempts at removing diplomats who did not support the Ottoman cause were not only limited to military personnel. Aristarchi Bey in Washington had also exerted much pressure to remove the American Consul General stationed in the Ottoman capital, during the War.

Lastly, censorship on foreign press sometimes outdid such “soft” measures. In December 1877 French post office in Salonica was raided by the Ottoman soldiers, who collected all Greek newspapers. Such acts were not only a matter of displeasure, but the officials were also put to trial by martial court and were sentenced to detention.²⁹³

2.2.6 International events and aid to Ottomans

The Ottoman diplomats continued to attend international events throughout the Balkan Crisis. These events, some of which were directly related to humanitarian ethos of the period served as an opportunity to underline Ottoman presence and accentuate Ottoman diplomatic networking.

Aristarchi Bey was vested with the duty to organize the Ottoman participation in an exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876,²⁹⁴ Ahmet Vefik Paşa moderated the session on the Ottoman Empire in the Orientalist Congress of 1876 in St. Petersburg²⁹⁵ and three representatives from the Ottoman Empire, Nubar Paşa, Rıza Paşa and Riyaz Paşa joined the Congress in Anvers organized by “The Association for the Reform and Codification of the Law of Nations” in 1877.²⁹⁶ These international activities presented the Ottoman government with the possibility to participate in various international circles. Yet, one development quickened the pace of involvement in

²⁹³ FO. 424/66. Report from acting consul Barker to Mr. Layard, no.2.

²⁹⁴ Kuneralp, “Last of the Phanariots,” 51.

²⁹⁵ Koçak, “Uluslararası Oryantalistler Kongreleri.”

²⁹⁶ BOA. HR. SFR. 3. 254/48.

humanitarian events. It was the establishment of the *La Société Ottomane de Secours aux Blessés Militaires*, also known as the Ottoman Red Crescent.

This Society was instrumentalized in a specific way in the diplomatic sphere; it allowed the Ottoman diplomats to engage in international humanitarian networks with a new argument and a new medium. Upon receiving official news of the establishment of the Ottoman branch, the diplomats spread the news in various philanthropic circles, extending aid campaigns and enforcing the state discourse on victimhood.

“La Société Ottomane de Secours aux Blessés Militaires” was established in April 1877.²⁹⁷ Its establishment was announced to the Ottoman foreign representatives on August 16, 1877. This society provided an international legitimacy for conducting relief work on behalf of the Ottomans. Previous relief and aid depended more on personal efforts of the Ottoman delegates or was limited to groups in Europe who had a positive attitude towards the Empire. Having witnessed the work of the International Red Cross in action during the Serbian War, the Ottoman government decided to allow its establishment in the Ottoman Empire.

Announcements regarding the society underlined the work already taken up by the Committee and more importantly made an appeal to public charity.²⁹⁸ With its official establishment, it could now be publicized in the international press and was referred to in the international dealings of the diplomats. Robert Efendi²⁹⁹ informed Aleko Paşa, Ambassador at Vienna, that he had distributed 50 copies of the circular

²⁹⁷ For the ORCS, see 4.2.

²⁹⁸ Server Paşa to Ottoman representatives, August 16, 1877, no.676 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

²⁹⁹ Consul general at Trieste. Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X, 18.

about the establishment of the Society to the aid societies and charitable organizations.³⁰⁰

The establishment of relief committees for the Russians was a matter which the Ottoman diplomats kept a watchful eye. Correspondence between Sadullah Bey³⁰¹ and Safvet Paşa illustrates the ways in which the Ottoman government viewed such committees. Upon the news about the formation of a committee for the wounded Russians, the Ottoman Foreign Minister replied that there was no need to take the matter to the German government since it was a private charity, indicating that private aid was treated differently than official and internationally acclaimed aid. Appealing to their sentiments of humanity and offering the establishment of the Society as an inducement, Safvet Paşa conveyed the expectation that the Berliner Society would eventually aid the wounded Ottoman soldiers in a similar manner.³⁰²

2.2.7 Propaganda and pamphleteering: Quest for truth

The Balkan Crisis witnessed an impressive number of political publications which aimed at the promulgation of alternative viewpoints about the conflicts. Pamphlets, newspapers, books and images circulated in a multitude of contexts. Having received much attention and reference, Gladstone's pamphlet and *Les Responsabilités* were the two most famous pamphlets to be published during the Crisis, however they are certainly not the only ones. Both the Ottoman government and pro-Ottoman groups published various propaganda materials during the conflict to spread their word.

³⁰⁰ Robert Efendi to Aleko Paşa, June 21, 1877, no.350 in Kunalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

³⁰¹ Sadullah Rami Paşa (1829-1891) was the Ambassador at Berlin between 1877-1883. He later served as the Ambassador at Vienna. Kunalp, *Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali*, 119.

³⁰² Safvet Paşa to Sadullah Bey, June 14, 1877, no.318 in Kunalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

One example of these propaganda materials, an official one, was the founding of a new Ottoman newspaper, published in the capital. Ottoman Ministry of War had been publishing an official newspaper on military affairs, *Cerîde-i Askeriyye*, since 1864. As part of image management and combatting the anti-Ottoman press coverage, the Ottoman government found it imperative to publish yet another newspaper, *Hakikat* or *La Verite*. It was announced as a non-official newspaper but its publication in the War Ministry's Press House (*Bab-ı Seraskeride Cerîde-i Askeriyye Matbaası*) poses questions to this claim. Published in Ottoman and French, bi-lingual *Hakikat* was issued in September 1876. The drive behind its publication was to inform the Ottoman public about the war and narrate the Ottoman version of what was happening. The name of the newspaper exemplifies the Ottoman attitude towards pamphleteering; it was vital to establish control over truth (*hakikat*) by way of press. *Stamboul* informed its readers about the publication of *Hakikat* in a satirical way. Stating that one of its former editors was now employed for this newspaper, *Stamboul* questioned the title of the new publication in a sarcastic tone.³⁰³

In the second issue, *Hakikat* stated that the recent campaigns in the British press about the insurrection, had turned part of the British public against the Empire, and this development posed a serious problem for the Ottoman government since Britain was the only friend of the Empire in Europe.³⁰⁴ Although rejecting the interpretation that the article was a response to Schuyler's pamphlet, the main motivation, the editorial of the new paper claimed, was to narrate the Ottoman perspective. Thus, *Hakikat* served as a semi-official propaganda tool to counter the allegations and underline the Russian involvement in the crisis. Tracing the "seeds" of the uprising in Herzegovina to the long-time publication of *Le Nord*, the article

³⁰³ *Stamboul*, September 27, 1876.

³⁰⁴ *La Verite*, no. 2.

narrates about how the European states had dealt with insurgents in their dominions. Narrating the uprising in Delphi or the suppression of Algerian uprisings by the French, the piece argued that violence played a legitimate role in cases of insurgency.

Justifying the use of violence as a state mechanism employed in domestic conflicts, the article aimed to legitimize the Ottoman state's action as a rightful measure to preserve internal order. Playing upon the anti-Russian inclination in British policy, the newspaper underlined the English preoccupation with Russian conquests and argued that the Russian threat on the Ottoman borders was more pressing and imminent. To combat the idea of throwing the "alien race", the Ottomans, out of Europe and saving the Christian populations of the Balkans³⁰⁵, the newspaper justified the violence in Bulgaria as an act of retribution and opposed the idea that these defensive measures were savagery.

In addition to publishing telegraphic dispatches from the European agencies, the newspaper dedicated a column for publishing "special correspondence" from St. Petersburg, in which certain governmental or military instances were depicted. In one of these articles, *La Verite* despised the Russian press, claimed that their news was full of folly, making the Russian society obliged to follow foreign press for the truth. Other articles focused on the enrolment of Russian volunteers in the Serbian War, and their relationship with the pan-Slavic circles, the Russian Red Cross and the interrogation of Russian POW's who were captured in Alexinatz. These topics reveal that humanitarian actions, volunteering and aid efforts were just as important as fighting on the battlefield. *Hakikat* did not only serve for the domestic audience or

³⁰⁵ Çiçek, "'Bulgarian Horrors' Revisited."

the foreigners residing in the Empire, but Ottoman diplomats also forwarded its articles to foreign newspapers.³⁰⁶

Among the examples of pro-Ottoman pamphlets published in Europe one can exemplify the pamphlet by L. Bernhard, *Les Atrocités Russes en Bulgarie et en Arménie pendant la guerre de 1877*. Announcing its publication, a certain Albert Abelsdorff, an editor from Berlin, identified the book as a great service to humanity in denouncing the misguided public opinion and narrating the true course of events.³⁰⁷ Aristarchi Bey's comments on this publication shed light on the Ottoman strategy to counter the anti-Ottoman propaganda. He claimed that the brochure included excellent observations, and he had publicized it in America however, one setback about the publication was that it contained predominantly Ottoman documents. This was a problem precisely because the Ottoman documents were presumed to be biased. He thus commented that the documents he had sent to Karatodori Efendi, to be used in his project, were not Ottoman documents.³⁰⁸ Karatodori Efendi was indeed involved in producing publications for the European audience to increase public support for the Empire. Bernhard's publication was promoted and analyzed in *La Turquie*, claiming that it had a great impact.³⁰⁹

Karatodori Efendi informed Safvet Paşa about the dispatches from the front provided by the Russian authorities to the Western press. According to Karatodori

³⁰⁶ Aristarchi Bey to Server Paşa, October 19, 1877, no.996 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

³⁰⁷ BOA. H. SFR.3. 250/31, no.65. The advertisement is dated November 1, 1877.

³⁰⁸ Aristarchi Bey to Server Paşa, November 30, 1877, no.1252 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

³⁰⁹ *La Turquie*, December 1, 1877. P.1. The newspaper continued to write about Bernhard's publication in the following issues. See *La Turquie*, December 5, 1877. Another interesting example of international pamphleteering was when Charles Chapman approached the Ottoman representatives with a book project. Charles Chapman was an English captain having served in the British Navy. He was also on board the Ottoman Frigate Sultan Mahmud (*Mahmudiye*) on its journey to the Ottoman lands. Chapman consulted with the Ottoman government with a book project, which would defend the Ottoman cause prior to the beginning of the hostilities with Russia. BOA. HR. SFR. 3. 233/52. 19.09.1876.

Efendi these dispatches included false news or alleged Russian victories. To counterbalance this, Karatodori Efendi suggested that the Ottoman government should regularly provide dispatches depicting correct and official news from the front. To achieve this, the Ottoman diplomat had already contacted the Havas agency in Brussel to provide the European press with Ottoman documents.³¹⁰ All these dispatches showcase the importance attributed to the European public opinion by the Ottoman diplomats and that they contemplated on possible solutions.

Four months later, Karatodori Efendi was appointed by Server Paşa, to compile a collection of documents on the Russian atrocities to ruin the Russian disinformation campaign. This collection was to be comprised of only foreign correspondence and publications, due to the Russian intrigues of disqualifying Ottoman official reports. Both this correspondence and Aristarchi Bey's comments about the suspicion towards official Ottoman documents reveal that Ottoman bureaucrats were acutely aware of the difficulty of convincing European press and diplomatic circles. Karatodori Efendi contacted major Embassies in Europe and US to collect documents for this publication, which included British Blue Books, consular reports, collection of correspondences from newspapers, and individual testimonies all relating to the Russian and Bulgarian atrocities.³¹¹

Other Ottoman diplomats were also working on the publication of such brochures. Musurus Paşa was also involved in establishing close relations with press representatives in England, encouraging pro-Ottoman articles and publishing pamphlets. *Morning Post*, the conservative newspaper was particularly keen on publishing such materials, and Musurus Paşa also had a personal acquaintance with

³¹⁰ Karatodori Efendi to Safvet Paşa, May 3, 1877, no.49 in Kunalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

³¹¹ For Karatodori's activities regarding the ORCS and his use of British humanitarian agents' reports for such publications, see 4.2.

him.³¹² Sadullah Bey in Berlin also published, according to his correspondence, a pamphlet on the Russian atrocities, with the aim of showing Europe that they were fooled by Russia, glorifying Islam by underlining how it was susceptible to progress and claiming that pan-Slavism posed a danger to whole world.³¹³

La Turquie announced the publication of *Atrocités Russes an Asia et en Roum lie, pendant Les Mois de Juin, Juillet et Aout 1877*, which was sold at its own bureau and other bookstores in İstanbul. Defining the book as a faithful and detailed account of atrocities, *La Turquie* underlined that the narrative was based on official telegrams and private correspondence, and it was under the seal of incontestable authority.³¹⁴

2.2.8 Ottoman newspapers

Ottoman newspapers of the period depicted the Russians as enemies of humanity and placed the blamed mostly on the Russians. Narrating news from the front, *Vakit* described how the Russian forces captured Muslims soldiers, tied their hands and have them tortured and executed by Bulgarians. This piece depicts the Russians, not the Bulgarians, as enemies of humanity and civilization (*insaniyet ve medeniyet d şmanı*) and labels them as Moscow savages (*Moskof vahşileri*). The piece then questions why the “civilized” (*alem-i medeniyet*) had preferred to stay silent and accuses the diplomatic personnel who had been inquiring into the condition of the Russian wounded soldiers instead.³¹⁵ This piece is representative of how the Ottoman

³¹² Kuneralp, “Bir Osmanlı Diplomati,” 434-435.

³¹³ It is not clear from the correspondence whether this is a copy of *Les Responsabilit s*, but the date of the correspondence defies such an assumption. Also, Sadullah Bey’s comments do not include any reference to translated Russian documents. Sadullah Bey to Server Pa a, October 28, 1877, no.1050 in Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

³¹⁴ *La Turquie*, December 2-3, 1877, p.3. It was sold for five piastre *kaim s*.

³¹⁵ *Vakit*, no.723. 29.10.1877.

press engaged with the matter. While the Ottoman government and bureaucrats tried to present the Ottoman subjects as victims of Russian and/or Bulgarian aggression and their continued emphasis on the rules of just war, the issue was picked up by the Ottoman press from a different perspective amidst mobilization. In other articles, Russian Empire was depicted most often in derogatory terms and as being stuck in detrimental situations.³¹⁶ These articles aimed to motivate the Ottoman population during mobilization.

Building upon state propaganda, *La Turquie* reported on the Russian atrocities frequently by publishing articles titled “Les Atrocités Russes.” Some of these articles were translations from British sources.³¹⁷ Other publications about the Russian atrocities included correspondence between high-ranking Ottoman bureaucrats and Ottoman representatives in foreign countries. One such example is the telegram titled “L’Humanité Russe”, written by Safvet Paşa to the Ottoman representatives, depicting the Russian atrocities.³¹⁸

2.2.9 Rhetorical and practical uses of jihad

When Abdülhamid II complained to Mr. Layard about the representation of the Ottoman Empire in the European press, he tried to delegitimize the Russian War declaration and expressed that he had not declared a jihad, in the face of a Russian crusade.³¹⁹ Despite the lack of an official declaration of jihad during the Balkan Crisis, the concept of jihad had an important place in state propaganda, it was an

³¹⁶ For examples of derogatory depictions of the Russian Empire or the people in support of Russia, see *Vakit*, nos.451, 700.

³¹⁷ *La Turquie*, July 5, 1877.

³¹⁸ *La Turquie*, July 8-9, 1877.

³¹⁹ See above for details. For the quotation and its interpretation see, Deringil, *The Well-protected Domains*.

integral component of mobilization and the concept was embraced by individuals and groups in support of the war effort.

The Ottoman state declared jihad officially six times between 1768 and 1922. After the declaration of Tanzimat, the Ottoman governments refrained from resorting to jihad in the conflicts.³²⁰ Crimean War, War of 1877, Italian occupation of Tripoli and The Balkan Wars of 1912 were the major conflicts in which jihad was not declared officially.³²¹ Additionally, the Ottoman government did not respond to the jihad call during the Indian rebellion of 1857, and aligned with the British.³²² Yet, the notion was important in mobilization and recruitment and was a frequently cited concept in state propaganda in matters of armed conflict.³²³ Aksakal's research illustrates an example of how jihad was embraced by individuals during the Crimean War.³²⁴

There is much literature on jihad during the First World War, its history within the Islamic law, or its function in the military ideology.³²⁵ Yet the function of jihad during the 1877 War remains understudied. Jihad could be implemented in two ways; during offensive wars into Dâr-ül Harb, fighting was a common duty, (*farz-ı kifâye*) and the military could act as the representative of this duty. In the case of a defensive war, the responsibility to fight in the war fell on every subject (*farz-ı ayn*) and every Muslim was obliged to fulfill this duty.³²⁶ For the jihad declaration to be official, there needed to be a fetwa on jihad by the SheikhuIslam with official

³²⁰ Zürcher, "Giriş: Osmanlı Cihadı."

³²¹ The only scholar to claim that the Ottoman Empire called for jihad during the War of 1877 is Cemil Aydın. Aydın does not differentiate whether the call was official or not. Aydın, *Idea of the Muslim World*.

³²² Aydın labels this as an instance in which the call for Muslim solidarity by the Mughals was rejected by other Muslims dynasties. Aydın, *Idea of the Muslim World*, 55.

³²³ Zürcher, "Giriş: Osmanlı Cihadı"; Aksakal, "Holy War."

³²⁴ A woman named Ayşe came to the capital to participate in jihad. Her venture resulted in a compensation payment by the state at the end of the conflict. Aksakal, "Osmanlıların Cihat İlanı."

³²⁵ See Zürcher, *Cihat ve İslam*; Aksakal, "Holy War"; Aksakal, *Ottoman Road to War*.

³²⁶ Zürcher, "Giriş: Osmanlı Cihadı"; Aksakal, "Holy War," 2.

approval from the Sultan. Ottoman governments were aware of the power of jihad among the society throughout the nineteenth century however, an official endorsement of jihad had the potential to isolate the Empire from the European powers.³²⁷ Abdülhamid's explanations to Layard emphasize this point clearly. However, the lack of an official declaration does not propose a simple explanation about the utilization of religious sentiments in mobilization.

The above-mentioned discussion on the Ottoman state conduct with respect to the increasing humanitarian sentiments and the diplomatic efforts for being regarded as a civilized power, could not work side by side with jihad. The image of the barbarian was, to a certain extent, interpreted in relation to Islam in the first place. Thus, the efforts to defy such an image and seek sympathy, if not an alliance, with the European powers was the main reason for not declaring an official jihad. The concept of jihad, however, frequently surfaced throughout the Balkan Crisis in newspapers and official correspondence. It was also instrumental in aid and support from Muslims outside the Empire.

In May 1877, shortly after the declaration of the Russo-Ottoman War, Abdülhamid II was vested with the title Ghazi and this announcement was read out loud in the mosques. Yet this emphasis on ghaza during the 1877 War has a certain ambiguity. Evidence suggests that jihad had already been regarded as an important component of domestic relief campaign prior to the beginning of the hostility with Russia. It was articulated in the formation of volunteer units and served to bolster participation and encourage mobilization in the army.³²⁸ Yet, an official declaration could jeopardize the state efforts in image management. Complicating the matter further were two other developments. The extraterritorial claims for jihad by the

³²⁷ Aksakal, "Holy War," 187.

³²⁸ See 3.3.

Muslims living outside the Empire and the inclusion of non-Muslims as volunteers in the guards' units.

Jihad was essential in encouraging participation in the Ottoman military campaigns. It provided the ideological backbone of military service in the Empire, which rested predominantly on the Muslim population. It provided a rhetoric that resonated with the religious and cultural symbols of the Ottoman countryside during times of mobilization and conscription.³²⁹ It was also instrumental in enrolling auxiliary troops, which were composed of non-Turkish Muslims, such as the Circassian, Kurdish and other ethnic groups.³³⁰ The concept of jihad also served as a means to ensure the continuity of service in the army during the conflicts.³³¹ Additionally jihad was a concept with social and emotional significance.³³² Research into the Balkan Crisis reveals that religious motifs, particularly ghaza and jihad were among the main instruments of mobilization. Both the state and society perceived religion as an important indicator of participation in the war effort. Yet, as the following sections will reveal, Islamic references were not the only means of mobilization. Islamic rhetoric was one of the ways of defining the imperial Ottoman identity and its instrumentalization did not automatically rule out other discourses. The use of ghaza in mobilization may as well be interpreted in relation to Deringil's proposition that in the nineteenth century "the state spoke the political language of Islam" while at the same time "implementing the concrete policy of a rational secular

³²⁹ Beşikçi situates this argument within the period between the 1908 and the First World War. Beşikçi, "Osmanlı Cihadının Yurtiçi Boyutu." Zürcher treats the matter as a continuity, evidenced during the reign of Abdülhamid II and the Young Turks and analyzes the transformation of the dominant religious rhetoric by identifying the ways in which religion was sacralized and bureaucratized. Zürcher, *Young Turk Legacy*, 274-278.

³³⁰ Beşikçi, "Başbozuk Savaşçıdan Makbul Tebaaya."

³³¹ Beşikçi, "Osmanlı Cihadının Yurtiçi Boyutu."

³³² Zürcher underlines that jihad was instrumental in encouraging mobilization and it served an important social and emotional function. Zürcher, "Giriş: Osmanlı Cihadı" 7.

program.”³³³ The inclusion of non-Muslims as volunteers and the propagation of *Osmanlılık* throughout the mobilization campaign reveals that the rhetoric of mobilization did not solely rest on Islamic values but could also incorporate individuals along the lines of a multi-ethnic imperial identity.

In early July 1876, Ottoman Muslims in the Aegean region, such as Aydın, Nazilli, Bergama, formed volunteer units and expressed their willingness to serve with the Ottoman army in the war with Serbia with references to jihad. Their petitions used words such as jihad in god’s path (*cihâd fisebilillah*), honor of martyrdom (*şeref-i şehadet*), mujahid and ghaza.³³⁴ These petitions reveal that these volunteers, possibly *zeibeks*, perceived military participation from within an Islamic rhetoric and could easily employ the concept of jihad without any need for an official declaration. Although not using the term jihad, the volunteer softas expressed their participation in the Serbian War with references to Islam and argued that their volunteering was a result of Islam.³³⁵ Similarly, volunteers from Rize, mostly *mollahs*, marched through the streets of Trabzon before their dispatch to the front, singing prayers. The leading *mollah* had invited the Muslims to be volunteers in the religious war.³³⁶ Shaykh Shamil’s son, Gazi Mehmed Şamil Bey approached the Ottoman authorities and declared his wish to participate in the jihad against the Russians. He eventually went to Kars to join the war effort.³³⁷

The use of religious war was not only limited to recruitment efforts. The *iâne* campaign, in addition to its naming as *iâne-i cihâdiyye*, incorporated a religious

³³³ Deringil, “The Invention of Tradition,” 5-6.

³³⁴ BOA. A. MKT. UM. 01489/00046, early July 1876. There were also other petitions with less emphasis on religion. See 3.3 for the details of these petitions and their significance in the formation of volunteer units.

³³⁵ For the declaration of the softas about the volunteering of non-Muslims in the war effort, see *Vakit*, no.277 and *Stamboul*, July 19, 1876.

³³⁶ FO. 424/43. From Vice-Consul Billiotti to the Earl of Derby. August 31, 1876.

³³⁷ BOA. ATASE. ORHK. 110/9/1/3/124/0/762.

rhetoric in many instances and the Ottoman press utilized such a religious language in publicizing and propagating about the aid to Ottoman soldiers.³³⁸ The incorporation of the term jihad in the relief campaign became the topic of polemical pieces in the newspapers of the period. *The Levant Herald* published an article discussing the naming of the relief campaign. The term *iâne-i cihâdiyye* connoted a religious war, creating discontent in public.³³⁹ *İttihad* opposed this comment by arguing that the term jihad signified war and in the case of a religious war, the term ghaza or *cihâd fisebilillah* (war in the name of God) were preferred. While *İttihad* tried to soften the religious connotations, foreign press was not convinced with this explanation.³⁴⁰ The ambiguity surrounding the use of religious terminology need to be contextualized in relation to the audience of the rhetoric. While the Ottoman newspapers' resort to religious terminology aimed at bolstering mobilization and patriotic feelings, the constraints resulting from international relations necessitated explanations which rested on counter arguments. Foreign observers looked for such religious motives to enhance their vision of the Ottoman barbarity, downplay the Ottoman justification for resorting to military means and eventually strengthen the arguments about the unfavorable condition of the non-Muslims living in the Ottoman domains.

Such ambiguity, however, did not restrict the use of religious motives though the period. Distribution of religious books (*cihâd risalesi*) was not uncommon during the Balkan Crisis.³⁴¹ Haled Efendi's book also served another purpose. He declared

³³⁸ For a discussion on the transition from *iâne-i cihâdiyye* to *iâne-i harbiyye* and specific examples about the incorporation of religious rhetoric into the aid campaign see 3.2.

³³⁹ For the article in *İttihad* about the publication of *Levant Herald* see, *İttihad*, no.5.

³⁴⁰ The French newspaper *Le Constitutionnel*, summarized the discussions and by referring to *Vakit*'s use of the term ghaza, raised suspicions about the term jihad. *Le Constitutionnel*, July 25, 1876.

³⁴¹ Both before and during the War of 1877, jihad literature was distributed among the soldiers. For Haled Efendi's *risale* see BOA. ATASE. ORHK. 110/9/1/3/125/0/29. For the *risale* published by Abdurrahman Şevki Efendi see BOA. ATASE. ORHK. 110/9/1/3/125/0/481.

in his book that the revenue generated from its sale was going to be donated to the *iâne* committee.³⁴² Patriotic poetry published in the newspapers referred to the sword of ghaza (*gaza seyfi*)³⁴³ or *Vakit*'s commentary about the staging of Namık Kemal's play *Vatan*³⁴⁴ included expressions of religious zeal, with the use of phases such as jihad, *rayet-i nusret* (flag representing god's help) and *seyf-i celadet* (brave swords.)³⁴⁵ Press reports about auxiliary troops formed by Circassians and Kurds were almost always expressed with references to Islam, if not, jihad.³⁴⁶

This evidence confirms the fact that Ottoman mobilization rested on religious justifications and jihad was a distinctive, yet ambiguous, feature of mobilization. The fact that fighting for jihad was explicitly expressed in newspapers and public manifestations, forced the foreign observers to interpret the concept and its possible outcomes with respect to the current situation.

In mid-June 1876, a Bulgarian informant working for Consul Reade³⁴⁷ claims to have eavesdropped a conversation among the Muslims of Rustchuk, one of whom had recently returned from the fight against the insurgents. He was asked whether he had become a Ghazi during the battle. The whole inclosure, which was not signed, might be fabricated or exaggerated yet the phrasing of participation in battle is

³⁴² See 3.2 for the details of dedications and donations by way of publishing.

³⁴³ *Sabah*, no.128.

³⁴⁴ *Vatan*, also known as *Vatan Yahud Silistre*, was staged on April 1, 1873, for the first time and immediately after its staging, the play became the epitome of patriotic theatrical performance. The play reflects Namık Kemal's conceptualization of motherland, situated within the troubled political developments of the 1870's. The play narrates the story of a Muslim Ottoman volunteer, İslam Bey, during the Crimean War. The play was an immediate hit, and the moved audiences took to the streets after its staging. The emotional demonstrations came under the sway of constitutionalist demands, which led to the banning of its staging and the exile of its author, Namık Kemal. With the Balkan Crisis, *Vatan* was back on stage, and it continued to be staged during times of conflict throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Ersoy, "Motherland or Silistra."

³⁴⁵ *Vakit*, no.282.

³⁴⁶ For an article mentioning the Circassian troops and their participation in jihad see *Basiret* no.1870. For Kurdish participation and jihad emphasis see *Vakit*, no.275.

³⁴⁷ The British Consul in Rustchuk.

articulated in Islamic terms.³⁴⁸ The use of the title ghazi in such a casual setting implies that participants were predominantly motivated by religious zeal and that ghazi would connote participation in a religious war by every individual. In another report, Consul Reade warned the British authorities that violence against non-Muslims was the result of the official embracing of the term jihad. Because the conflict was labeled as a religious war, tension could escalate quickly, resulting in the death of Christians and plundering of their properties. He also informed the British authorities that the Ottoman newspaper published in the region labelled the war as a jihad.³⁴⁹

On May 16, 1877, Wednesday, the judge (*kadı*) of Istanbul informed the authorities in Galata, Eyüp and Üsküdar about the declaration of the giving of the title Ghazi to Abdülhamid II and the necessity of announcing this in the Friday prayers.³⁵⁰ *La Turquie* published two fetwas by the Sheikhlislam on May 20-21, 1877, which were translated from *La Verite*. The first decree was the announcement of war on Russia, underlining that it is a just and holy war. It underlined that initial affairs in preventing war were unsuccessful and resulted in the imposition of unacceptable conditions on the Muslim populations. Thus, the Sultan of Muslims had the right to mobilize a war against such an oppressor. Written in the form of a question-and-answer, the last question states whether the Sultan could proclaim war (*proclamer la guerre (Djihad)*). The answer, of course, was affirmative. The second article then informs that the Sultan had acquired the title Ghazi relying on the Islamic

³⁴⁸ Translation of an informant's report. FO. 424/42. From Consul Reade to the Earl of Derby, June 18, 1876.

³⁴⁹ FO. 424/43. From Consul Reade to Sir H. Elliot, August 15, 1876. No.297. Consul Reade's warning seems to have not been regarded as a serious threat by the British officials.

³⁵⁰ *İstanbul Kadı Sicilleri* 99, İstanbul Mahkemesi, Sicil no. 334.

precept which claims that those who arranged Muslims to fight in God's path shall be Ghazi, i.e. victorious.³⁵¹

Informing the British Foreign Minister, Layard claimed that even though the fetwa would provoke Muslim fanaticism, the wording of the fetwa was "a mere ancient form used on such occasions and has no religious significance." The title Ghazi, similarly, was "always issued ... upon the commencement of a war, and not in consequence of victories actually achieved."³⁵² While Abdülhamid II sought to further utilize religious motives in the mobilization, his formulation was the exact opposite of the way in which the word jihad was propagated in the newspapers recently. Thus, the ambiguity created around the notion of jihad and ghaza, seems to have served the Ottoman purpose by utilizing religious motives without confronting the European decision makers and public.

However, not all parties were convinced with these arguments. The proclamation of the two fetwas were interpreted as a declaration of jihad, as a war on Christians, in some of the British newspapers and Layard informed the British Minister of Foreign Affairs one month after the declaration that "it was not the case, and that the imperial decree announcing the war with Russia was couched in terms always employed in such documents." Layard assured the Minister by adding that he had inquired into the situation and did not hesitate about his statement.³⁵³ The claim that the fetwa rested on the phrasing of traditional war declarations seems to have convinced the British. Yet, as the evidence suggests, the notion of jihad and ghaza occupied a central position both in the military and among the people during periods

³⁵¹ *La Turquie*, May 20-21, 1877. *Levant Herald* on the other hand, published a very brief note indicating that the title "Ghazi" was added to the imperial titles of the Sultan. *Levant Herald*, May 23, 1877.

³⁵² FO. 424/55. From A. H. Layard to the Earl of Derby, May 21, 1877. No.10.

³⁵³ FO. 424/55. From Layard to the Earl of Derby, June 16, 1877. No. 520.

of conflict and war and they were already part of the mobilization rhetoric. As will be demonstrated in the following chapter, the matter was further complicated by the incorporation of diverse rhetoric throughout the period. The concept of jihad and ghaza occupied a crucial role in mobilization, by serving as a justification in volunteering for the war cause and participating in the relief campaign. It served to bolster belonging and devotion to the war cause, particularly among the Muslim population. However, the religious rhetoric did not automatically result in the exclusion of non-Muslims. By challenging the very notion of a religious war, the Ottoman government aimed to create a multi-confessional mobilization campaign, and the ambiguity of rhetoric proved useful in the expansion of the patriotic fervent.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter first delved into the political developments leading to the Balkan Crisis and the ways in which these events were formative in the making of the “Eastern Question.” One aim of this section was to show how these developments were part and parcel of the nineteenth century humanitarianism and humanitarian interventions. The Ottoman image in Europe transformed throughout the conflicts yet, every turn of event contributed negatively to the debate on the future and the prestige of the Ottoman Empire. The involvement of the European states in these matters changed according to political calculations and the diplomatic balance during the period. What makes these events significant for the Balkan Crisis is that by the time of the uprising in Herzegovina, the prior developments had built up historical precedents and they did not look promising for the legitimacy of the Ottoman rule.

The Bulgarian uprising marked a turning point, leading the Ottoman government and the foreign representatives to instigate various mechanisms to ward

of international pressure. To this end, both the central government and the Ottoman diplomats were engaged in various measures to make their voices heard and their narratives published.

The existing practices, such as foreign press reports and sending denials, were put back to work immediately. Yet, there were new measures in defending the empires' prestige during the Balkan crisis and these were not necessarily the workings of the central government alone. It is evident from the correspondence between the foreign embassies and the central government that the representatives were also concerned with initiating efficient mechanisms which would produce beneficial results. Participating in the philanthropic networks was one of these ways. Coinciding with the increasing humanitarian activities during the Balkan Crisis, the Ottoman bureaucrats organized and participated in philanthropic events. It is important to underline that while also linked with domestic matters, the establishment of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society during this period reveals that the state, and the bureaucrats, regarded it as an opportunity to be part of the humanitarian club with their own branch.

While the Ottoman decision making elites were encumbered with the notions of moral sentiments, public opinion, and the threat of humanitarian intervention - which meant losing sovereignty and legitimacy – they resorted to constructing a specific image of the Ottomans, the victims. Aiming to turn the dominant rhetoric of the oppressed Christians and the oppressor Ottomans upside down, the government sought to depict the Ottomans as the real victims. This victimhood rhetoric rested on the Geneva Convention, the notion of just war, requirements of civilization and the morality of war. Presenting the Russians as the real perpetrators of atrocities, the Ottoman government and the bureaucrats were involved in producing pamphlets,

making deals with foreign correspondents, and using decorations and honors to encourage pro-Ottoman stance.

This chapter also revealed that this apparatus was not unique to the Ottoman empire, or the period. It was a global phenomenon; it had earlier examples, and some people regarded this as an opportunity to support their own activities and approached the Ottoman government to ask for financial support. Additionally, this chapter put forth that the Ottoman government resorted to the rhetoric of jihad without officially declaring one, due to its possible negative ramifications with respect to European support. However, the concept of jihad was instrumental in an ambiguous way in mobilizing the Ottoman subjects and its usage was not only instructed by the state, but certain groups embraced the idea prior to its utilization by the governments.

CHAPTER 3

MANIFESTATIONS OF PATRIOTISM: DOMESTIC RELIEF AND VOLUNTEERING

3.1 Mobilization, public and patriotism

In a circular submitted to the provincial governors at the end of April 1877, the central government urged its local representatives to propagate support to the Ottoman cause in the war against Russia. This circular identified two specific ways of relief both of which were articulated as “categories of duty imposed by patriotism and subjection.” Ottoman subjects were expected to participate in the army and for those who did not enroll in the army, the duty was to provide the necessary provisions. The circular asked the governors to urge the locals to enroll in the auxiliary troops. Others would be encouraged to support the Ottoman administration, fulfilling the requirements throughout the war.³⁵⁴

Donating and volunteering were the two defining practices of Ottoman mobilization throughout the Balkan Crisis. Notwithstanding the official impetus exemplified by this circular, it was comprised of diverse mechanisms. From the onset of the revolt in Herzegovina in 1875, distinct groups within Ottoman society started to collect donations and enroll as volunteers. These patriotic acts were defined in relation to the duties of the Ottoman subjects. Coinciding with the declaration of the First Constitution, the Ottoman public executed these acts from within different patriotic circles, emphasizing consent and voluntariness. Patriotic duty was defined within the confines of an overarching Ottoman identity, and a nascent proto-nationalism. Concurrently, the critical function of the press in this campaign cannot

³⁵⁴ For the circular, see FO. 424/53 Consul J. E. Blunt to the Earl of Derby, May 8, 1877.

be overestimated. Witnessing the emergence of civil initiatives in aiding the Ottoman soldiers, the mobilization of the Balkan Crisis thus provides an interesting case for discussing the relation between the state and society at a particular historical conjuncture.

Nineteenth century humanitarianism, among other attributes, provided invaluable grounds for the formation of certain socio-cultural practices which paved the way for the formation of civil initiatives, civil society, and eventually leading to social movements in the last decades of the nineteenth and the beginning of the early twentieth centuries. This chapter argues that while the studies on the social movements reveal the diverging interests of the governments and the public, patriotic mobilization efforts during times of conflict exemplify a convergence between the state-led campaigns and civil initiatives. By looking at an exemplary moment of convergence between 1875-1878, this chapter will illustrate the multiple ways in which certain mechanisms served for the formation of a patriotic mobilization campaign which rested on aiding the wounded soldiers and the Ottoman army.

The linguistic marker of aid to Ottoman soldiers was “*gönüllü*” (used to imply both consent and volunteering for the war) within the Ottoman domains. The press publicized donations by underlining the voluntariness of the act (*gönülleriyle ettikeri îâne*) and volunteering (*gönüllü birlikler*) was cherished with emphasis to the Ottoman imperial identity. Both phenomena were appropriated within various patriotic circles. Thus, the mobilization campaign and the aid to Ottoman soldiers serve as testing grounds for the discussions on defining the belonging of the masses.

The flourishing Ottoman press, under the guidance of Young Ottoman intellectuals, did not only function as a tool in disseminating information. It was actively engaged in practical matters pertaining to the aid campaign and the

campaign's discursive articulations allowed room for constructing empire-wide relief networks. These networks initially provided a sense of belonging within a wider sphere of voluntary activism which was shaped by the requirements of morality and the growing patriotic ethos. These developments lend themselves to challenges to power relations. Military mobilization necessitated cooperation between the state, the elites, and the society at large along the lines of voluntary sacrifice. This cooperation rested on the notion of consent, which needed to be created and defined with the participation of various actors.

This chapter will first delve into a discussion on how these topics have been treated in Ottoman historiography. The first section will discuss the important characteristics of the period such as state-society relations, formation of civil initiatives, the notion of *efkar-ı umûmiyye*, and the important function of Ottoman press, highlighting the context out of which the two characteristics of the aid to Ottoman army emerged: the *iâne* campaign and volunteering for the Ottoman army. The subsequent sections will focus on these two practices and provide a historical perspective along with a discursive interpretation.

3.1.1 State-society relations

There are two fundamental approaches to explaining the relation between state and society in Ottoman historiography. The traditional approach underlines the strong presence of the state and perceives the Ottoman state as the main motor of historical change.³⁵⁵ This approach received both criticism and applause. Criticism to this

³⁵⁵ Şerif Mardin identifies the main tenet of the Ottoman state as patrimonialism and argues that the powerful state held back the growth of capitalism, that the Ottoman system lacked "intermediate structures" which would contribute to the development of the civil society and autonomous urban structures. Heper identifies the Ottoman structure as composed of a strong and transcendental state and a weak society. Mardin, "Power, Civil Society,;" Heper, *Türkiye'de Devlet Geleneği*, 24.

approach highlight the fact that it rests upon a hegemonic Westernization discourse and that it interprets the transformation of the empire from within the “structure of global historical time” as defined by Chakrabarty, which rests on the idea of “first in Europe, then elsewhere.”³⁵⁶ Viewing the populations as powerless under the dominance of a patrimonial or transcendental state, this approach gives priority to state conduct in any given topic, rejecting the agency of the various actors in question. Scholars who reject this approach stress the fact that state and society need not be perceived as binary opposites.³⁵⁷ Revisionist scholarship rejects situating society as an opponent to state, which shadows the possibility of interaction and negotiation between the two entities.

Following this revisionist approach, this dissertation argues that the Balkan Crisis of 1875-1878 serves as a case study of a moment of interaction between the state and society which is crystallized in the philanthropic activities aimed at Ottoman soldiers. Emerging out of a military mobilization context, which requires an alliance between the state and the society, the relief campaign reflects the Tanzimat ideals, particularly the doctrine of *Osmanlılık* whereupon the state calls for the participation of diverse groups and individuals with the resources they have at their

³⁵⁶ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, 29.

³⁵⁷ This framework has been critiqued by various scholars. The revisionist perspective expands over a wide area of case studies. Only a few examples will be listed here. Çetinkaya, in his study on the 1908 boycott, critiques this approach, following Huri Cihan İslamoğlu’s proposition, and argues against such an oppositional conception of state and society, and lends support to the interpretation that structures of hegemony and legitimacy were varied in the Ottoman domains as part of larger mechanisms of mass politics and social mobilization. Çetinkaya, *1908 Osmanlı Boykotu*, 23-24. Another critical scholar, Nadir Özbek, rejects the dualistic state-society approach. Focusing on the philanthropic activities during the Hamidian period, Özbek proposes to view state-society relations as a dynamic realm in which social and political groups struggled for their interests. Özbek, “Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism.” Another scholar who contributed to this revisionist trend, Safa Saraçoğlu, argues that the reforms of the period, particularly reforms concerning the provinces were administered as a result of internal pressures. Prioritizing the local dynamics Saraçoğlu argues against “the presumed rift between state and society.” Saraçoğlu, *Local Governance in Ottoman Bulgaria*, 166. For the role of the coffeehouses in the formation of the public sphere see Kırılı, “The Struggle.” For a discussion of the emergence and development of public opinion, see Şiviloğlu, *Emergence of Public Opinion*; Kırılı, “Coffeehouses.”

disposal and, even with their lives. This convergence proves interesting as it happened at a period in which discussions on constitutional monarchy are also at work among the Ottoman intellectuals.

Inspired by the “reconceptualization of agency” which exceeds the dialectic understanding of state and society relations and posits that individuals may act on their behalf³⁵⁸ this chapter argues that individuals and groups executed acts of aid with different motivations leading to the formation of various “patriotic circles.”³⁵⁹ Relief work was advertised in the press, and some were even accompanied by performative acts. Thus, the philanthropic articulations served as a “stage” on which imperial identities, communal obligations and subjecthood duties were acted out.³⁶⁰ As the official circular, quoted in the beginning reveals and as the rest of the chapter will explicate, different groups perceived and formulated the act of giving in multitude of ways and cultural forms. The performative aspect of the act of giving, as reflected in the marches of the volunteer units around the cities, their participation in the Friday ceremonies or the fact that ferries and theaters were decorated with flags, upholds an interpretation of the patriotic campaign as a stage.

This stage, it should be underlined, was also the ground for the creation of a new type of individual. The formulation of duties and obligations through the framework of “consent” implies a mutual relation. As in the words of Foucault:

.. [w]e should [not] consider the ‘modern state’ as an entity which was developed above individuals, ignoring what they are and even their very existence, but, on the contrary, as a very sophisticated structure, in which individuals can be integrated, under one condition: that this

³⁵⁸ Burbank and Ransel, “Introduction,” xvi.

³⁵⁹ Jean H. Quataert, in her analysis of the philanthropic activities in Dynastic Germany, underlines patriotism as an important marker in dealing with philanthropic activities and attributes importance to the processes that highlight identity formation and cultural forms as a way of interaction and bargaining. Quataert, *Staging Philanthropy*. This dissertation regards her approach as an important insight into analyzing the diverse patterns in engaging with the state call for relief in the Ottoman society.

³⁶⁰ This phrase is borrowed from Jean H. Quataert. She identifies philanthropy as a stage on which obligations and responsibilities were enacted. Quataert, *Staging Philanthropy*.

individuality would be shaped in a new form and submitted to a set of very specific patterns. In a way, we can see the state as a modern matrix of individualization or a new form of pastoral power.³⁶¹

The question whether a proper individuality is applicable to the donation campaign seems doubtful because the donations were predominantly expressed in a collective form. This collectivity could be expressed through locality, confessional belonging, vocational or institutional affiliation, however, Foucault's comment about the creation of a new way of engaging with the state authority and the need to create new patterns to identify this relationship proves useful in understanding the emphasis on consent. This new pattern, that of a consensual relationship between the state and the society, hints at a subtle rhetorical transformation.

3.1.2 Public sphere and civil society

While the question of defining the emergence of public sphere in the Ottoman Empire is beyond the scope of this research, it is illustrative to engage briefly with the literature pertaining to the role of the public and situate this research within these debates. It is true that for the period of analysis it may not be possible to identify a breakthrough in the state-society relations, but certain features of the aid campaign do point to the enhancement of civil practices. Thus, it seems beneficial to illustrate the ways in which these notions have been discussed in literature.

From its first publication in 1962 Habermas's *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* has dominated the discussions on public sphere. Identifying the emergence of the transformative change which led to the formation of the public sphere to the early capitalist commercial era, Habermas underlines that civil society could only emerge at a moment in which it became "the corollary of a depersonalized

³⁶¹ Foucault, "The Subject and Power," 783.

state authority” and that economic activity which “had become private had to be oriented toward a commodity market.”³⁶² The economic activity was brought out of the private realm, during a period which Habermas calls “the rise of the social.”³⁶³ Having a key role in Habermas’s theory, the press functioned as an explosive power which is interpreted as “a kind of transposition of the publicity of representation into the new form of public sphere.”³⁶⁴

The relation between private individuals, taking form in public, was the emergence of the bourgeois public sphere according to Habermas and this new form transformed the sociological meanings of reason, law and opinion. While the early form of public sphere, which he calls the world of letters, was apolitical its representatives in the towns separated themselves from the monarch’s sphere and thus the town became the center of civil society economically, culturally and politically.³⁶⁵ Public opinion, as a vehicle of the world of letters shaped the evolution of the public sphere into the political realm. Thus, Habermas’s conception of the public sphere was born out of the bourgeois society with a new form of sociability. This transformation resulted in the separation of the society from the state and the private from the public.³⁶⁶ The formation of the public sphere necessitated the conception of the state as an “impersonal locus of authority.”³⁶⁷ A rational-critical discourse could only emerge in a society in which the educated elite perceived itself “as constituting the public” and thus institutionalized “a set of interests and an opposition between the state and society.”³⁶⁸

³⁶² Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, 19.

³⁶³ Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, 19.

³⁶⁴ Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, 21.

³⁶⁵ Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, 29-30.

³⁶⁶ Calhoun, “Habermas and the Public Sphere,” 7.

³⁶⁷ Calhoun, “Habermas and the Public Sphere,” 8.

³⁶⁸ Calhoun, “Habermas and the Public Sphere,” 9.

Habermas's theory of public sphere was embraced, discussed, and applied to various historical contexts. Of particular importance to this dissertation is how his theory was expanded to places and periods which did not experience the development of bourgeois liberal institutions following the European trajectory. One of the initial attempts to interpret Habermas's theory within the context of the nineteenth century belongs to Geoff Eley. Discussing the condition of civil society in Russia, Geoff Eley argues that contrary to the historical development of European institutions over time, Russian civil society was backward, and this left the state in isolation from any outer force, which would eventually be toppled down by a revolutionary force. Labelled as the "counterexample," the Russian case stands out with its lack of civil society and necessary institutions vis-à-vis a strong state.³⁶⁹

As for the Ottoman context, Şerif Mardin was the first scholar to discuss the question of civil society in the Ottoman empire. Originally published in 1969, Mardin's "Power, Civil Society and Culture in the Ottoman Empire" set the agenda for discussing the Ottoman civil society. The central idea in Mardin's approach is a comparison between the Western and Eastern experiences of the formation of civic society. Insinuating that the Ottoman system fell under the category of "Eastern despotism" as opposed to Western feudalism, Mardin bases his analysis on two major assumptions: the lack of intermediary structures, particularly in the pre-modern era and the ambiguous positioning of the Young Ottoman intellectuals in their dealings with the European ideas.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁹ Eley, "Nations, Publics," 324. Geoff Eley justifies his argument by claiming for the need, and therefore its lack in autocratic societies, of a precondition which would allow the emergence of public sphere. This he explains as follows: "public sphere presumed the prior transformation of social relations, their condensation into new institutional arrangements, and the generation of new social, cultural, and political discourse around this changing environment." Eley, "Nations, Publics," 290.

³⁷⁰ Mardin, "Power, Civil Society."

Providing a Marxist definition of civil society and taking on a sociological perspective, Mardin identifies a sharp contrast between the Western and Eastern practices. Arguing that civil society was non-existent in the Ottoman Empire, Mardin distinguished the main reason as the lack of structures which would function independently from the government, and which were based on property rights. Thus, Mardin explains the transformation of the nineteenth century Ottoman society through the existence of a gap between the center and periphery, between the elite and the commoner.³⁷¹ “Ottoman citizens stood in a direct rather than a mediated relationship to the supreme authority” and the missing link in this relation was the civil society.³⁷²

Arguing against the “culturally determined ‘stasis’ of the Ottoman society” and the absence of civil society, Reşat Kasaba traces the development of the civil society in the Western Anatolian region.³⁷³ According to Kasaba, the coastal cities in Western Anatolia, and particularly İzmir, contributed to the development of civil society in the Ottoman Empire. The underlying reasons for this regional transformation were, according to Kasaba, the accumulation of wealth and a relatively free environment far away from the control mechanisms of the central government. Following the integration of the port cities into world economy, the cultural and economic developments resulted in the formation of private entities with independent means to power.³⁷⁴ Exemplifying these developments with the Greek communities living in Western Anatolia, Kasaba’s analysis is limited within the confines of a specific geography and of a specific group.

³⁷¹ His center-periphery approach was an influential theory for the Ottoman historiography, particularly in explaining the transformation of the state and society in the upcoming decades.

³⁷² Mardin, “Power, Civil Society,” 279.

³⁷³ Kasaba, “A Time and a Place,” 208.

³⁷⁴ Kasaba, “Economic Foundations” 82.

Nadir Özbek, in his study on the philanthropic activities during the Hamidian Era rejects the argumentation about the lack of civil society in the Ottoman Empire and proposes a conceptualization of modernity as a global and shared process which is closely related to and dependent upon “the historical context of power relations.”³⁷⁵ Özbek situates the nineteenth century state-society relations within power relations and lends support to the attempts at extending Habermas’s ideas into different contexts, particularly into late-imperial and monarchical structures. Situating the notion of public sphere within the autocratic Hamidian Era, Özbek underlines that the ruling elite could instrumentalize public and civic activities in order to legitimize their rule, to create consent and eventually reproduce hegemony.³⁷⁶ As a result of the emphasis on the manifestations of power through symbolic gestures in public and the accompanying discursive forms, Özbek claims to move away from the dichotomy between an autocratic regime and the existence of public sphere.

Notwithstanding the fact that aid to Ottoman soldiers during the Balkan Crisis is not by itself an explanatory category to argue for the existence of the public sphere in the Ottoman Empire, the discussion on the topic is still relevant for analyzing the phenomenon. As stated above, mobilization provided grounds for the alignment of the state and society which resulted in the expansion of civil initiatives. This campaign was articulated by the Ottoman government as a voluntary act and resonated the Tanzimat Edict’s language. Such characteristics allow for labelling the phenomenon as a collective negotiation. The state needed to mobilize its resources, and the accompanying rhetoric was carefully constructed. Such interaction between

³⁷⁵ Özbek, “Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism,” 61.

³⁷⁶ Özbek, “Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism,” 63.

the governmental policies and the social reactions proves that the aid to Ottoman soldiers was a mediated process. If one is to approach the period from a strictly Habermasian perspective, or from within a preconception about the lack of economic and political development, one may fail to reveal the complexity and the entangled transformation that the process contained. Therefore, instead of applying Habermas's perspective, it seems more beneficial to adopt a stance which allows for a different conceptualization of the philanthropic efforts of Ottoman society.

Three studies are particularly illustrative in suggesting that civil initiatives could flourish under autocratic regimes, which do not follow the European, liberal, capitalist trajectory. Linking the development of the Russian associations to the administrative, legal and educational reforms and underlining the development of press and an art market, Joseph Bradley in his study on the Russian voluntary associations, is cautious in stressing the fact that the Russian subjects did not have the "rights that undergirded civil society in the West" and that there were "no institutional guarantors" of civil society canonized in Western political thought."³⁷⁷ By examining certain voluntary associations, however, which paved the way for the formation of the civil society in Russia, Bradley underlines that these associations had "legal recognition, imperial patronage, and a system of rules and bureaucratic practices [which] gave them a certain tutelary protection."³⁷⁸ Positing the Russian civil society as an entity created by the state, Bradley states that the society "saw their role as collaborating with the authorities and assisting the state in the achievement of mutual objectives."³⁷⁹

³⁷⁷ Bradley, "Associations and the Development," 21.

³⁷⁸ Bradley, "Associations and the Development," 22.

³⁷⁹ Bradley, "Associations and the Development," 36-37.

This perspective is important in underlining that a collaboration between the state and the society could result in civil initiatives which in Bradley's words "signify the potential for the self-organization of society" and enhance individual identities, provide "autonomy, and choice and ... new group solidarities and venues where sociability merged with education, science and philanthropy."³⁸⁰ Thus this dissertation posits that the practice of aid allowed for engaging with an imperial identity and created venues of sociability and group solidarity.

One important contribution of Bradley's research into the associations of the late imperial Russia is the fact that the collaboration between the state and the civil initiatives was not without frictions. While the Russian governments relied on the expertise and activities of the associations, they at the same time tried to curb their activities, making sure they did not contradict with state policy and rhetoric.³⁸¹ A similar tension is clearly traceable in the Ottoman aid campaign. The Ottoman government's need of relief work eventually resulted in the state attempt to curb, control and redefine some of the aid initiatives.

Another revisionist contribution to the literature on the relation between the state, the press and the associational life is by Abigail Green. Green, in her article about the German press, underlines the dynamic relation and interaction between the German state and the press and relates her study with the research on the role of the state officials in the German associations during the nineteenth century. Defying the confrontational and oppositional character of the press and the state in Habermas's theory, Green narrates the complicated and intertwined history of the nineteenth century press in Germany by narrating the interaction between state policy, public opinion, censorship and the political developments. Her contribution lies at the

³⁸⁰ Bradley, "Associations and the Development," 37.

³⁸¹ Bradley, "Associations and the Development."

intersection between government press policy and the emerging public sphere. Rather than rejecting official press as a mechanism which only spreads pro-government polemic, Green highlights the importance of government press management in the expansion of the public and its effects on public opinion.³⁸² She argues that when official newspapers aimed at disseminating comprehensive and up-to-date information, they were widely read and cited as a source by other newspapers.³⁸³ Underlining the German governments' awareness of the potential biases in news publication, Green posits that they were greatly involved in the "dissemination of pro-government news through the non-official press" thus enabling the "governments to influence public opinion discreetly."³⁸⁴ The Ottoman press during the Balkan Crisis provides ample evidence of the preoccupation of the governments with disseminating information and spreading the patriotic aid rhetoric.

In addition to the state efforts in managing foreign press publications, similar measures were implemented within the Ottoman domains. It should also be noted that despite the low numbers of literacy and circulation, during times of armed conflict, the newspapers served as the primary medium for the people to follow the news. Thus, while it is hard to pinpoint this argument statistically, it may be presumed that the demand for newspapers increased during the Balkan Crisis.³⁸⁵ While censorship and the difficulties of transportation may have hindered the spread of newspapers, it is safe to assume an increasing interest in newspapers for following the political and military developments at the urban centers and particularly in the

³⁸² Green, "Intervening in the Public Sphere," 164.

³⁸³ Green, "Intervening in the Public Sphere," 167.

³⁸⁴ Green, "Intervening in the Public Sphere," 169.

³⁸⁵ In fact, censorship did not only target newspapers, but coffeehouses were shut down as part of policing measures in 1875. Stambolski narrates that a coffeehouse in Şehzadebaşı, which he frequented to read some of the Ottoman language newspapers, was shut down by the officials. This event was followed by subsequent censorship measures on newspapers. Stambolski writes that both the newspapers and the coffeehouses supported oppositional ideas. Stambolski, *Bir Osmanlı Hekiminin Anıları*, 273.

capital. Taking the inspiration from Green, it is possible to argue that while the official press hindered the development of a free press, both entities eventually influenced each other.³⁸⁶ Green proposes that this process resulted in “a more open attitude towards releasing information” by the government. The fact that the relief campaign was published with reference to the Ottoman imperial identity and the notion of consent was underlined predominantly, shows that there existed a brief period in which the notion of consent circulated among the newspaper readers of the Ottoman Empire. It should also be underlined that the Ottoman governments consulted to press publication in bolstering participation. There is ample evidence to state efforts in publicizing relief efforts through newspapers.

The third approach which illustrates collaboration and interaction between the state mechanism and the public expressions is Özbek’s study. As mentioned above, his analysis rests on the idea that the ruling elite could adopt symbolic and public gestures and support civil initiatives despite its authoritarian characteristic.

Enthronement of Abdülhamid II and the major war with Russia resulted in a transformation of the relief efforts. This transformation included the curbing down of the initiatives of the constitutionalists, yet the Sultan did not refrain from engaging in and supporting relief efforts. The establishment of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society and their philanthropic activities were executed under imperial patronage. The fact that he supported the semi-official Ottoman Red Crescent Society while at the time hindering the *Hediye-i Askeriyye Cemiyeti* seems to be in line with Özbek’s proposition that the “social and political transformations of the nineteenth century constituted state-society relations contingent on power relations”³⁸⁷ and the changing dynamics with respect to the aid to Ottoman soldiers may be analyzed as a

³⁸⁶ Green, “Intervening in the Public Sphere,” 171.

³⁸⁷ Özbek, “Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism,” 62.

manifestation of a power struggle during the turbulent years of the Balkan Crisis.

Such an elaboration necessitates a brief overview of how one of the most influential philosophers, Michel Foucault, interpreted power and governmentality.

Situating the relational aspect of power at the center of his theory, Michel Foucault identifies three categories - power relations, relations of communication and objective capacities – as the main spheres of social interaction. Foucault emphasizes that these three categories are not separate entities but are shaped by each other. He argues against a final equilibrium between these three categories and instead proposes that “there are diverse forms, diverse places, diverse circumstances or occasions in which these interrelationships establish themselves according to a specific model.”³⁸⁸ His emphasis on the multiplicity of the context in which relations of power are defined is illuminating when discussing the transformation of social practices and the discourse which surrounds them. Similar to his rejection of a final equilibrium, social practices and state regulations surrounding aid efforts kept changing throughout the period of 1875 to 1878. Situated within the tumult of political transition - the overthrowing of the government and the imposition of a new political regime - philanthropic expressions became the bedrock of mobilization, went beyond the established patterns, and were molded in the creation of new modes of sociability which inferred changes in established power relations.

Rejecting an overarching and imposing notion of power Foucault puts forth that “power exists only when it is put into action” and that it “is not a function of consent.”³⁸⁹ Power according to him “can be the result of a prior or permanent

³⁸⁸ Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 786-787. Foucault labels the institutions as “blocks” within this system, in which certain disciplines are constructed and the disciplining of the European societies since the eighteenth century happened through processes of adjustment between “productive activities, resources of communication, and the play of power relations.” Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 788.

³⁸⁹ Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 788.

consent, but it is not by nature the manifestation of a consensus.”³⁹⁰ What defines a relationship of power is the fact that it acts upon others’ actions and the exercise of power is a “total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions.”³⁹¹

Foucault’s conceptualization of power relations in such a manner seems to offer fruitful interpretation of the power dynamics in the period of analysis. What becomes crystalized in popular gestures and linguistic symbols such as the meeting of volunteers outside Mithad Paşa’s mansion, or the chanting of the word “*vatan*” in the streets after the staging of “*Vatan Yahud Silistre*”, for example, are ultimately challenges to the existing power relations. They should be regarded less of acts of subversion than attempts to reconfigure power relations. They do not necessarily represent a systematic or an ideologically well-defined oppositional movement but rather reveal a moment of challenge to the existing modes of governmentality³⁹² as understood within a particular segment of Ottoman society. The power relations, which according to Foucault are “rooted deep in the social nexus, not reconstituted ‘above’ society”³⁹³ undergo an intense reformulation during this period of social and political turmoil. The increasing activities of the Young Ottomans, the socio-cultural effects of the Tanzimat identity and ideals, the contentions about the government and the imminent danger of war contributed to the expanding agitation among the urban populations of the Empire. The allure of patriotism not only made possible certain experimentations -such as the incorporation of modern genres into mobilization and the creation of patriotic aid circles - within the society and among the ruling elite but also resulted in the implementation of provisional mechanisms -enrollment of non-

³⁹⁰ Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 783.

³⁹¹ Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 789.

³⁹² Foucault’s use of the term governmentality is not limited to the political administrative usage of the term, but it defines a process in which individual or group actions are directed.

³⁹³ Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 791.

Muslims and softas in the army- which had the potential of redefining and regulating subjecthood.

3.1.3 Defining the term civil

The term civil is not part of the vocabulary of the aid to Ottoman soldiers, however, a brief discussion on the ways in which it is discussed in the literature is necessary for the purpose of highlighting different approaches before elaborating on the details of the aid campaign. Arguing that the Ottoman Empire lacked the necessary intermediary structures required for the emergence of a civil society, Mardin equates the term civil (*sivil*) with civilization (*medenî*).³⁹⁴ Mehmet Alkan on the other hand argues that the term civil was used as the antonym of the military order initially and that in time it came to signify a realm that is outside state conduct and is relatively free of state intervention.³⁹⁵ The notion of civility, the phenomenon of public sphere, even the notion of the public has been debated from various perspectives. Yet the difficulty in pinpointing a precise definition also partly stems from the varied usages of the term throughout the nineteenth century.

The Redhouse English-Ottoman dictionary of 1856 defines the term civilian as “*başibozuk, askerden olmayan*” (someone not part of the military) and other dictionaries of the period propose similar definitions.³⁹⁶ The term *mülki* is used to define the institutions which are not military. Most common example is the use of the terms *askeri mektep* and *mülki mektep*, the first term meaning an educational facility located within the military structure and the latter implies that the institution is not

³⁹⁴ Mardin, “Sivil Toplum,” 9.

³⁹⁵ Alkan, “Osmanlı’da Cemiyetler Çağı,” 238.

³⁹⁶ Redhouse, *An English and Turkish Dictionary* (1856).

situated outside the military structure. Complicating the matter further, is the fact that the term *mülki* has come to signify the state in the recent years.

The use of military as a marker of civility is reflective of the classical Ottoman order and the state approach in differentiating between what is military and what is not military seems to follow this tradition. Ahmed Midhat's definition of the term civil is very illustrative and sheds light on how the term was used in the nineteenth century Ottoman context. He underlines that the term civil signifies a relation with the city and the urban sphere in Europe, but that the term is used with reference to not being connected to the military realm in the Ottoman domains.³⁹⁷ Throughout this dissertation, the term "civil" is used to highlight the non-involvement of state in relation to relief efforts and "civic" with reference to the urban sphere. While the term civil, and the notion of civility is used in connection with the non-military sphere in the Ottoman Empire during the period, the practices, which may retrospectively be labelled as civil and to a certain extent civic, are evident in the aid efforts of the period.

3.1.4 The actors of aid to Ottoman soldiers

The initial phase of the Crisis, starting with the uprising in Herzegovina until the declaration of the Russo-Ottoman War, witnessed civil aid initiatives by diverse groups. The role of Salonica, in the initial phase of the relief campaign are in line with Reşat Kasaba's argumentation about the leading role of the port cities, yet the findings of this research shows that Kasaba's analysis need to be extended in a way as to include the other groups in the aid initiatives other than the non-Muslim merchants of the port cities. Not only Jews and Muslim bureaucrats were involved in

³⁹⁷ Quoted in Alkan, "Osmanlı'da Cemiyetler Çağı," 197.

the philanthropic efforts, but the wives of the Ottoman bureaucrats were also an important part of the phenomenon.

Tracing the philanthropic activities among the urban elites and particularly Muslims of position and wealth, Mestyan posits that there existed “a networked urban, elite culture” during the nineteenth century and that they formed the backbone of Muslim bourgeois.³⁹⁸ Mestyan divides the upper strata of the Ottoman society into two groups; the bourgeois aristocracy and the urban professionals. The high bourgeois-aristocracy in his formulation includes the Ottoman ruling dynasties and the high administration who used their positions for capitalist enterprises.³⁹⁹ The second group within this category is the Muslim provincial notables and the third group is composed of high-ranking bureaucrats, wealthy merchants, high ranking military personnel, bankers and rich doctors.⁴⁰⁰

Notwithstanding the vexed debates on the existence of bourgeois in the late Ottoman Empire, the findings of this dissertation contribute to the notion that the groups belonging to the upper strata of Ottoman society were enmeshed in philanthropic networks and that various groups in position of power and prestige were involved in the collective effort of aiding the Ottoman soldiers during the Balkan Crisis. The urban layer or the middle groups in Mestyan’s labelling, were the smaller lawyers, doctors, merchants, craftsmen in guilds, middle-ranking soldiers, teachers and lesser scholars of religion were all involved in the aid efforts.⁴⁰¹ The cooperation between these two groups or their alignment in “middle-class Western practices” as Mestyan suggests is particularly visible in the appropriation of cultural practices into the aid campaign.

³⁹⁸ Mestyan, “The Muslim Bourgeoisie.”

³⁹⁹ Mestyan, “The Muslim Bourgeoisie,” 214.

⁴⁰⁰ Mestyan, “The Muslim Bourgeoisie,” 215-216.

⁴⁰¹ Mestyan, “The Muslim Bourgeoisie,” 216.

Julia Cohen's study reveals the ways in which the Jewish community appropriated the language of the Tanzimat and took on duties which the imperial subjecthood necessitated.⁴⁰² The Balkan Crisis served as the "first opportunity [for Ottoman non-Muslims] to put their newfound citizenship into practice"⁴⁰³ and the Jewish community participated both in the donation campaign and in the volunteer units. Their participation in the *iâne* campaign is particularly visible in Salonica and the monetary donations for the war cause was followed by the participation of Jews in the volunteer units. The volunteers, as will be explained below, participated in the war effort and acted as civic guard units. These contributions were discussed in the Ladino press by emphasizing patriotic duty and support to the Ottoman government. Cohen interprets this as an opportunity of visibility for the Jewish community and an expression of their patriotic belonging to the Empire.⁴⁰⁴

The Jewish community was not alone in supporting the Ottoman government through the turbulent times. The Armenians, the Greeks and the softas all participated in the mobilization by donating money, items and their lives for the Ottoman cause. The period witnessed a collective action of diverse groups, including the migrant communities, provincial notables, non-Muslim communities, non-Ottoman residents, the state elites of almost every denominator and the Ottoman Muslims.⁴⁰⁵ The rhetoric tool for uniting such a diversity rested on the realization of the imperial Ottoman identity, *Osmanlılık*.

⁴⁰² Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*, 13.

⁴⁰³ Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*, 15.

⁴⁰⁴ Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*, 32.

⁴⁰⁵ Kasaba argues that a collective political action, particularly by the nonstate actors, was not possible due to the variety of cultural, economic and social divergence. Kasaba, "A Time and a Place," 223-224. While his discussion revolved around the possibility of posing a challenge to the established order, the mobilization of the Balkan Crisis acted as a catalyzer resulting in the collective action in support of the Ottoman state.

3.1.5 From supranationalism to proto-nationalism: *Osmanlılık* during the aid campaign

In his article on Ottomanism, Akşin Somel proposes a periodization of the ideology of Ottomanism. According to Somel, Ottomanism was initially a series of pragmatic practices, which was later transformed into an ideology from 1868 onwards.

Separating the state practice of Ottomanism from the ideological perspective of the Young Ottoman movement, Somel argues that initially Ottomanism was linked with the centralization reforms.⁴⁰⁶ Defining the initial period of Ottomanism as a response to the separatist movements, Somel argues that during the Tanzimat period, this ideology had an authoritarian component deriving from the traditional conceptualization of the Ottoman state.

The Reform Edict of 1856 was a turning point in Ottomanism, with the emphasis on the notion of equality among the subjects. The defining characteristic of the second phase, Constitutionalist Ottomanism, was an intellectual engagement with Ottomanism and the merging of it with constitutionalist ideas.⁴⁰⁷ The first Ottoman Constitution embodied the official articulation of Ottomanism and defined the requirement of being an *Osmanlı*. Davison, on the other hand, interprets Ottomanism as one of the responses of the Ottoman ruling elite to the growing nationalist ideologies. Equality of all Ottoman subjects irrespective of their creed would serve as a barrier against separatist movements.⁴⁰⁸ The Citizenship Law of 1869, or the Educational Reform Act of 1869 envisioned the equality of the Ottoman subjects.

Challenging the above-mentioned state-oriented approaches to Ottomanism, recent historiography has focused on the perception, appropriation and the interaction

⁴⁰⁶ Somel, “Osmanlı Reform Çağında Osmanlıcılık,” 88.

⁴⁰⁷ Somel, “Osmanlı Reform Çağında Osmanlıcılık,” 104.

⁴⁰⁸ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 39.

between various groups of the Ottoman society and the state in defining and shaping the Tanzimat reforms in general and Ottomanism in particular. Cohen's study reveals how the Jewish community appropriated the imperial identity and viewed their participation in Ottoman patriotism as a struggle with other ethno-religious groups.⁴⁰⁹ Yaşar Tolga Cora's research, by exemplifying the history of the local Armenian elites of Erzurum, posits that Ottomanism came into being through "a set of relations between imperial bureaucrats, local authorities and local power holders" and that certain reforms of the imperial center converged with the aims of Armenian local notables, as a result of which the notables became the agents in enacting these reform projects.⁴¹⁰ Analyzing the reforms enacted in the Danube province by Midhat Paşa, Milen Petrov describes how the provincial administration promoted Ottomanism and how the reforms sought to create a belonging to the empire through Ottomanism, among both elites and non-elites.⁴¹¹ Hannes Grandits in his research on the Ottoman Bosnia, concurrently posits that Ottomanism was framed through an allegiance to the Ottoman sultan and what he calls the "Sultan cum Ottomanism" was the "predominant way of how politics was framed" during the end of the Ottoman rule in Bosnia.⁴¹²

These studies suggest that Ottomanism resonated among the populations of the Empire in diverse ways and that different groups appropriated this concept throughout the Tanzimat Period. Taking the inspiration from this approach, this dissertation aims to display how both the state and the society embraced Ottomanism throughout the Balkan Crisis and how the heritage of this imperial identity and the Tanzimat order came to define the ways of mobilization and shaped its rhetoric. As

⁴⁰⁹ Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*.

⁴¹⁰ Cora, "Transforming," 51-52.

⁴¹¹ Petrov, "Tanzimat."

⁴¹² Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 41.

the analysis on the *iâne* campaign and the formation of the volunteer units, particularly the mixed units, will evince, Ottomanism was embraced by the state and society at a specific historical conjuncture.

It was instrumentalized as a state mechanism to increase participation in the mobilization campaign, to ward off foreign pressure, to prevent any further insurgence and to present an alternative to the dominant negative image of the irregulars. Equally important is the political atmosphere which included growing Muslim resentment and thus Ottomanism served as an expression of the state that it continued to adhere to the Tanzimat ideals. At the same time the excitement about constitutionalism created an added impetus for the Ottoman society and particularly for the elites to embrace and campaign in support of Ottomanism. Additionally, the ways in which Ottomanism was articulated by different groups exposes that the period witnessed a transition from a supra-national ideology to a proto-nationalist discourse.⁴¹³ It is imperative to underline that these arguments need to be perceived within the context of a mobilization campaign, which witnessed both internal unrest and a war with Russia. The political developments, particularly the ways in which the unrests in the Balkans were picked up by international press and European representatives served for the deepening of certain social and religious cleavages among Ottoman society. This must have forced some of the non-Muslim Ottoman subjects to embrace and demonstrate their imperial belonging.

Even though the dominant language of mobilization was patriotic Ottomanism, not all individuals contributed to the campaign with similar motivations. As will be demonstrated below, while Jews from Salonica articulated their volunteering as an expression of their Ottoman identity, others viewed their

⁴¹³ Deringil, *The Well-protected Domains*, 45.

participation in the volunteer units of Altunizade Efendi as a chance for desertion. Other groups, such as Circassians and Kurds were mobilized through religious motifs. Notwithstanding the multiplicity of motivations and subjective identifications, Ottomanism turned out to be a dominant narrative among certain groups.

3.1.6 Young Ottomans

Rejecting a class based approach, Nazan Çiçek treats the Young Ottomans as a group of intellectuals who represented a new consciousness responding to the changes happening around them.⁴¹⁴ Describing the main venues of their struggle as civilization, modernity, reforms, and the Eastern Question, Çiçek posits that as a result of their endeavors they created “a new set of values, a sense of objectivity and professionalism.”⁴¹⁵ Aiming to save the empire from the gripping problems, they were critical of the Tanzimat administration, particularly Fuad Paşa and Âli Paşa. Another resentment which bonded the Young Ottomans was the position of the Empire vis-à-vis revolts and the international pressure.⁴¹⁶ Cretan uprising was formative in the thinking of the Young Ottomans, for it provided them with the opportunity to publicly discuss the state policies and propagate their opinions. Young Ottoman thinking revolved around the rejection of foreign intervention and support for a military solution on the Cretan issue. They regarded the Cretan uprising as an exemplary case which had the potential to expose the might of the Ottoman Empire, and they became leading figures in establishing new forms of public mobilization which would continue into the period of the Balkan Crisis. While the aid campaign

⁴¹⁴ Çiçek, *The Young Ottomans*, 27.

⁴¹⁵ Çiçek, *The Young Ottomans*, 30.

⁴¹⁶ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 175.

of the Cretan revolt was limited, it nevertheless allowed them to experiment with new ways of pursuing philanthropic goals and instigating a reactionary debate over the press.

Among their many achievements, theater proved particularly important during the Balkan Crisis. Namık Kemal's play *Vatan* took on a special meaning during the Balkan mobilization and performances of *Vatan* did not only serve to bolster the patriotic feelings of the residents of the capital but was also integrated into the aid campaign. Their intellectual burden to create solutions was merged with modernity and the increasing European pressure, both politically and intellectually. In addition to literary genres, their involvement in press was outstanding and it was through press that they raised their criticism towards the government and proposed their ideas to their readers. Having founded independent journalism in the Turkish language, two figures, Şinasi⁴¹⁷ and Namık Kemal stand out with respect to the evolution of the Turkish press.

Despite the fact that there is doubt about their outreach in the literature,⁴¹⁸ the relief campaign during the Balkan Crisis proves that the Young Ottomans did reach out to people, especially people in the major urban centers and their activities were formative in the relief efforts and the formation of volunteer units.⁴¹⁹ Their literary

⁴¹⁷ İbrahim Şinasi Efendi (1826-1871) was the leading figure in Ottoman newspaper publishing and the dissemination of Europeanization ideas among the Ottoman intellectuals. Regarded as the intellectual mentor of the Young Ottomans, Şinasi's newspaper, *Tasvîr-i Efşkâr*, turned into an intellectual forum and Mardin identifies him as "the first private exponent of [Europeanization.]" Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 252.

⁴¹⁸ Çiçek makes the following comment about the outreach of the Young Ottomans; Young Ottomans were "active social mobilizers who believed they were appealing to a general public – even though in fact such public might not have existed." Çiçek, *The Young Ottomans*, 27.

⁴¹⁹ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 219. Karal identifies that the Young Ottomans' engagement in press was the driving factor behind the public enthusiasm when the Principalities declared war on the Ottoman Empire. Karal narrates that there were public performances all around the capital and the residents of the capital were engaged in raising donations and forming voluntary units. This was made possible, Karal implies, by the Young Ottomans. Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, v. VIII, 16.

production and their efforts in creating a public opinion contributed to the precepts of the campaign.

3.1.7 Public opinion

Roderic Davison explains the three characteristics of the Young Ottomans as; emphasis on equality and Ottomanism, Ottoman patriotism, and a desire for reform.⁴²⁰ These defining characteristics were coupled with their desire to create and influence public opinion.⁴²¹ Şinasi's belief in the people's right to information, was embraced by the Young Ottomans and was particularly influential among those who were involved in newspaper publishing. It is no coincidence that in the *Special Issue* (*Fevkalade Nüsha*) of *Muhbir* which was published to collect donations, the first article underlines the benefits of newspaper publishing both for aid work and for society at large.⁴²²

Namık Kemal viewed public opinion, along with law, as the major constituent of the society and state. Namık Kemal celebrated the re-publication of *İbret* newspaper as an expression of the importance of law and public opinion in the Ottoman domains. Law was not in itself enough, for there had to be public opinion which had the potential to resist any oppositional force. The three requirements for ending the troubles of the Ottomans, according to Namık Kemal were, obeying the Islamic law, following the state regulations and believing in the power of public opinion. When these features would combine with the love of the fatherland, they

⁴²⁰ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 195-196.

⁴²¹ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 219. For Şinasi's ideas on public opinion, see Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, chapter 8.

⁴²² *Muhbir*, no. 28. March 4, 1876.

would construct the building blocks of the imperial Ottoman identity (*Osmanlılık*), and the outcome would ensure a positive future for all Ottomans.⁴²³

Mardin identifies the dual origins of Namık Kemal's philosophy as Rousseau and Islamic law and claims that this duality was a problematic feature of his thinking. When formulating his political theory, one of Kemal's aims was to "devise some means by which ultimate reference in matters of government would be the will of the community while still remaining true to Islamic principles."⁴²⁴ The main instrument to achieve this aim and the formation of the public opinion, was the press.

3.1.9 Press and mobilization

The critical role of press in the creation and shaping of public opinion is obvious, yet research into the donation campaign reveals that the physical space of the press bureau and the individuals working in the printing offices were also significant for the establishment of the relief network, especially prior to the state effort of centralizing donation. In the Cretan donation campaign, famine relief and the Balkan Crisis, it was the Ottoman press, published both in Ottoman and other languages, which initiated aid campaigns, advertised them and managed practical matters. Moreover, during times of crises, press publications contributed to the creation of an "imperial imagining" and a sense of belonging. This is particularly evident during the Balkan Crisis. Newspapers predominantly narrated war news and advertised aid to Ottoman soldiers. Special issues incorporated patriotic verses, prose and theater pieces and they provided additional monetary funding for the war cause.

⁴²³ Kemal, "İfade-i Meram." It was originally published in *İbret*. For the transliteration, see Aydoğdu and Kara, *Namık Kemal*, 134-140.

⁴²⁴ Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 296. See the chapter on Namık Kemal for Mardin's elaborate analysis on his political philosophy.

Much has been written about the role of press in disseminating ideologies, the creation of an imagined community in the Ottoman Empire and the ways in which press functioned in reflecting diplomatic relations.⁴²⁵ Benedict Anderson's seminal work on the creation of imagined communities in the construction of nationalism and the pivotal role of print capitalism within this process has been influential on studies on press and nationalism from its publication.⁴²⁶ The formation of the nation, as an "imagined political community" in Anderson's formulation necessitated the transformation of two cultural systems; the religious community and the dynastic realm.⁴²⁷ Linking the processes of vernacularization of texts, spread of print capitalism and the use of vernacular as the means of administrative centralization, Anderson identifies the "possibility of a new form of imagined community" by underlining the relationship between the nation states, national consciousness and print languages.⁴²⁸

While the aim of this dissertation is not to discuss the emergence of nationalism in the Ottoman Empire, Anderson's notion of imagining a unity proves useful in interpreting the role of press in volunteering and donating. As mentioned above, printing houses and publishers took on the responsibility of collecting and sending donations during the initial phase of the mobilization period. Thus, they served as agents linking the donor to the receiver. The receivers, i.e. the soldiers on

⁴²⁵ The following is a brief list of studies on Ottoman press, which fit into the framework of the period of this dissertation. For the Ottoman press during the Hamidian Era, see; Boyar, "The Press and the palace." For the ways in which Ottoman governments utilized press in their dealings, see Davison, "The Newspaper Press." For an overview of censorship policies, see Yosmaoğlu, "Chasing the Printed Word." For relation of the press and diplomacy, see Özcan, "Press and Anglo-Ottoman Relations." For the role of press in Young Ottoman thought, see Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*; Çiçek, *The Young Ottomans*; Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, Şiviloğlu, *Emergence of Public Opinion*.

⁴²⁶ For the impact and criticisms of Anderson's theory, see Calhoun, "The Importance of *Imagined Communities*"; Chakrabarty, "Nation and Imagination."

⁴²⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 12.

⁴²⁸ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 46.

the battlefield, may not have access to the newspapers, however, the donors could trace their contribution through publications and the newspaper indeed published articles on the materiality and the condition of donated items. Additionally, the newspapers regarded it important to publish the letters of the volunteers, particularly the non-Muslim volunteers to strengthen the emotional and the imaginary links between the two parties. Whether the letters were fabricated or not is a question that may never be answered. Yet the fact that the editor felt compelled to making such a publication suggests that they were indeed preoccupied with creating imaginary and emotional links between the subjects of the empire and those who fought for the empire in the front.

Equally important is their role in creating the rhetoric of aid. Articles on the necessity of aiding the Ottoman soldiers, the moral imperative in donating, definitions and categorization of aid allowed the Ottoman subjects to image themselves as part of a larger unit, sharing the same goals and eventually allowing them to define their actions within this context. When Basiretçi Ali narrated, in a “Letter of the City” (*Şehir Mektubu*) his encounter with an ordinary subject and conversed about aid, it created both a feeling of spontaneity, empire-wide unity and solidarity, which was made possible by the press and the sociability that the urban space allowed. So, the press contributed in the making of collective action, at least in the minds of the people who could read and have access to the newspapers. Such a depiction of the man on the street, or the woman in Basiretçi Ali’s case, participating in the donation campaign, may be interpreted as an additional push towards the “legitimation of the man in the street.”⁴²⁹ The fact that this process is exemplified in a relief campaign, is particularly valuable for reminding that despite the fact that

⁴²⁹ Mardin underlines this fact as an important factor in creating anti-elitist ideas through the journalism of the 1870’s. Mardin, “Power, Civil Society,” 276.

philanthropic efforts were largely carried out by the wealthy, the people in the street did also engage with such efforts, especially during times of armed conflict.

The fact that this was a period of crisis must have contributed to an increase in the demand for newspapers. In fact, Mehmet Arif underlines this fact in his memoir and states that everyone was following news through newspapers, particularly in the period right before the Russian war.⁴³⁰ He informs that military generals and state official alike were all anxiously waiting for the news through newspapers.⁴³¹ The circulation of *Basiret* was 10,000⁴³² and *İbret*'s daily circulation was a minimum of 12,000, except for the first issue which was published in 1872 with a circulation of 25,000.⁴³³ The circulation of *Takvîm-i Vekayi* ' was 5,000 in its early period.⁴³⁴ Despite the low number of literacy in the Ottoman Empire during the period, it is possible to suggest that in the urban centers the number of people who had access and the skills to read the newspapers was comparatively high. These individuals, particularly the residents of the capital, were either members of the decision-making elite or had access to elite circles. This is also evident from the state's efforts in publicizing certain philanthropic acts and the distribution of decorations because of these acts in the newspapers.

⁴³⁰ A similar argument is expressed by David Mackenzie about the Russian newspaper publication during the Balkan Crisis. According to Mackenzie, Russian periodical publications increased four times from 1855 to 1875. Influential St. Petersburg newspaper *Golos* reached a daily circulation of 22,632 copies in 1877. *Golos* had the greatest circulation number during the Balkan Crisis. Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 41. Onur İşçi underlines that *Golos* had become the "best-seller" in Russia by the time of the Russo-Ottoman War. İşçi, "Wartime Propaganda," 185. For a detailed comparative analysis of *Basiret* and *Golos* during the Russo-Ottoman War, see İşçi, "Wartime Propaganda."

⁴³¹ Mehmed Arif, *Başımıza Gelenler*, 81.

⁴³² Koloğlu, *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Basın*, 38; Yerlikaya, "Basiret," 29.

⁴³³ Koloğlu interprets the high number of circulations of its first issue in relation to the participation of the leading Young Ottomans, including Namık Kemal. Koloğlu, *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Basın*, 39.

⁴³⁴ Koloğlu, *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Basın*, 19; Yerlikaya, "Basiret," 29.

3.1.10 *Basiret* newspaper and the city

One of the leading newspapers of the period, *Basiret* published news articles, opinion pieces and news from foreign press during the Balkan Crisis. Its most significant contribution to mobilization, however, was its deep involvement in the *iâne* campaign. Ali Efendi, later known as Basiretçi Ali Efendi⁴³⁵ with reference to his newspaper, did not produce literary works, as was the case with Şinasi, Namık Kemal and Ahmed Mithat. He claims that his aim was to establish his own newspaper and his first attempt to step into the world of printing press was in 1868. Ali Efendi's petition to establish a newspaper was rejected by the Ottoman authorities on the premises that the Cretan uprising proved as a dangerous context to establish new newspapers.⁴³⁶ *Basiret*'s first issue had to wait until January 23, 1870, to be published.

Basiretçi Ali Efendi shared the same ideals with the leading literary figures of the time, one of which is to give voice to people and the newspaper represented the professionalization of journalism.⁴³⁷ With the participation of prominent Ottoman intellectuals, such as Halet Bey, Esad Efendi, Ahmet Midhat Efendi, Ali Suavi, and Namık Kemal, *Basiret* published articles on pan-Islamism and Ottomanism and engaged in polemics. Thus, *Basiret* did not refrain from political debates, and expressed anti-British and anti-Russian pieces, while at the same time raising a critical voice towards the Ottoman governments. Anti-Russian propaganda became

⁴³⁵ Basiretçi completed his education at the inner school of the imperial household, and retired from his official post in 1860, after which he travelled around the empire. Upon his return to the capital, after a brief service in the Ministry of Finance, he started working in *Takvîm-i Vekayi*, the official newspaper. He initially held the position of typesetter, finally achieving a position as an administrator. Sağlam, "Basiretçi Ali Efendi." By the time Ali Efendi established his own newspaper, he had the necessary skills, experience and network among the Ottoman bureaucracy.

⁴³⁶ Basiretçi Ali Efendi, *İstanbul'da Yarım Asırlık*.

⁴³⁷ İşçi, "Wartime Propaganda," 190; Koloğlu, *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Basın*, 37.

particularly prominent during the Balkan Crisis, and its publications on *İttihad-ı İslam* were instrumentalized as a measure against the pan-Slav propaganda.⁴³⁸

Basiretçi established a column titled *Şehir Mektupları*, to discuss the social problems pertaining to the capital, during a period in which most of the newspapers concentrated on foreign relations, stemming from the Franco-Prussian War.⁴³⁹ He claims that press should be concerned with “*ahval-i dahiliyye*” instead of “*ahval-i hariciyye*” and the societal problems that the Empire was faced with.⁴⁴⁰ Reflecting his ideas on educating the public, Basiretçi underlined the need for the Ottoman subjects to engage with the domestic issues instead of focusing on the foreign issues pertaining to the war. This is precisely the duty of the press, according to Basiretçi Ali Efendi, to inform and educate the people about the common needs of the Ottoman people. Linking modern press with progress and civilization, the first *Şehir Mektubu*, fastens upon the predominance of foreign news in other newspapers, labelling such practice as an obstacle in fulfilling the duty of serving the homeland (*hizmet-i vatan kaziyesinin tamami-i husulüne büyük mani*).⁴⁴¹

According to Ali Efendi, writing about domestic affairs was a patriotic duty (*havadis-i dahiliyeden bahsin lüzumu müsellemler olup bu yolda kalem oynatmak vatan ve ebna-yı vatana hizmet demek*)⁴⁴² and the second letter that he published focused on two issues which were the sole preoccupation of the capital: donations during

⁴³⁸ İşçi, “Wartime Propaganda,” 191.

⁴³⁹ In fact, *Basiret*’s articles on foreign affairs during the Franco-Prussian War, particularly the pro-German articles resulted in Basiretçi Ali’s visit to Germany and Bismarck’s support, including money and printing equipment. Ursinus; “Basiret”; Basiretçi Ali Efendi, *İstanbul’da Yarım Asırlık*, 76-83. İsmail Paşa of Egypt also supported *Basiret* with monetary aid in return for favorable publications. See Ursinus; “Basiret”; Basiretçi Ali Efendi, *İstanbul’da Yarım Asırlık*. These funds helped boost *Basiret*’s circulation.

⁴⁴⁰ Sağlam, *İstanbul Şehir Mektupları*.xi.

⁴⁴¹ Sağlam, *İstanbul Şehir Mektupları*, 4.

⁴⁴² Sağlam, *İstanbul Şehir Mektupları*, 4.

bayram and the mud covering the streets.⁴⁴³ Concern with the urban texture and charity work thus appeared as the sole preoccupation of residents of the capital, which exemplifies the aura of the period. Later in the Balkan Crisis, the letter column was incorporated into the mobilization campaign, discussing donations and volunteers. Letters as a genre have been identified as an example of modernity, an expression of the formation of individual identity and its intermingling with the urban transformation is indeed a telling characteristic.

As mentioned above, the urban centers were the main hubs for the growing phenomenon of philanthropy. Salonica and the capital were the two important centers in aiding the Ottoman soldiers during the Balkan Crisis. However, evidence suggests that similar aid efforts were initiated in various other cities such as Bursa, Erzurum, Trabzon, either in the form of collecting donations or hosting volunteer units. It is undisputable that the urban elites played an important role in these efforts. Yet, partial evidence suggests that people from the economically disadvantaged groups were also involved in these efforts. Women, for example sew soldiers clothing or helped prepare the necessary clothing materials. For this work, they commuted frequently to the city center, which made their efforts visible to the residents of the capital. The Compassion Bazaars in the port cities, the balls and theater performances contributed to the sociability of the urban residents, and they were physical expressions of patriotism embedded in the urban texture.

The imperial cities were also sites where “the material and ideological expressions of” a symbolic capital could “be accumulated, displayed, or obtained.”⁴⁴⁴ The elites, through their charitable activities could publicly display their claims for

⁴⁴³ Namık Kemal’s Ramadan Letter, one of the first letters to be published in a newspaper, defined the characteristics of the new genre and it set an example to other publishers and editors. It was published in *Tasvîr-i Efkar* during Ramadan in 1867. Sağlam, *İstanbul Şehir Mektupları*, iv-v.

⁴⁴⁴ Keene, “Cities and Empires,” 18-19.

cultural and symbolic capital and the ruling elite, in a similar manner, sought ways to express and assert their power over the distribution of symbolic capital. The attendance of the *Muzıka-yi Hümâyun* in the Ottoman Red Crescent charity event at Taksim Garden is thus both an expression of sultanic support for the philanthropic efforts and a venue for the elite to strengthen their position and symbolic capital. Other performative events such as the marches of the volunteer units around the city, incorporation of street lighting, flags, bands, marches and patriotic speeches reveal that volunteering and donating were not only experienced through newspapers, but they were also part and parcel of the urban texture and the daily lives of the residents. These events may be interpreted in correlation to the expansion of the urban middle class lifestyle. This lifestyle was in close relation to the expansion of an enthusiastic audience, keenly interested in social matters. Their interest stimulated them to take public action regarding social problems and hence created new definitions of social and cultural identifications.⁴⁴⁵

3.2 *İâne* campaign

The aid (*iâne*) campaign of the Balkan Crisis needs to be analyzed on two levels: that of the state and that of the public. Understanding the state perspective requires an analysis on the state discourse, practice and the ways of legitimizing and propagating. Public reaction to and contribution in the call for aid, on the other hand, needs to be analyzed by way of classifying the donations, identifying diverse ways of engagement with relief, with a particular emphasis on different networks and

⁴⁴⁵ Exertzoglou, “Medicine, Philanthropy” 250. For example, poverty as a social category was constructed during the nineteenth century and resulted in the expansion of a specific discourse in close relation to cultural identifications through philanthropy and social actions, and additionally to state measures such as policing and managing. See Özbek, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda İç Güvenlik,”; Özbek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Sosyal Devlet*.

patriotic circles. Not all the members of the Ottoman society perceived the donation campaign in the same manner, and the state allowed for a multiplicity of methods for collecting donations, albeit within limits. The creation of the patriotic ethos by the Ottoman state needs to be juxtaposed with the ways in which people lived and practiced that ethos.⁴⁴⁶

Tracing the history of *iâne* during the Crimean War, Cretan uprising, and the turbulent years of the Balkan Crisis, this section will highlight the roots of *iâne* and Ottoman mobilization, shedding light on the continuities and transformations involved in donations throughout different conflicts. The practice of donation will be interpreted on two levels: First, the state mechanism for funding the war effort and sustaining a functioning army will be described. Second, the social dynamics of the donation campaigns will be discussed by revealing the differences between people's contribution in the call for donations and the state's reaction to this process. This section argues that (1) limiting the *iâne* analysis by referring to its involuntary nature masks the multiple ways in which members of the society engaged with the campaign and aims to show that various dynamics such as class, profession, gender, geography/locality and ethnicity were key factors in the different facades of humanitarian activities of the Ottoman society. (2) State discourse and donation practices were not fixed but negotiated. (3) Society's participation rested upon a multiplicity of discursive practices showing the dynamic relation between relief work and patriotism. (4) Even though the Ottoman state issued compulsory *iâne* from time to time, *iâne* campaigns in fact involved a certain degree of voluntariness, or at least practices which were not necessarily included in the compulsory forms. (5) The

⁴⁴⁶ Lindenmeyr, in her article on the formation of the Russian civil society through an analysis on the People's Houses in late imperial Russia, underlines the importance of differentiating between discursive practices and their social resonances. Lindenmeyr, "Building Civil Society," 6.

Ottoman state limited relief mechanisms in certain cases, reflecting the state attitude towards the oppositional groups despite their contribution to the war effort. (6) *İâne* practices took on a particular form in the cities, which were embedded in the nineteenth century urban transformations, and which reflect both a contribution and a challenge to the structures of power and legitimacy in the imperial cities.

3.2.1 Making sense of the terminology: Definitions and uses of *iâne*, *hediye* and *hamiyyet*

A major challenge in researching into aid efforts was the difficulty in coming up with working definitions for the terminology. Was *iâne* used to refer to a compulsory mechanism or was it used with reference to individual agency in matters of aid? What was the difference between *iâne* and *hediye*? What did it mean for the state officials when they used the term in their call for aid? What exactly did *iâne* mean for the small trader? Could the pro-constitutionalist intellectuals have attempted to expand the meaning of the term? Complicating the matter further was how the secondary literature interpreted and translated the terminology. When confronted with other specific usages of the term, such as *iâne-i umûmiyye* and *iâne-i askeriyye*, it seems imperative to clarify the terminology and the specific historical contexts in which *iâne* was articulated, defined and translated. To this end, this section will initially chart down how major terms were defined in the various dictionaries and how they are conceptualized in the sources. The remaining historical analysis will reveal the ways in which aid was defined, implemented and propagated during the Balkan Crisis.

The ambiguity regarding the use of the term *iâne*, especially in the secondary literature, arises from a couple of interconnected factors which are the classical usage

of the term in relation to an extraordinary taxation practice, different uses of the term by the state and the society and its relation to the growing importance of aid and charity initiatives in the nineteenth century. In addition to these factors, the diversity of the actors involved in this process and their different motivations further complicate the picture.

The fact that *iâne* practice was exercised in various situations does not simplify the analysis. Along with regional *iâne* practices, in cases of armed conflict, natural disaster, and financial setback *iâne* campaigns were implemented throughout the empire. These empire-wide practices also included aid efforts from other states, international actors and institutions. Therefore, defining the terminology requires an in-depth and comparative analysis of some of the different uses of the term and situating this analysis within the larger framework.

Deriving from the Arabic root of ‘avn, *iâne* means assisting, help and aid. The dictionary entries for *iâne* remained mostly unchanged throughout the nineteenth century and used *yardım*, *muavenet*, *imdad* and *iâne* interchangeably.⁴⁴⁷ However, by the end of the century the definition of *iâne* seems to have expanded. In 1901 Şemseddin Sami Efendi’s definition of *iâne* in *Kamus-i Türki*, includes the act of collecting or donating money for a common cause or to provide aid for people or

⁴⁴⁷ The 1857 Redhouse defines *iâne* as “an assisting, helping.” See, Redhouse, *An English and Turkish dictionary* (1857), 468. *İanet* is defined as “yardım, muavenet etmek” in *Müntehabat*. See, Redhouse, *Müntehabât-ı lügât-ı Osmaniye* (1866). The French translation of *iâne* in Bianchi is “aider, assister.” See, Bianchi and Kieffer, *Dictionnaire Turc-Français* (1835), 57. The entry for aide in the 1843 edition uses similar words for its translation; “yardım, meded, avn, iânet, muavevet.” See, Bianchi, *Dictionnaire Français-Turc* (1843), 40. In the 1850 edition *iâne* is still translated as either “secuors, aide” or “aider, assister” depending on its grammatical form. See, Bianchi and Kieffer, *Dictionnaire Turc-Français* (1850). The term continued to be explained and translated along similar lines in the 1870’s. *Lehçe-i Osmani* (1876) does not have a separate entry for *iâne* but refers to *iâne* under the “yardım” entry. See, *Lehçe-i Osmani* (1876), 1217. Redhouse uses *iâne* as one of the translations of aid, along with “yardım, muavenet, imdad.” “Assist” and “assistance” are translated with the same terminology; “yardım, imdad, iâne, muavenet.” The entry for “help” again uses the same terminology “yardım, muavenet, iâne, imdad.” See, Redhouse, *Lexicon English and Turkish* (1877), 13, 46, 35.

groups in need.⁴⁴⁸ The inclusion of a collective act of giving and aiding may be interpreted as an outcome of the transformative change in matters of giving in the second half of the century, particularly the collective aid practices. These practices, which will be dealt with in detail in this section, reveal that the accumulation of aid practices resulted in the transformation of the term *iâne* to indicate collective action.

While the term signified aid and assistance in strictly lexicological terms, one of its specific usages, *iâne-i harbiyye* or *iâne-i cihâdiyye* is interpreted in relation to the Ottoman taxation system. Even though the term *iâne* means aid, when used in combination with other words, it represents a specific state practice. The roots of Ottoman *iâne-i cihâdiyye*, a phenomenon reserved for aid to Ottoman army and the state during times of armed conflict, is traced back to the pre-Tanzimat era and defined within the context of a temporary taxation, implemented in specific circumstances. This traditional root of *iâne* highlights the state's urgent financial needs in times of war or disaster and the temporary nature of *iâne* was always underlined.⁴⁴⁹ Born out of the principle of *avâriz*, *iâne-i cihâdiyye* had a slightly different implementation. Instead of designating the desired amount of money on tax units, it was designated regionally. Each province was given a pre-determined sum by the government, which would be divided among its residents according to their

⁴⁴⁸“(1)Yardım, imdad, akçe ile muavenet. (2) Bir fi'l-i hayr için ya umumi bir işi için veyahud musab ve muhtaç bir adam veya bir cemaat için verilen ve toplanılan akçe: iâne akçesi.” See, Şemseddin Sami Efendi, *Kamus-ı Türki*, 127.

⁴⁴⁹ Abdurrahman Vefik Sayın, in *Tekâlif Kavaidi*, categorizes these taxes under the category of *Tekâlif-i Örfiyye*. These include *imdadiyye-i seferiyye*, *imdadiyye-i hazariyye* and *iâne-i cihâdiyye*. The difference between *imdadiyye* taxes and *iâne*, according to Sayın, rests on the fact that *iâne-i cihâdiyye* was sent directly to the central administration. According to Sayın these taxes were abolished and put under the category of *Tanzimat-ı Hayriyye*. These taxes were determined by the central administration according to each districts' fiscal strength and districts could be subjected to these three taxes all at the same time. Sayın, on a separate article, argues that *iânât* was a general category including aid for the sufferers of disasters such as fires, deluge, earthquake and adds that *iânât* was abused by administrative officials and that there were various complaints about the application of *iânât*, which was one of the reasons for the declaration of Tanzimat. For Sayın's comments on *iâne* taxes see Sayın, *Tekâlif Kavaidi*. 96-99. For his comments on *iânât* see Sayın, *Tekâlif Kavaidi*, 115.

income.⁴⁵⁰ This method of assigning a regional pre-determined sum will be the basis for many of the *iâne* practices as will be demonstrated below. Resting on this traditional approach, some historians have labelled the nineteenth century *iâne* strictly as a form of tax.⁴⁵¹ Equating *iâne* practices with extraordinary taxation continued into the 1890s. Redhouse lexicon refers to *iâne-i cihâdiyye*, as a “supplementary tax imposed by the government in times of war.”⁴⁵²

The *iâne* campaign of the Balkan Crisis period, which was named *iâne-i harbiyye*,⁴⁵³ witnessed the imposition of a compulsory *iâne*, which followed the traditional method of defining the total amount of monetary aid according to each district’s fiscal strength. However, in addition to the compulsory *iâne*, the Ottoman society took on the responsibility of aid, expanding the methods and the discourse far beyond a pre-determined sum of contribution. Different groups engaged with and related to the aid campaign in various ways, with diverse motivations. The Ottoman state at the same time considered it important to underline the notion of voluntariness and founded its efforts on creating consent. This implies that the state-society relations underwent a significant change during the mobilization campaign.

Sayın comments that *iânât* was a specific temporary tax for the sufferers of natural disasters and due to the malpractice of Ottoman officials, this category was abolished during the Tanzimat reforms. The abolishment of *iânât* that Sayın underlines, however, can best be described as merely a name change. The Empire

⁴⁵⁰ Turgay, “İâne-i cihâdiyye,” 117-118.

⁴⁵¹ Candan Badem identifies the *iâne* of the Crimean War as a compulsory tax. See Badem, *Ottoman Crimean War*, 319. Analyzing the *iâne-i cihâdiyye* collected in Trabzon during the Crimean war, Turgay labels it as an extraordinary tax. See Turgay, “İâne-i Cihâdiyye,” 115-124. Arguing against labeling the donations of the Crimean War as merely an extraordinary tax, Cora reveals the ways in which the Armenians of Erzurum participated in the patriotic campaign, how they defined their contribution to the war effort and how loyalty was negotiated in this process. See Yaşar Tolga Cora “Providing Services,” 421-444.

⁴⁵² Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, 507.

⁴⁵³ *İâne-i cihâdiyye* and *iâne-i harbiyye* are used for the same practice however the transformation of the naming will be discussed in detail below.

continued to face natural disasters during which both the central government and the local authorities had to respond by organizing aid to sufferers under the term *iâne*.⁴⁵⁴ Other uses of the word *iâne*, such as *iâne-i umûmiyye* or *iâne-i askeriyye* also call for comments. *Îâne-i umûmiyye* is a specific monetary aid which aimed to collect money

⁴⁵⁴ Three cases of aid to sufferers of natural disasters during the 1860's and 1870's may be listed as examples. Mitilini (*Midilli*) was struck by an earthquake in March 1867 at a time when the Empire was enmeshed in an international crisis, which witnessed the incorporation of an international humanitarian discourse imbued with the threat of intervention. The island of Crete had been under serious unrest and the Ottoman government was already involved in military operations and aid work in Crete. Thus, the Ottoman Sultan was faced with conducting a two-fold relief in the empire, aid to Muslims in Crete and to the sufferers of the earthquake in Mitilini. Danubian and Edirne provinces provided monetary aid to the two communities in need without differentiating between them, revealing that *iâne* efforts could overlap. See BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 386/78. For aid to sufferers of the earthquake in Mitilini, See BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 387/79. The second case when *iâne* was initiated for the sufferers of a disaster was in 1870 when the Ottoman capital witnessed a devastating fire. Known as the great fire of Pera (*harik-i kebir*), it resulted in the destruction of more than three thousand buildings, and the death of hundreds of inhabitants. The government proposed multiple plans to rebuild the destroyed neighborhoods, which resulted in the protests of the property owners. See Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul*, 64-65. The government also responded by providing temporary accommodation and daily subsidies to the affected populations. See, Keyvanoğlu, "1870 Büyük Beyoğlu Yangını," 175. After the immediate support, the government then organized an aid committee which would be responsible for distributing relief. Organized under the guidance of the Minister of Finance, Mehmed Sadık Paşa, the committee members included directors of the Imperial Ottoman Bank, the Ottoman Financial Association (*Şirket-i Maliye*), members of the police force (*Emniyet-i Umûmiyye*) and two representatives from each millet (*rüesa-ı milletten ikişer kişi*). For the committee, see *Rûznâme-i Ceride-i Havâdis* published on June 8, 1870. SALT. AJRRCH00023. The committee went around the commercial and financial districts of the capital to collect donations from the *sarraf*s and the merchants. Sultan Abdülaziz made personal donations in kind and money and the newspapers of the period reported extensively on the *iâne* campaign. For the details of the campaign, see Keyvanoğlu, "1870 Büyük Beyoğlu Yangını." For an example of the *iâne* announcement and the donation list see *Rûznâme-i Ceride-i Havâdis*, published on June 8, 1870. SALT. AJRRCH00023. The third example is the famine relief in 1874. Drought and famine hit various places around the globe in the year 1874. The province of Bihar, in India, had been suffering from drought since 1873 and various wildfires affected the economies of Britain, US and the Ottoman Empire in 1873. For the details of the global consequences of this drought period, see Erler, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kuraklık*, 138-139. In 1874 and 1875 Anatolian lands suffered a serious drought which was followed by a famine. Worsening the situation was the extreme climatic conditions. Ankara and Konya vilayets were the regions most effected by the drought, while other regions such as the Balkans and the Arab provinces also suffered under extreme climatic conditions. The Ottoman aid to the most affected regions included cereals, animals and money. The central government also aided the refugees from the regions by way of providing temporary settlement and jobs. In addition to state aid, Ottoman society was also involved in organizing relief to the sufferers of the famine. *Basiret* newspaper initiated a call for *iâne*, organizing and advertising for aid to sufferers. These calls and donation lists were published in the newspaper. An aid committee was formed under the guidance of Sadullah Paşa, a high-ranking bureaucrat. Other members of the committee included religious leaders, bureaucrats, the director of the Imperial School (*Mekteb-i Sultani*). Another important component of the relief aid was the international aid and aid by non-Muslims to their co-religionists. The American missionaries collected monetary aid from the United States, and they were particularly active in the Talas and Merzifon regions. For the details of this campaign and the aids, see Erler, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kuraklık*; Kunalalp, "Orta Anadolu'da Kıtık," 247.

for the domestic debt and eventually withdraw the Ottoman paper money, *kaime*.⁴⁵⁵ Instigated in 1851, this compulsory aid was conducted under the supervision of a temporary committee (*meclis-i müfrez*) which designated the amount of monetary aid for each district. Male subjects were required to pay 20 piastres and certain percentages from the civil servants' wages were cut off. All the details of *iâne-i umûmiyye* were published in *Takvîm-i Vekayi*.⁴⁵⁶ Due to the insufficiency of the amount collected, the Ottoman authorities called for a second round of *iâne*, this time only in the capital and established another temporary committee for its execution. One of the members of this committee, Logofet Bey,⁴⁵⁷ was also going to participate in the *iâne* committee during the Balkan Crisis.

To bolster the participation of the residents of Istanbul, the government announced the names of the people who participated in the campaign in the semi-official *Cerîde-i Havâdis*.⁴⁵⁸ This practice became a marker of aid efforts in the period. An interesting detail that Akyıldız revealed in his research is the mediation of foreign embassies in forcing the British and Austrian merchants, who refused to participate in *iâne-i umûmiyye*, into making the necessary payments.⁴⁵⁹ While this

⁴⁵⁵ *Kaime* (also known as *esham kavaimi*, *evrak-ı nakdiyye* or *kaime-i nakdiyye*) was initially implemented as a credit method by transforming the *esham* system. By 1851 the interest rates on *kaime* were abolished, allowing them to be circulated in daily transactions. The first attempt to abolish *kaime* was executed in 1848 accompanied by an *iâne* campaign. Execution of *kaime* continued in the following years in certain periods such as the Crimean War.

⁴⁵⁶ Akyıldız, *Para Pul Oldu*, 83-96.

⁴⁵⁷ Aritarchi Stavrakî (Stavro), referred to as Logofet Beyzade İstavrakî Aristarhi Logofet Bey in the Ottoman documents, was the son of Nicholas Aristarchi Bey and like his father, he served as the Logothete of the Patriarchate. He was a member of the Chamber of Notables (*Meclis-i Ayan*) in 1877, and he served in various important positions in the Ottoman bureaucracy. Among his duties were various *iâne* committees. There is a slight confusion about his year of birth and death in the literature. According to Kuneralp he lived between 1838-1920 while Philliou informs that he lived between 1836-1925. Kuneralp, *Osmanlı Erkân ve Ricali*, 67; Philliou, *Biography of an Empire*, Appendix A. His official biography (*hal tercümesi*) defines his year of birth as H. 1252, correlating with Philliou's information. BOA. Y. PRK. A. 9/25. His brother, Gregorios Aristarchi served as the Ottoman representative in Washington, and he was also involved in philanthropic efforts particularly during the Balkan Crisis. See 2.2 for Gregorios Aristarchi.

⁴⁵⁸ Akyıldız, *Para Pul Oldu*, 97-98.

⁴⁵⁹ While Akyıldız claims that the foreign merchants initially refused to contribute to the campaign, the British Ambassador reports no such resistance and underlines that the leading merchants were

topic does not fall under the period of analysis of this dissertation, the language in which the Ottoman government explained the *iâne-i umûmiyye* to the British representatives is significant for the discussion.

During the meeting with the British representatives, the Ottoman authorities underlined that this was a special tax “occasioned in a special locality by a special and urgent want” which will not hold “as any example as to the future.”⁴⁶⁰ The articulation of the urgency and the temporary nature of *iâne*, is regarded as a defining characteristic in the historiography. It also signifies that the Ottoman governments were indeed cautious about not presenting the temporary aid as permanent taxation to prevent any discontent. Additionally, the Ottoman phrasing of *iâne-i umûmiyye* in the 1850’s reveals that it was not only the Ottoman subjects but in certain cases foreign subjects who needed to be persuaded into contributing to *iâne*, through an abiding dictum.

İane-i askeriyye, or *bedelat-ı askeriyye* on the other hand, is a tax imposed on the non-Muslims in exchange for exemption from military service.⁴⁶¹ Despite the abolishment of *cizye* during the Tanzimat, *bedel-i askeriyye* continued to be paid by the non-Muslim populations as a fee for not participating in military service. Thus, scholars underline that *cizye* continued to be implemented under a new name.⁴⁶²

Another term that is frequently referred to in the documents is *hediye*. *Hediye* is defined as a gift in Ottoman language dictionaries.⁴⁶³ The French translations for

willing to participate in the removal of *kaime*. See Private Memorandum by Sir H. Bulwer, March 7, 1860. FO. 424/19. Akyıldız, *Para Pul Oldu*, 101.

⁴⁶⁰ Private Memorandum by Sir H. Bulwer, March 7, 1860. FO. 424/19.

⁴⁶¹ Karpas, *Ottoman Population*, 20.

⁴⁶² Gülsoy, *Osmanlı Gayrimüslimlerinin Askerlik Serüveni*, 59-62; İnalcık, “Cizye.”

⁴⁶³ *Muntehabat* (1866) define *hediye* as “*armağan, pişkeş*.” See, Redhouse, *Müntehabât-ı lugât-ı Osmaniye*, 234. *Lehçe-i Osmani* in 1876 uses only as *armağan*. See, *Lehçe-i Osmani*, 1200.

hediye include two words “*don*” and “*present*”⁴⁶⁴ and the Redhouse translations refer to *hediye* as a gift.⁴⁶⁵ However, the 1877 version of Redhouse refers to *hediye* as a donation in kind. The entry for donation in this dictionary includes the following definition: “*bahş, ita*” and if it is monetary donation (*verilen akçe*) then it is translated as *atiye*. If it is a donation in kind (*verilen nesne*), then *hediye* is used.⁴⁶⁶ This entry is both significant and yet confusing on different levels. While the definition of *hediye* in the 1877 edition is in line with the findings of the archival research for the Balkan Crisis period, implying a donation in kind, *atiye* as a monetary donation is not used in the primary sources. The dominant terminology for monetary donation during the period of analysis is *iâne akçesi* or *iâne-i nakdiyye* and donations in kind are additionally referred to as *vatan hediyesi* (patriotic gift).⁴⁶⁷ One other specific use of the term in the context of the Balkan Crisis donations is when a book’s revenue is dedicated to the war effort. It is possible to deduce from the transition of the meaning of *hediye* in the dictionaries that donating materials for a cause had become an established practice and was called *hediye* by 1877.

Almost exclusively, the act of aiding or the person who is participating in aid is described with the adjective *hamiyyet* or one of its versions.⁴⁶⁸ *Hamiyyet* is translated as honor, zeal or public spirit and those who participate in the donation campaign are regarded as people who are bestowed upon with these qualities.⁴⁶⁹

⁴⁶⁴ *Hediye* is translated as “*don, present*” (gift, donation) in the two Bianchi dictionaries. See, Bianchi and Kieffer, *Dictionnaire Turc-Français* (1850), 1211 ; Bianchi and Kieffer, *Dictionnaire Turc-Français* (1835-37), 1211.

⁴⁶⁵ Redhouse 1856 translates gift as “*hediye, atiyee, ihsan, ina’m, bahşış*.” See, Redhouse, *An English and Turkish dictionary*, 137.

⁴⁶⁶ Redhouse, *Lexicon English and Turkish* (1877), 259.

⁴⁶⁷ Van Os proposes the translation of the term *vatan hediyesi* as “patriotic gift” indicating a gift by the fatherland. Van Os, “Feminism, Philanthropy and Patriotism,” 57.

⁴⁶⁸ *Hamiyyetli, hamiiyetmendan, erbab-ı hamiiyet, hamiiyetmendan-ı vatan*.

⁴⁶⁹ Bianchi (1850) defines *hamiiyet* as “zele, ardeur, courage” and includes the term *hamiiyet -i islamiye* which is translated as “*zele de la vraie foi*” (the zeale for the true faith). See, Bianchi and Kieffer, *Dictionnaire Turc-Français* (1850), 438. Redhouse (1857) defines *hamiiyet* as zeal, feeling of honor. See Redhouse, *An English and Turkish dictionary*, (1857), 659.

However the term *hamiyyet* also connotes patriotism in certain usages. The use of *hamiyyet* within a patriotic context goes back to the emergence of the Young Ottoman thought and was incorporated into the language of the propaganda material of the secret *Meslek* organization in 1867.⁴⁷⁰

Almost all the actors relating to the *iâne* of the Balkan Crisis period, use the word *hamiyyet*. The state call for compulsory donation uses the phrase “*erbab-ı hamiiyyetin*”⁴⁷¹ or one of the first articles in *Basiret*, which discusses the possibility of an *iâne* campaign in July 1876 uses the word *hamiyyet*.⁴⁷² *Hamiyyet* also appears in combination with the word *vatan*. *Basiret* uses the adjective “*hamiyyetmendan-ı vatan*” to define the patriotic act of giving.⁴⁷³

3.2.2 Donations during the Crimean War

The Ottoman state initiated a call for *iâne-i cihâdiyye* during the Crimean War. The Ottoman Council (*Meclis-i Mahsusa*) founded the donation campaign on religious grounds, underlining that it was possible to participate in jihad by way of payment along with physical participation.⁴⁷⁴ The impetus for *iâne-i cihâdiyye* had come from the high-ranking officials, who were present at the initial meeting on *iâne* and their donations were published in *Takvîm-i Vekayi*‘ on 19 April 1854 to bolster the campaign.⁴⁷⁵

Even though war propaganda and the patriotic efforts of the state were based on Islamic notions, both Muslim and non-Muslim populations provided aid to

⁴⁷⁰ Onaran, *Padişahı Devirmek*.

⁴⁷¹ BOA. İ. MMS. 55/2496.

⁴⁷² *Basiret*, no.1853, p.1.

⁴⁷³ *Basiret*, no.1867.

⁴⁷⁴ “... malen ve canen hizmet-i fariza-ı zimmet ve emr-i mefruz-ı cihadın bedenen mefruziyeti olduğu misillü bedelen dahi vücub ve meşrutiyeti ulema-yı a’lam canibinden ve cümleten beyan olunarak ..” Transliterated by Özcan. Özcan, “Kırım Savaşı'nda Mali Durum,” 34.

⁴⁷⁵ Özcan, “Kırım Savaşı'nda Mali Durum,” 36; Badem, *Ottoman Crimean War*, 320.

Ottoman army during the Crimean War.⁴⁷⁶ Analyzing the donation lists from Trabzon, Turgay reveals that in Trabzon, twice the expected amount was collected. This indicates that the state had a predetermined amount to be paid by the subjects of the empire, as will be the case in 1877. In addition to calculating the contribution of different religious groups in the donation, Turgay also reveals that nearly half of the donations from central Trabzon, *nefs-i Trabzon*, were by merchants, followed by small traders and shopkeepers (*esnaf*) and local administrators.⁴⁷⁷ Özcan's study displays the composition of the contribution, listing the participation of various actors; including state officials, bureaucrats from various levels, and members of schools and hospitals. The donors are predominantly civil officials (*memur*), scribes (*ketebe*), state officials, and doctors. The regional lists do not include any information about the individual donors.

Cora's article on the Armenian elite's participation in the war effort reveals how the Armenian elites of Erzurum participated in the mobilization efforts and how it turned into a mechanism which provided them with certain political and economic leverages.⁴⁷⁸ Cora's study highlights the fact that the patriotic mobilization did not only rest upon Islamic sentiments, targeting the Muslim populations. On the contrary it included negotiation between the local actors and the state. Armenian notable's contribution was later rewarded by the state through medals and privileges. The analysis of the local notables' contribution thus sheds light on the complexities of supporting the Ottoman state during times of conflict. It reveals that the political rhetoric of the period was intertwined with the necessities of war time measures and

⁴⁷⁶ Özcan, "Kırım Savaşı'nda Mali Durum"; Turgay, "İlâne-i cihâdiyye."

⁴⁷⁷ Turgay, "İlâne-i cihâdiyye," 121.

⁴⁷⁸ Cora, "Providing Services."

the interaction between the non-Muslim local notable and the state was defined by the transformation of the society through reforms.⁴⁷⁹

The Crimean War case reveals that the official newspaper, *Takvîm-i Vekayi* ‘ was incorporated into war mobilization as a mechanism to construct and propagate a patriotic campaign and the high-ranking bureaucrats’ donations was the first list to be published. Yet, despite the official Islamic rhetoric and the stately impetus, *iâne* was executed in relation to and in interaction with both the local dynamics and the transformations pertaining to subjecthood and duties. The showcase of *iâne* – publication of the donations of the upper echelons of the society - will continue to be the case but with the Cretan uprising, major changes will take place in matters of aid during conflicts. The independent press will kick-start the campaign and make rhetorical and practical interventions. The Ottoman state will continue to resort to compulsory donation but with a significantly different rhetoric.

3.2.3 Donations during the Cretan revolt

Cretan *iâne* campaign began in February 1867, after the arrival of Christian volunteers to the island and the intensification of fighting between the irregular Muslim troops, the Cretan insurgents and the Christian volunteers. One of the important aspects of aid for Crete is that they reveal the growing importance of press for public mobilization and the formation of public opinion with the leading roles of *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* and *Muhbir*. This case also reveals that Muslim merchants became the prime actors in establishing philanthropic practices and the Ottoman intellectuals undertook the publicity of relief efforts in times of armed conflicts. Donations were

⁴⁷⁹ Cora, “Providing Services,” 424.

collected for the purpose of aiding the Muslims who were affected during the conflict, however, Muslims and non-Muslims participated in the aid campaign.

Donations during the Cretan uprising were predominantly aimed at civilians. Although this dissertation is centered around aid to Ottoman soldiers, this case proves important for reflecting on the transformation of donation practices. It is the first time that independent newspapers published opinion pieces and news about the conflict, and they were involved in the *iâne* campaign from the beginning. The newly established Ottoman language press was the main medium for disseminating the ideas of the Ottoman intellectuals, whose clustering around certain ideas had already started during the Crimean War leading to the formation of Young Ottomans and more explicit patriotism.⁴⁸⁰

The Ottoman press, more specifically the Young Ottoman newspapers such as *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* and *Muhbir*, published articles calling for donations and donation lists made their way into the newspapers. *Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, was an important medium in disseminating ideas about progress, education and constitutional government, and when combined with Şinasi's aim of simplifying the language to reach a wider audience, *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* became a milestone in Ottoman intellectual history, which aspired to transform the Ottoman public.

Initial state support to Crete included the distribution of flour, rice and oil to civilians through the regional councils on the island.⁴⁸¹ Soon an official relief commission was established under the auspices of Server Efendi⁴⁸² at the end of

⁴⁸⁰ Badem, *Ottoman Crimean War*, 408.

⁴⁸¹ BOA. İ. MTZ. GR. 12/352.

⁴⁸² Server Efendi (1821-1886, later Server Paşa) started his career in foreign office posts. He was sent to Crete during the Cretan events and was the head of the aid committee during the crisis. During his lifetime, he served in various bureaucratic positions, including different Ministries. He served as the head of the Council of State (*Şura-yı Devlet*) between August 1875-February 1876 and the Minister of Foreign Affairs (August 1877-February 1878) during the Balkan Crisis. He was initially a member of, and later the head of the Chamber of Notables between March-June 1877 during the First Constitutional Era.

March 1867. This commission was responsible for managing aid to the affected civilians with separate branches in the three major centers of the island; Hania, Candia and Resmo.⁴⁸³ According to a report written by the Hanya branch, relief work included the temporary settlement of Muslim and non-Muslim migrants and the distribution of bread and monetary support to the populations. Many doctors were dispatched to the region, providing medical services. Food and other daily necessities were provided through the distribution of tickets (*bilet*) and the dispersed populations were vaccinated and Muslim orphans were circumscribed. Clothing, medical supplies and bed sheets were distributed for the hospitals and Candia and Resmo witnessed similar support mechanisms.⁴⁸⁴

In February 1867, *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* commented on the relief work aimed at dispersed Christian communities. The newspaper underlined a variety of actors involved in charity work to Christian refugees, such as Greek merchants in London, Jews and theater companies in Odessa, balls in St Petersburg, all narrated in a letter by a bishop from York, published in *The Times*.⁴⁸⁵ Immediately after this paragraph, the newspaper called for the Muslim populations of the empire and invited them into making donations. Identifying communal belonging (*hemcins*) as an important indicator of donations, the newspaper invited Muslims into making donations and argued that donations were the only option to relieve the sufferings of the Muslims of Crete and it was important to publish the donations in newspapers.⁴⁸⁶ The labelling of civilian aid as the only viable solution to the suffering of Muslims implies a subtle criticism of the governmental policies and attempts to empower the people by cherishes their participation in ameliorating the condition of their co-religionists. The

⁴⁸³ BOA. İ. MTZ. GR. 12/352.

⁴⁸⁴ BOA. İ. MTZ. GR. 12/352.

⁴⁸⁵ *Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, no.462.

⁴⁸⁶ "... “şiar-ı İslamiyeden olan müriyyet ve seha ve şefkatin vakti gelmiştir...” *Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, no 462.

same article, by referring to a charity ball by the Greek populations of Istanbul, tried to evoke feelings of compassion through references to Islam. By referring to previous examples of charity work, such as donations in kind to the Ottoman soldiers during the conflict with Russia, and the donations to Circassian migrants (*muhacirin*), *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* initiated a donation campaign, without any reference to state mechanism, and claimed that there were already some donations, which needed to be published in the press.

Around a week after the call for donations by *Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, *Hayriye Tüccarları* published an article in the same newspaper, stating that they had established an aid commission (*iâne komisyonu*) and explained in detail how they envisioned to provide relief to the region.⁴⁸⁷ *Hayriye* merchants commented that following the newspaper's suggestion for establishing commissions, no such initiative had taken place so far and that the merchants were now taking on the responsibility. They announced that one of the members of the committee was responsible for taking the donations to Crete personally, and that everything was going to be published in newspapers.

Hayriye Tüccarları, was a special group of Muslim merchants, who were recognized during the reign of Mahmud II to provide Muslim merchants with certain leverages. The Ottoman state supported and privileged the Muslim merchants in their business, allowing them to have tax reductions. The limitations on the number of *Hayriye* Merchants were eventually abolished, leading to an increase in the number of merchants willing to achieve this title.⁴⁸⁸ The state would intervene in overcoming

⁴⁸⁷ *Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, no.464.

⁴⁸⁸ The Ottoman state initially allowed 40 *Hayriye* merchants in Istanbul and 10 in the provinces. This number was raised to 60 in the capital and 30 in the provinces in 1829. In ten years, this limitation was abolished. Sağlamçubukçu, *Arşiv Belgelerinde Hayriye Tüccarları*, 88; Güripek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda İktisadi Düşüncenin*, 79.

the obstacles they encountered in their business. They not only became representatives of the Ottoman state in commercial life⁴⁸⁹ but they also turned out to be agents in establishing philanthropic circles and cooperating with intellectuals in expanding the civil realm. The way they formulated the relief campaign does not indicate the involvement of the state which allows for interpreting their act as a civil initiative. The fact that they took on the responsibility to organize aid, explicates that as a group back up by the government, they wished to enhance their prestige.

Traditional historiography argues that *Hayriye* merchants could not rival the non-Muslim merchants and that they did not produce the desired effect, that is to achieve a trade volume that could challenge the European and the Ottoman non-Muslim merchants, resulting in their losing power and status in short time. Recent research, however, suggests that the traditional explanations may have failed to represent the phenomenon in its entirety and reveal the ways in which certain Hayriye merchants had accumulated both economic and cultural capital.⁴⁹⁰ Thus the role of the Hayriye merchants in establishing philanthropic circles during the Cretan Crisis serves as a curious case in revealing the intricate relation between philanthropic activity, patriotism and accumulation of wealth, and this practice would continue to be deployed during the famine relief in 1875 and the Balkan Crisis. In the light of evidence, the efforts of the Hayriye merchants in forming aid initiatives and their propagation in the newspapers can easily be identified as the beginning of a new tradition.

⁴⁸⁹ For a detailed study on the Hayriye Merchants, see Güripek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda İktisadi Düşüncenin*. For a *tereke* of a Hayriye Merchant, see Keleş, "Hayriye Tüccarı Elhac Mehmed."

⁴⁹⁰ A study by Tolga Cora reveals the role and the importance of a Muslim Great Merchant Family, The Nemlizades, and traces the economic endeavors of this family and identifies their philanthropic activities as having a central role in their commercial enterprises. Initiating their economic activities as Hayriye merchants, the Nemlizades established prominent positions in local and imperial levels, as a family relying on commercial activities. The second and third generations of the Nemlizades had also accumulated cultural capital to enhance their networks and did not refrain from participating in various philanthropic activities. Cora, "A Muslim Great Merchant."

After the call by the Hayriye merchants, their donations were published in *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* in the form of donation lists,⁴⁹¹ indicating the name of the donor and the amount of donation. These lists were brief, but they are significant as the first examples to publicize donations by way of civil initiative. The donation lists indicate that along with merchants, state officials and their wives participated in the campaign,⁴⁹² showing that by the 1860's certain modes of aid and charity were already in the making and modern communication methods were instrumentalized in these activities.

The first *iâne* list was published in *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* on March 3, 1867, and two people were responsible for the organization of the aid: *Hayriye Tüccarı Şehbenderi* and *Kandiye Şehbenderi*.⁴⁹³ The committee was located in store number 28 in Asmaaltı.⁴⁹⁴ The first name that appears in the first list is the *Hayriye Tüccarı Şehbenderi*, Hacı Halil Efendi, with a donation of 670 piastres, the second highest sum in the list. The highest donation is by Hacıpaşazade Hacı Ahmed Efendi, another wealthy Hayriye Merchant.

A total of 11 donation lists were published in *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* between March and May 1867, a period in which inhabitants of Crete were migrating from inland to coastal towns such as Candia and living in miserable conditions. The number of

⁴⁹¹ *Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, No.469, March 25, 1867.

⁴⁹² The donation lists from the commission (*Asmaaltı'nda Girit iâne komisyonu tarafından gelen varaka*) published in *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* shows that people from different parts of the society participated in the donation campaign. *Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, no 487.

⁴⁹³ The title *Hayriye Tüccarı Şehberderi* was initially used to indicate the head of the *Hayriye* merchants, residing in the capital with assistants, working under a *beylikçi*. *Şehberder* was initially used to indicate the head of a merchants' associations based in various Ottoman cities. Bruce Masters argues that the position was revived with the establishment of the *Hayriye* merchants and the *Şehberder* was elected by the members of the association. With the expansion of the category of *Hayriye* Merchants, local *şehbenders* came to be elected by the provincial establishments. The *şehbenders* acted as local representatives, often referred to as consuls. Masters, "The Sultan's Entrepreneurs," 586. *Hayriye Tüccarı Şehbenderi* could function as an intermediary in resolving disputes between the state and the *mültezims*. Hacı Halil Efendi, for example, was sent to Çankırı by the state to resolve the dispute over taxes. Güripek, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda İktisadi Düşüncenin*, 81.

⁴⁹⁴ *Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, no. 486, 4.

Muslim refugees in Candia would reach to 30.000 over the summer. The donation lists allow us to trace the people who contributed to this campaign such as merchants, small traders (*esnaf*), soldiers, members of the commercial courts (*ticaret mahkemeleri*), members of the quarantine council (*meclis-i sıhhiye*), members of the various quarantine units, wives of the merchants and collective donations from certain neighborhoods, such as Yerebatan or Kabasakal. What is also interesting in these donations lists is the fact that women made an appearance as aid givers. Wives are listed as separate people making donations and this characteristic continues into the Balkan Crisis. There is yet no information whether women formed aid committees during the Cretan uprising, but by the Balkan Crisis, women started to establish ad-hoc aid committees, and these would be published in the press, making the activities of women more visible.

The donations were not restricted to the Muslim merchants or state officials. In an article in *Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, coffeehouses are identified as places in which people contributed to donation campaigns.⁴⁹⁵ This practice will also continue during the 1875-1878 period and the fact that coffeehouses became the sites for donations, contributes to the discussion on the role of coffeehouses in the formation of public opinion.⁴⁹⁶

Muhbir, which published extensively on Cretan events, was possibly the first newspaper to publish a special issue in support of humanitarian sentiments. On February 27, 1867, *Muhbir* announced the forthcoming publication of a special issue and the donation of its revenue to the Cretan Muslims.⁴⁹⁷ On March 4, Ali Suavi

⁴⁹⁵ The article is a correction about a previous article in which a certain coffeehouse, without any indication to its name, was to be kept open during certain hours for the purpose of collecting donations. *Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, no 465.

⁴⁹⁶ For the role of the coffeehouses in contributing to the formation of public opinion, see Kırılı, "Coffeehouses."

⁴⁹⁷ *Muhbir*, no. 24.

published the special issue, 1,000 copies in total and announced that he would personally take the revenue to Crete and publish the names of people who would buy the special issue as *iâne*.⁴⁹⁸ According to Mardin, this special issue was a case for publicity⁴⁹⁹ and Âli Paşa was not pleased with this.⁵⁰⁰ However, this special issue (*fevkalade iâne nüshası*) can be labelled as the first attempt to promote humanitarian practices through press and its manifestations during the Balkan Crisis became instruments of a proto-nationalist propaganda.

The first article in *Muhbir*'s special issue underlines the importance of newspaper publishing. The justification for the importance of newspaper publishing relies on the fact that press published both good and bad deeds; good deeds would be known by society and the bad ones would serve as object lessons. Thus, *Muhbir* justified the function of the press as a mechanism which would resolve moral dichotomies by declaring deeds publicly. Drawing on European and Christian examples for aid work, *Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, on the other hand, does not put much emphasis on religiosity or morality but suggests a more practical perspective on the publication of aid work. Despite the differences of approach to and justification of the donations, the two newspapers collaborated and *Tasvîr-i Efkâr* published two lists, presenting the names of the people who bought the special issue.⁵⁰¹

Hayriye merchants' donations were not the only aid mechanisms of the Cretan Events. There were regional donations from Philippopolis, Danube and Edirne.⁵⁰² The total *iâne* collected by the merchants was 52,477 piastres, and the

⁴⁹⁸ *Muhbir*, no. 28.

⁴⁹⁹ Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 26.

⁵⁰⁰ Çiçek, *The Young Ottomans*, 85; Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 26. Following the special issue, Suavi published a critical article about the withdrawal of Ottoman army in Belgrade, which resulted in Ali Suavi's arrest and shutting down of *Muhbir*. *Kararname-i Âli* was promulgated in the following days, establishing strict press censorship just around the time when the situation in Crete was deteriorating for the Ottoman state.

⁵⁰¹ *Tasvîr-i Efkâr*, no. 468.

⁵⁰² BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 386/78.

revenue from the special issue was 233 Ottoman pounds. The contribution of donations via press was 757 Ottoman pounds in total.

Although the *iâne* campaign of the Cretan crisis was limited in its scope and confined to a specific ethno-religious target group when compared with the practices of the upcoming periods, it exemplifies some of the important characteristics of the period. It had a religious tone, and Islamic references prevailed. It shows that Muslim merchants and intellectuals cooperated in creating philanthropic efforts and aimed at establishing social compensation mechanisms when the power and might of the Ottoman state was challenged internationally. This case study also allows for identifying the growing humanitarian sentiments, expressed through the language of morality and executed via modern communication technologies. The involvement of the intellectuals in the aid efforts coincided with their self-acclaimed duty to protect the Empire and their experimentation in popularizing relief mechanisms served as an example in the upcoming periods. The Cretan *iâne* campaign acquired symbolic value during the Balkan Crisis, it was referred to as the earlier example of a collective aid effort thus functioned as a historical precedent.

3.2.4 Donations during the Balkan Crisis

3.2.4.1 Initial phase

In May 1875, the Ottoman officials who had been assigned to resolve the disputes in Podgorica were on their way back, having achieved their duty and the general belief was that the situation had calmed down.⁵⁰³ Beginning in the fall of 1874, Podgorica witnessed an assassination of a powerful merchant, which caused unrest in the region. By May, the commission managed to resolve the unrest, and the refugees

⁵⁰³ Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*, 89.

who had fled the region were on their back. The peaceful situation only lasted until July 1875 when a caravan raid happened in Nevesinje, triggering the chain of events, which is known as the Balkan Crisis. Following the initial recruitment of troops from Bosnia, soldiers from the capital were deployed in August.⁵⁰⁴ It was not until the end of 1875 that the Ottoman public was engaged in the events. People from different parts of the Empire started to establish aid to Ottoman soldiers, who were involved in fighting against the insurgents. The defining characteristic of this early period is that the state is not yet involved in the call for aid and that Ottoman society started to organize donations in kind, *hediye*, to the Ottoman soldiers.

In December 1875, *Basiret* published a piece of war propaganda, which was a letter from Kemah, describing how women perceived mobilization; narrating the readiness of women to do any work so that their husbands and children could join the military effort.⁵⁰⁵ This piece signaled the beginning of a mobilization campaign which would last until the end of the 1877-1878 Russo-Ottoman War.

Almost around the same time, a women's journal in Salonica published articles on the mobilization of the Ottoman troops to Herzegovina and called for women to make donations. Published in Salonica between November 1875 and October 1876, *Ayine* targeted Muslim women and children as its audience.⁵⁰⁶ The call for donations in *Ayine* underlined the fact that the soldiers did not lack anything but that as a patriotic gift women should provide their assistance.⁵⁰⁷ This call is also articulated in a similar manner in *Basiret*.⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁴ Danişmend, *İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi*, 4.

⁵⁰⁵ *Basiret*, no 1674.

⁵⁰⁶ "Muhadderat ve etfale mahsus gazete," *Ayine*, no.1

⁵⁰⁷ *Ayine*, no.3.

⁵⁰⁸ Sağlam, *İstanbul Şehir Mektupları*, 443.

In a memorandum, Raşid Naşid, the governor of Ankara informed the central government about the collection of socks for the soldiers. The government responded by underlining that the soldiers were not in need of anything⁵⁰⁹ and that due to the recent famine, Ankara was not obliged to provide such a service.⁵¹⁰ The wording of the aid reveals preferred terminology of aid. Socks and other items were labelled as “*hediye-i vatan ve vatandaş*,” “*eşya-ı nişane-i vatanperveri ve hamiyet olarak*,” “*eşya-ı vatanperveri*,”⁵¹¹ *hediye-i nacize-i vatan*.⁵¹² Initial donations came from Ankara, Girid, Sinop, Isparta, Eğirdir, İzmir starting in December 1875 continuing into the spring of 1876. Gifts were not limited to material donations, people collected money for the soldiers as well.

On December 9, 1875, *Basiret* wrote about the donation campaign in detail followed by a donation list. The article underlined that the soldiers of the Sultan were not in need of anything and defined the donations as a patriotic act.⁵¹³ The formulation of aid not as a necessity but as an expression of patriotism, does not continue long into the Balkan Crisis. In less than a year the discourse of aid transformed, emphasizing the dire need of the state and the soldiers. During the initial uprisings, it was strictly underlined that the Ottoman army could provide its soldiers with everything they needed. Donations were gifts for the fatherland, and

⁵⁰⁹ In the aid to soldiers in Herzegovina, it was imperative to underline that the soldiers did not need anything and that gifts were an expression of solidarity of the people. Similar expressions appear both in the archival documents and the newspapers of the period: “*asakir-i nusret-measir cenab-ı cihanbaninin ... hiçbir şeye ihtiyaçları olmadığı*,” see BOA. A. MKT. UM. 1441/5. “*Hersek taraflarında bulunan asakir-i nusret-measir hazret-i padişahinin ... hiçbir şeye ihtiyacı yok ise de mücerred vatan hediyesi olmak ve bu surete de kendilerine ebna-yı vatan tarafından bir eser-i muhabbet ve uhuvvet gösterilmek için*,” see *Basiret*, n. 1680.

⁵¹⁰ “*takdimi arzu edilen çorab eser-i hamiyet olup fakat bu havali ahalisinin henüz kahtdan kurtulmuş oldukları cihetle bu hizmete kıyamaları ... kabulü haiz olamayacağı*,” see BOA. A. MKT. UM. 1441/51.

⁵¹¹ BOA. A. MKT. UM.1441/51.

⁵¹² BOA. A. MKT. UM.1445/40.

⁵¹³ *Basiret*, no. 1680.

expression of gratefulness and appreciation of the people for the soldiers' services to the fatherland.⁵¹⁴

Apart from the obvious patriotism, acts of giving in the earlier period of the Crisis need further elaboration. Every act of giving is reciprocal, and every gift has an implication for the status of the receiver and the donor.⁵¹⁵ It is this reciprocity that is frequently underlined in the discourse surrounding the donations to the Ottoman soldiers. The soldiers participating in the army are fulfilling their duties of protecting the empire and the people who receive the benefits of this duty shall reciprocate the act with individual participation. The gift for the fatherland thus is an act of reciprocity in return for the services of the soldiers in protecting the Ottoman domains and providing security. The donors would also receive a praising in the eyes of the community by presenting themselves as a member of the aid group (*mümid takımı*).⁵¹⁶ The benefit of giving is, as implied by the declaration, a good social status (*enzar-ı alemde mazhar-ı sitayiş olmak*) and people could donate out of solidarity (*uhuvvet*), benevolence (*eser-i muhabbet*) or as a pure patriotic gift (*mücerred vatan hediyesi*). Later in the period, the act of giving will not only be an expression of a good act vis-à-vis the society, but it will be a duty of honor and patriotism.

After the initial call for donations, *Basiret*'s printing office received donations in kind. These materials were sent to the conflict regions under the supervision of a certain major general (*mirliva*) Reşid Efendi. *Basiret* claimed that they had an official permission from the office of the commander-in-chief (*Bab-ı Valay-ı Seraskeri*) and that they were going to accept the donations in exchange for a receipt (*ilmühaber*). Following the article, there is a donation list, showing the employees and officials

⁵¹⁴ *Basiret*, no. 1680.

⁵¹⁵ Marcel Mauss was the pioneer in refuting the notion of free gift and resting on anthropological research he theorized the notions of reciprocity and obligation in gift giving. Mauss, *The Gift*.

⁵¹⁶ *Basiret*, no. 1680.

from one of the imperial factories,⁵¹⁷ who donated money to buy shirts (*mintan*) for the soldiers.⁵¹⁸ One of the first donation lists published in *Basiret* during the Balkan Crisis, provides insights into the hierarchy between the factory workers. The highest donation comes from a British master (*İngiliz ustası*) with 20 silver coins (*sim meci diye*), followed by head stone mason (*taşçıbaşı*) with 15 silver coins (*sim meci diye*). Donations in kind are also listed.⁵¹⁹ Representing the state-sponsored industrialization efforts, the contributions from this factory are significant. *Basiret* celebrated the contribution of military personnel and the foreign subjects in the commentary following the list. By explaining the process of donation, providing examples of the receipt letters, and emphasizing the official permission, *Basiret* attempted to portray donations as a patriotic and a regulated act. In addition to this, *Basiret* wrote that people in Salonica were also collecting donations in kind by the efforts of a local newspaper, *Zaman*.

Zaman, as understood from *Basiret* and *Ayine*, acted as the center of Muslim donations in Salonica. In *Ayine*, women were encouraged to participate in the donation campaign through a patriotic discourse, with very little references to religion. *Ayine*'s contextualization of patriotic gifts did not have any reference to *zekat* or *sadakat* but the emphasis was on the good and patriotic qualities of women (*muhabbet-i milliye, hayır, sevgi*).⁵²⁰ *Ayine* was published in the printing house of the provincial administration and was directed by the same cadre who published

⁵¹⁷ Kapan-ı Dakik Fabrika-i Hümayunu. Vedat Eldem lists a military mill (*askeri tahniye fabrikası*) located in Unkapanı. Eldem, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun İktisadi Şartları*, 120.

⁵¹⁸ The list includes major (*binbaşı*), adjutant major (*kolağası*), scribe (*katip*), lieutenant (*mülazım*), British master (*İngiliz ustası*), mill servants (*değirmen hademeleri*), indicating the different groups working in the factory, who donated silver coins (*mecidiye*). *Basiret*, no.1680.

⁵¹⁹ Donations from *Sadakat* printing office, members of Ottoman imperial band (*Muzıka-yi Hümayun*) are listed. *Basiret*, no. 1860.

⁵²⁰ Van Os, "Feminism, Philanthropy and Patriotism," 57.

Salonica's influential newspaper, *Zaman*.⁵²¹ *Zaman*, with its editor in chief Mustafa Bey,⁵²² was among the earliest Ottoman language newspaper to be published outside Istanbul. It was an independent newspaper and published articles on the importance of non-state subsidized publications.⁵²³ Referring to Namık Kemal's ideas, Mustafa Bey treated *Zaman* as a medium which could create a "patriotic consciousness."⁵²⁴ Combining Islamic values with modernization, *Zaman* seems to have acted as the voice of the Muslim middle class of Salonica. Analyzing *Ayine*'s publications about the gifts, one senses a competition in donating between the females, who donated through *Ayine* and males, who donated materials through *Zaman*.⁵²⁵ Collecting materials for the reserve battalions, *Ayine* also narrated other regional donations, by underlining their own leading role in the patriotic effort.⁵²⁶

Starting with the next issue, *Ayine* published donation lists, indicating the type and the number of donations, along with the names of the women. The entries in the donation lists were predominantly wives of Ottoman officials and the lists included only donations in kind, except for one list, which displayed the money donated by the wealthy men of Salonica, both Muslim and non-Muslim. This money was donated for the purchase of clothing which was then going to be sewed to produce underclothing by the contribution of the female members of the families.⁵²⁷ This case reveals that the elites of Salonica could join forces in aiding the Ottoman soldiers. Subsequent donation lists from Salonica reveal that the donation campaign

⁵²¹ The newspaper was initially called *Rumeli* and it was renamed *Zaman* in 1874. For *Zaman* and its editor Mustafa Bey, see Somel "Mustafa Bey of Radoviş." For details about *Ayine* publications during the Balkan Crisis, see Bozkurt, "93 Harbi Eşiğinde."

⁵²² Mustafa Bey served as the editor in chief until July 2, 1876. *Ayine*, no.28.

⁵²³ Somel, "Mustafa Bey of Radoviş," 134-135.

⁵²⁴ Somel, "Mustafa Bey of Radoviş," 135.

⁵²⁵ *Ayine*, no.4

⁵²⁶ The people in Siroz started collecting shirts for the Siroz battalion after seeing the campaign in *Ayine*. *Ayine*, no.4

⁵²⁷ *Ayine*, no.34

was carried out as a multi-ethnic practice throughout the whole duration of the Balkan Crisis. Both *Ayine* and *Basiret* referred to the material donations as patriotic gifts (*vatan hediyesi*), but *Basiret* would switch to using *hediye-i askeriyye*, with the establishment of *Hediye-i Askeriyye Commission*.

Zaman published news articles about Muslims living outside the Ottoman domains, and articles on the significance of the Caliphate for uniting the Muslims around the world. pan-Islamic⁵²⁸ articles were taken from *Basiret*, and *Zaman* also published news and other entries from other Istanbul based newspapers, including the French language newspapers.⁵²⁹ These connections between the two newspapers, *Basiret* and *Zaman* and *Zaman*'s close relation with *Ayine* indicate that the earlier aid campaign was initiated simultaneously and with a very similar rhetoric in these two important cities. Salonica, as will be demonstrated throughout the dissertation, was the leading city after the capital in the relief campaign. Lastly, Mustafa Bey, had close relations with the governor of Salonica, Eşref Mustafa Paşa and he was appointed as one of the Salonica deputies by the governor for the First Ottoman Parliament, an offer which he initially turned down. He was a deputy in the second year of the Ottoman parliament, and he was a very vocal and critical representative.⁵³⁰

Even though when compared with the later *iâne* campaign, the aid efforts of the earlier period seem limited, they affected the residents of the urban centers and aid work was visible in the streets. Commenting on the working condition of women, *Basiret* provides an interesting example. Women from economically disadvantaged groups were employed in sewing clothing for the soldiers. Exposed to harsh weather

⁵²⁸ For a brief discussion on pan-Islamism see 4.3.2.2

⁵²⁹ Somel "Mustafa Bey of Radoviş."

⁵³⁰ For an analysis of his political career and his participation in the Parliament, see Somel, "Mustafa Bey of Radoviş."

conditions during their commute, these women had to travel long distances to Sultanahmet to get the necessary materials for the sewing of soldiers clothing.⁵³¹ Basiretçi Ali Efendi comments by suggesting some preventive matters for ameliorating the working condition for these women. This example shows that even during the initial phase of the Balkan Crisis, mobilization efforts were publicly visible, they had already become part of the urban setting and charity initiatives of the upper elites had turned into a temporary workplace for the lower strata of the residents of the capital.

3.2.4.2 From gift to donation: Aid in 1876

In addition to the ongoing disturbances and rebellions in Herzegovina and Bosnia, the Ottoman state was faced with the Bulgarian uprising in the spring of 1876 and its outcomes of the international outcry following the brutal suppression by the Ottomans. Followed by the declaration of war by the Serbians, mobilization was now becoming a more pressing issue. Along with the financial problems, intra-elite power struggles and the instability of the throne, the government was forced to centralize and institutionalize the donations for the army.

Donations prior to the Serbian War can be considered as a product of civil initiative, however with the declaration of the War, the Ottoman state became more active in defining and organizing donations. As the following section will illustrate, Ottoman society was also active in transforming the methods of and the discourse surrounding the donations, suggesting that *iâne* was not strictly a top-down practice. While the term gift hinted at a reciprocity, *iâne* signified a different kind of giving,

⁵³¹ Sağlam, *İstanbul Şehir Mektupları*, 448. The article was published on December 23, 1875, in *Basiret*, no.1693.

one that involved money, as opposed to gifts in kind and more importantly, it was unequivocally linked with patriotism, and it was executed empire wide.

3.2.4.2.1 Donations in kind

Prior to the establishment of War Relief Commission, donations were predominantly in kind which were exempt from tariff (*bandrol ve gümrük resmi*).⁵³² Donations were collected at various locations,⁵³³ creating difficulties in logistics.⁵³⁴ Basiretçi comments on the long duration of sending the materials to the front, which made some of the clothing useless due to the change of season by the time the materials would reach the designated location.⁵³⁵

As the sewing of clothing shows, people did not only donate readymade materials, but both men and women formed initiatives for producing the necessary materials and then donated them. *Basiret* informs that a group of women came together under the leadership of İzzet Efendi's wife and children, produced clothing for the soldiers and donated them to commissariat (*levazım dairesi*) more than once.⁵³⁶ Another group of women in Beşiktaş, collected lint (*tiftik*) and bandages (*sargı*)⁵³⁷ and Armenian women organized a relief committee with the cooperation of Muslim women.⁵³⁸ Other women who organized such committees for the wounded were Midhat Paşa's wife, Bulgarian women and Miss. Millingen, possibly the wife of Robert's College professor can be listed.⁵³⁹ Identified as the first proto-associations, these committees acted as an important component of the Ottoman mobilization, and

⁵³² BOA. A.MKT. UM. 1443/21; A.MKT. UM. 1436/68.

⁵³³ *Basiret*, no:1860, p1.

⁵³⁴ Sağlam, *İstanbul Şehir Mektupları*, 452.

⁵³⁵ Sağlam, *İstanbul Şehir Mektupları*, 450.

⁵³⁶ *Basiret*, no.884.

⁵³⁷ *Basiret*, no. 1865

⁵³⁸ *Basiret*, no. 1862.

⁵³⁹ Van Os, "Feminism, Philanthropy and Patriotism," 58.

the main driving force behind them was the need to help the wounded soldiers, making these activities patriotic and philanthropic.⁵⁴⁰

In July *Vakit*, published an article praising the Armenian women for establishing an organization for the wounded soldiers and called for Muslim women to display a similar effort.⁵⁴¹ Providing examples of women who participated with the Turkish Compassionate Fund, Van Os shows that the year 1876 witnessed the development of the first secular charitable activities of Ottoman Muslim women, which would eventually lead to the first female associations.⁵⁴²

While it is possible to trace the first female associations during this period, the ways in which they were depicted in the press showed differences. When commenting on the activities of the Armenian women, *Basiret* underlined their good and patriotic behavior,⁵⁴³ whereas when describing the women's efforts in Beşiktaş, *Basiret* used a more Islamic language, emphasizing ghaza and jihad.⁵⁴⁴ This might indicate that the women from Beşiktaş were Muslims while the other committee, although including Muslim women, was formed by Armenians and thus the difference in language. Additionally, the multiplicity of the rhetoric of aid indicates that different terminology could be instrumentalized and used with diverse justification mechanisms to mobilize Ottoman society, in its entirety.

The idea of producing for the army's needs as donation was not restricted to women; one article shows that two Jewish men produced 2,000 water bottles and donated them to the storehouse in Saraçhane.⁵⁴⁵ Shoemakers in Üsküdar produced a

⁵⁴⁰ Van Os, "Feminism, Philanthropy and Patriotism," 56.

⁵⁴¹ Van Os, "Feminism, Philanthropy and Patriotism," 58.

⁵⁴² Van Os, "Feminism, Philanthropy and Patriotism," 60.

⁵⁴³ "...measir-i hamiyet ve vatandaşı..." *Basiret*, no.1862.

⁵⁴⁴ "...hademat-ı mukaddese-i cihâdiyede zahmeddar olan gaza için nisvan-ı hamiyetmendani tiftik ve sargı gibi şeylerin tedarikine..." *Basiret*, no.1865.

⁵⁴⁵ *Basiret*, no.1885.

thousand pair of shoes for the army as donation.⁵⁴⁶ Donations in kind were also collected by collegial cooperation,⁵⁴⁷ a practice which can be traced in the donation lists as well.

A letter from Saruhan, published in *Basiret*⁵⁴⁸ reveals that the Muslim population of Saruhan was involved in sewing clothing for the soldiers, and the letter informs that the non-Muslim groups were also planning to participate in the mobilization. This method of informing the readers about possible future participation is a common trait of the period and should be interpreted as a method of enforcing public pressure. Calling out ethno-religious groups, collegial groups or regions as candidates for participation, based on hearsay, was in fact forcing these groups to declare their participation publicly. Additionally, this letter underlines that there was a request from Salonica made directly to Saruhan, asking for clothing. The predominance of textile industry in Saruhan shows that initiatives from Salonica identified Saruhan as a place, capable of supplying clothing for the Ottoman soldiers as donations. Even though the article does not elaborate about the details of this relation, it must have helped its readers to image the donation campaign as an empire wide phenomenon, connecting different regions through their efforts in aiding the soldiers.

3.2.4.2.2 War Relief Commission (*İâne-i Harbiyye-i Askeriyye Komisyonu*)

The official impetus for the donation campaign came in mid-1876. Attempting to centralize and systematize donations, the War Relief Commission (*iâne-i harbiyye-i askeriyye komisyonu*) was established on July 8, 1876, to collect and distribute aid to

⁵⁴⁶ *Basiret*, no.1885.

⁵⁴⁷ Coal traders (*kömürcü esnafı*) for example bought 120 shirts and brought them to the press office of *Basiret*. Van Os, “Feminism, Philanthropy and Patriotism,” 448.

⁵⁴⁸ *Basiret*, no 1954.

the Ottoman army.⁵⁴⁹ Following the *iâne* campaigns of 1875 and the beginning of 1876, the Ottoman state tried to regulate and coordinate the donations by uniting them under the umbrella of one commission. One of the reasons for this change was to do with the deterioration of the economic conditions.⁵⁵⁰ While the Ottoman state handled the rebellions in Herzegovina relatively easy, with the Ottoman-Serbian War, there emerged the need to mobilize more troops and to take care of the wounded soldiers which required the organization of money, personnel and materials. The increase in the number of the deployed soldiers and the auxiliary troops necessitated a more structured mobilization.

Just before the official announcement regarding the commission, *Basiret* published a telegram, dated June 25, 1876, from the office of the Grand Vizierate to all provinces, calling for people to make donations. This call underlined the reason for *iâne* as the financial burden of mobilization. The telegram underlined the voluntary nature of the call by declaring that the state was willing to accept all voluntary donations.⁵⁵¹ This announcement exemplifies explicitly a discursive change in defining aid: Donating for the Ottoman soldiers was transformed from the reciprocal *hediye*, to the duty of honor and patriotism. This duty, however, needed to be voluntary.

⁵⁴⁹ BOA. İ. DH. 731/50956.

⁵⁵⁰ Ten days after the establishment of the relief commission, the Ottoman government invited the Director of the Ottoman Bank to the Council of Ministers with the aim of convincing the director to the issuing of paper money (*kaime*). This was a governmental incentive to solve the problem of financing the increasing military expenses with a serious budget deficit. See Akyıldız, *Para Pul Oldu*, 165; Eldem, “Genel Kargaşa ve İdare-i Maslahat.”

⁵⁵¹ “maslahatın cesameti cihetiyle a‘dâ karşısında bulunan asakir-i şahanenin mesarif-i zaruresine medar olmak üzere devlet ve vatana en samim-i muhibb ve sadık ve eshab-ı yeser ve iktidardan olan sunuf-ı tebaa-i şahane tarafından dahi iâne olunmak mütehattim-i zimmet-i hamiyyet ve vatanperveri bulunmuş idüğünden ... erbab-ı gayret ve hamiyyet tarafından rızalarıyla edecekleri iâne kabul olunarak” *Basiret*, no 1859.

Basiret announced the establishment of this commission on July 9, and informed that Halet Paşa was appointed as the chief of the commission.⁵⁵²

Commission members included Vartan, Logofet, Ahmed Reşid, Şerif Rüşdü with the chair Mehmed Halet Paşa.⁵⁵³ Interestingly, some of the members of the commission did not receive salaries in the beginning and later they applied for a stipend.⁵⁵⁴ This might indicate that the initial establishment of the commission lacked the logistical organization that it meant to fulfil. This commission dealt with the collection and distribution of the donations and their donation reports were published in the newspapers frequently.

Logofet Efendi had prior experience in organizing *iâne*. In addition to being a member of the Council of State, and later the Chamber of Notables, Logofet Efendi participated in various committees relating *iâne*. He was a member of the *iâne* committee in 1860 which aimed to collect monetary aid for the emission of *kaime* in Istanbul.⁵⁵⁵ He also participated in the committee on Ottoman paper money (*kavaim-i nakdiye tab komisyonu*), aid initiatives for the refugees (*iâne-i muhacirin komisyonu*), and later in a committee working to relieve the sufferings of the people of Mitilini (*Midilli*), who had suffered a serious earthquake.⁵⁵⁶ Thus Logofet Efendi seems to have played a key role in relief work, with experience in organizing aid under different circumstances. His participation in aid work, particularly in *iâne* committees, points to a continuity in state conduct.

⁵⁵² *Basiret*, no. 1860. p.1.

⁵⁵³ For the announcement see *La Turquie*, July 13, 1876. Halet Paşa served as the chair of the commission until June 1877 and was replaced with Namık Paşa. BOA. İ. DH. 748/61098.

⁵⁵⁴ BOA. İ. DH. 731/50956.

⁵⁵⁵ This committee aimed at allocating the desired sum among the residents of Istanbul, to collect aid and eventually burn the paper money. Akyıldız, *Para Pul Oldu*, 97-98.

⁵⁵⁶ BOA. Y. PRK. A. 9/25.

State campaign was announced in the papers by advertising the donations of the ruling elite. The Ottoman Sultan and the high-ranking bureaucrats all made donations, and this list was published on the first page of *Basiret*,⁵⁵⁷ like the method deployed during the Crimean War. After describing the donation from the palace, the list starts with the Grand Vizier, Sheikhulislam being the second. Although the first two entries indicate a certain hierarchy, the remaining entries do not provide any clue about hierarchy. There is also no hierarchy in the donation sums. The highest amount is by Halim Paşa 1,000 Ottoman pounds (*lira-ı osmani*), followed by Kamil, Namık and Nuri pashas, each donating 500 Ottoman pounds. Grand Vizier Mehmed Rüşdi Paşa donated 400 and Sheikhulislam donated 200 pounds. In addition to their monetary contribution, most of the high-ranking statesmen donated animals. This list mentions Zeynep Hanım as the only female donor. Zeynep Hanım, the wife of Yusuf Kamil Paşa and the daughter of Kavalalı Mehmet Ali Paşa, donated 500 Ottoman pounds, a larger sum than the Grand Vizier and Sheikhulislam. This list shows that there was no expected hierarchy regarding the donation amounts among the high-ranking bureaucrats, and Zeynep Hanım's donation could be included in this list, only to be positioned at the left side of the table, what seems like an addition.

The donations were submitted to the committee, in return for receipts. The receipts served as proof of participation in the aid campaign. Residents of the Kanlıca district, for example, published a letter in *Basiret*, responding to allegations about their lack of support to the campaign. They listed the total number of donations and argued that their receipt (*makbuz senedi*) was their proof of participation.⁵⁵⁸

Basiret continued to publish donation lists, which provide ample evidence to understand the dynamics behind the donation campaign. There are both individual

⁵⁵⁷ *Basiret*, no.1862. Other lists are usually published on the second, third or even the fourth pages.

⁵⁵⁸ *Basiret*, no. 1947.

donations and collective donations. People made collective donations based on professional groups or districts. These lists also included high ranking officials and donations from palace members and palace workers. After providing the list of monetary donations, *Basiret* also listed donations in kind.⁵⁵⁹ While *Basiret* published detailed lists of the donations, indicating the amount of donation, the donor either by their name, their profession or their residency, state documentation about the donations provides lists based on provinces and indicates the total sum only.

Most of the donation lists published by *Basiret* were reports (*jurnal*) from the donation committee, along with a couple of different lists such as the lists of donations submitted to the Equipping Auxiliary Troops Society (*asâkir-i muavine teşhizi cemiyeti*) and Military Gifts Society (*hediye-i askeriyye cemiyeti*).⁵⁶⁰ Occasionally, provincial lists, such as Salonica donation list, donations by female residents of *Beylerbeyi* district or donations from collegial groups were published along with the reports.⁵⁶¹ Donation lists towards the end of 1876 are very brief when compared with the earlier ones, indicating the declining rate of contribution.

3.2.4.2.3 Composition of donation groups

Salonica stands out as an important center of aid throughout the Balkan Crisis. Publications in *Ayine* revealed that Salonica was actively engaged in aiding the Ottoman soldiers from 1875 until the end of the hostilities. As will be demonstrated in the following chapter, Salonica also supported the Ottoman Red Crescent Society

⁵⁵⁹ It is important to underline that despite the continuous attempts at centralizing the donations, printing houses continued to receive donations in money and in kind. The government requested that all donations, which were collected at the printing houses were required to be transferred to the War Relief Commission, as late as mid-September 1877. BOA. DH. MKT. 1319/39.

⁵⁶⁰ *Basiret*, no. 1865.

⁵⁶¹ For the Salonica list see *Basiret*, no. 1864; for *Beylerbeyi* list see *Basiret* no. 1901; for collegial groups see *Basiret*, no. 1870.

actively. The first regional branch of ORCS was established in Salonica, and this branch would be the most active one. Salonica was also the first place, after the capital, hosting Red Crescent Hospital.⁵⁶²

Detailed donation lists from Salonica were published in *Basiret* in July 1876. Analysis of these lists allows for an understanding of the composition of donors and provides insights into the workings of the donation campaign in the leading port city. All three lists were published in mid-July and all of them were submitted to the War Relief Commission.⁵⁶³ A total of 358,333.5 piastres were collected, according to these lists.⁵⁶⁴ The total amount of donations from Salonica, according to *Basiret*'s publication in November was 549,924 piastres all of which were submitted to War Relief Commission (*iâne-i harbiyye komisyonu*) until 12 October 1876.⁵⁶⁵ State documentation about the donations from Salonica between July 1876 to June 1877 indicates the total amount as 622,371 piastres.⁵⁶⁶

These numbers allow for an interpretation of the rate of contribution in the donation campaign. 358,333.5 piastres (58% of the total) were donated in the beginning of the donation campaign in mid-July 1876. 88% of the total sum was donated between July and October 1876. The remaining 22% (72,447 piastres) was donated between October 1876 and June 1877. This shows that voluntary donations continued at a lower rate after the compulsory donations. The fact that most donations from Salonica belong to mid-July shows that the voluntary donations reached their peak in the summer of 1876 and by the time of the compulsory

⁵⁶² Ada, "Osmanlı," 63.

⁵⁶³ The three lists were published in the following issues of *Basiret*: nos. 1864, 1866, 1867.

⁵⁶⁴ The individual sums of the lists are as follows: 320,747.5; 29,355.5; 35,833.5.

⁵⁶⁵ *Basiret*, no.1946.

⁵⁶⁶ BOA. İ. DH. 752/61390.

donation campaign, the upper segments of the Ottoman society had already provided their share in the voluntary donation campaign.

The donations in the first list, range between 50,000 to 1,000 piastres for the donors, while in the second list the amount of individual donations range between 1,000 to 4,00 piastres. The third list documents the donations which range between 300 to 40 piastres. This shows that the pattern in donating resembled that of the state impetus, which was initiated with the participation of the local ruling elite, with large sums. The first names to appear in the donation campaign from Salonica were the leading figures of the city. The first name in the list, is not the highest donor but the governor, Eşref Paşa, which is followed by the judge, the provincial treasurer (*defterdar-ı vilayet*), customs official (*rüsumat nazırı*), provincial chief secretary, and the religious authority (*müfti*). The leading provincial representatives are followed by the wealthy residents of Salonica.

The largest sum, 50,000 piastres is donated by one of the leading industrialists of Salonica, Alattini Bey.⁵⁶⁷ Another wealthy resident İskender Bey, donated the second highest sum, 40,000 piastres. İskender Bey, was a wealthy animal breeder, identified as a representative of the traditional community.⁵⁶⁸ Çolak Ali Ağa, on the other hand, one of wealthiest Muslims living in Salonica⁵⁶⁹ donated 2,000 piastres. The governor donated 18,500 piastres. Saul Modiano, another wealthy merchant who later went into banking business, donated the third largest sum. The list reveals that most of the wealthy residents of Salonica participated in the donation efforts. However, the fact that the first names to appear in the list were the regional powerholders, indicates that the local officials led the donation campaign.

⁵⁶⁷ Alattini Bey, additionally, donated 1000 shirts (*mintan*). *Basiret*, no.1946.

⁵⁶⁸ Anastassiadou, *Tanzimat Çağında Bir Osmanlı Şehri*, 240.

⁵⁶⁹ Anastassiadou, *Tanzimat Çağında Bir Osmanlı Şehri*, 237.

The lists represent the heterogenous ethno-religious composition of the city, with the high rate of participation by the non-Muslims. In the first list, 13% percent of the donors from Salonica belonged to the Jewish community, which made up 44% of the population of Salonica in 1830's.⁵⁷⁰ Five percent of the donors were Ottoman Christians, and the Muslim donors made up 80% of the donor, as indicated in the chart below. Participation of non-Muslim Ottoman subjects decreased in the second and third lists, as shown in the chart below. While 8% of the donors belong to the Jewish community, their donations amount to 26% of the total sum. Non-Muslim participation in the campaign was 13% however, the amount donated by non-Muslim Ottomans of Salonica amounted to 32% of the total sum, revealing that the amount of non-Muslim donations was larger than that of the Muslims of Salonica.

The donation lists serve as important sources in analyzing the occupational distribution of donations and how the donors identified themselves. The fact that individual donations were published in the newspapers suggests that individuals may have chosen their identification, or they may have used their publicly known titles. Tracing these personal identifications may serve as indicators of how the individuals perceived their identities in a public aid campaign. In the three lists from Salonica, half of the donors preferred to use their rank or their official duty (examples include *mahkeme-i ticaret reisi*, *sertahsildar*, *meclis-i idare başkatibi*, *muhassebe-i vilayet ketebesi*) as an identification. 20% of the donors used their profession (*bezirgan*, *tüccar*, *tuzcu*, *saatçi*) as an identification and 18% of the donors did not prefer to use any identification but were noted down in the list with their names only. Wealthy merchants and industrialists such as Alattini, İskender Bey and Çolak Ağa also did not prefer any title to identify themselves.

⁵⁷⁰ Anastassiadou, *Tanzimat Çağında Bir Osmanlı Şehri*, 286.

The largest occupational group among the donors (21 percent, which equals 33 people serving in various official positions) is civil officialdom, and the second largest occupational group is composed of people who serve in various courts (13%). The third and fourth largest groups are merchants (11%) and *esnaf* (10%). It should also be underlined that 25% of the donors did not identify their occupations. The analysis therefore indicates that most of the donations in Salonica came from civil officialdom, court members and merchants and small traders.

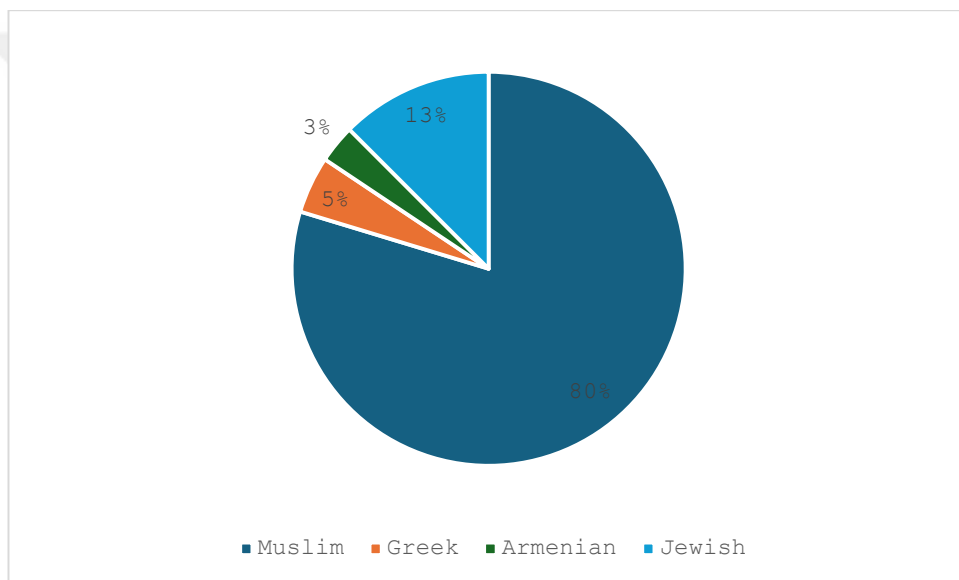


Figure 1. Ethno-religious composition of donors in the first list from Salonica

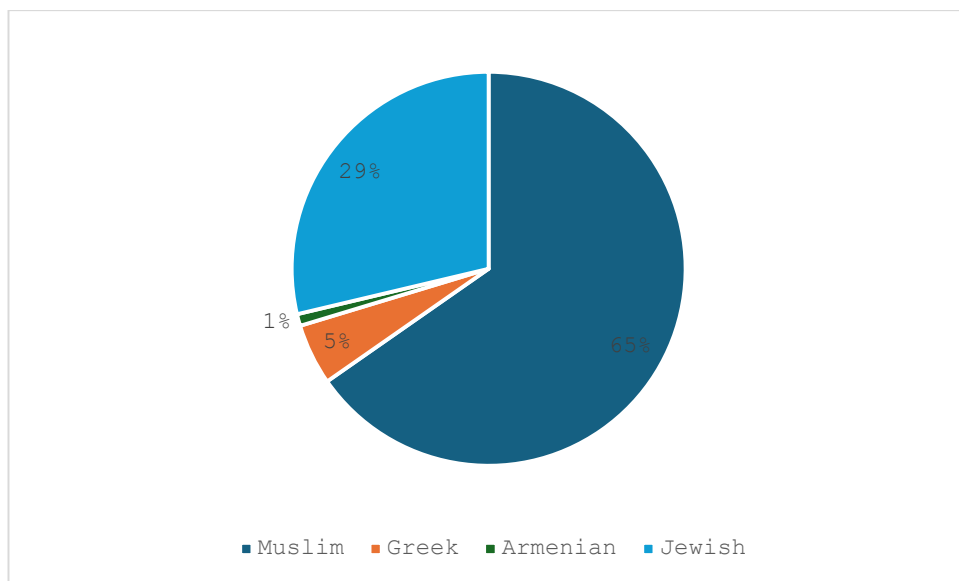


Figure 2. Donation amounts according to ethno-religious communities in the first list from Salonica

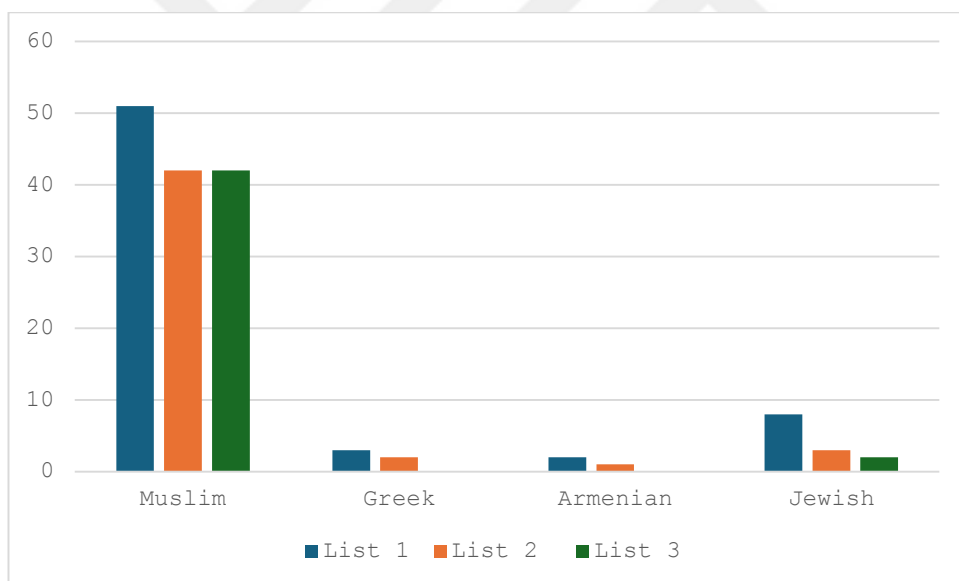


Figure 3. Ethno-religious composition of donors in the three lists from Salonica

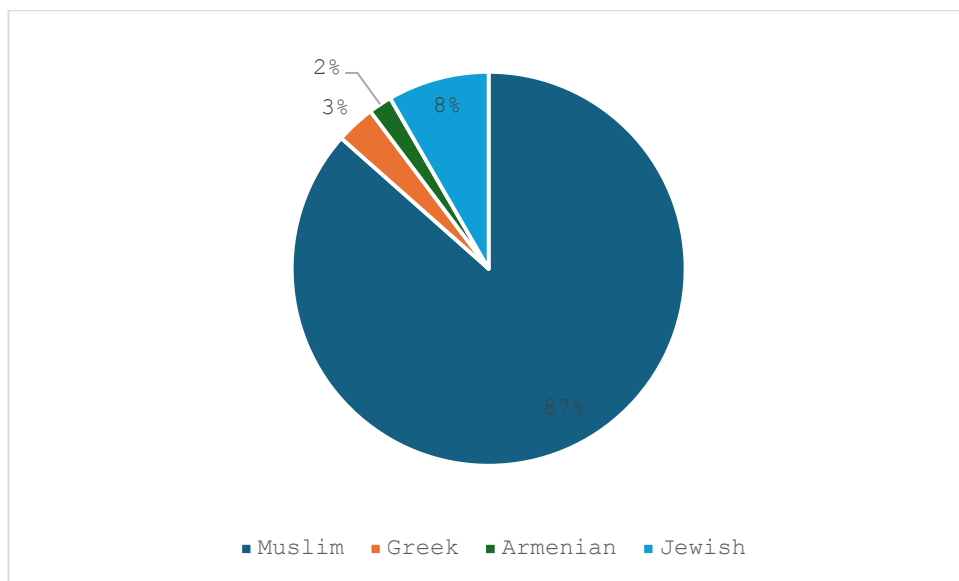


Figure 4. Ethno-religious composition of donors in the three Salonica lists combined

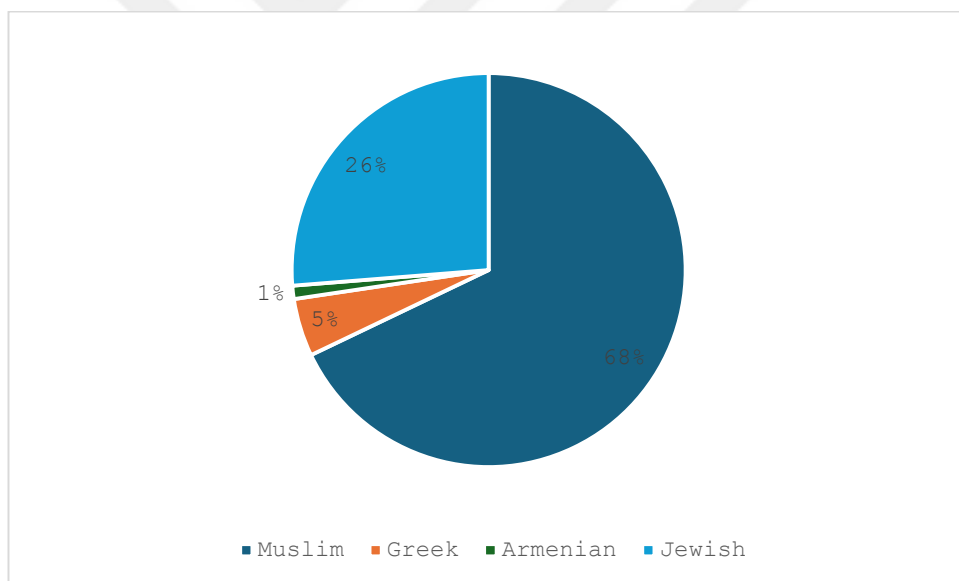


Figure 5. Amount of donation according to ethno-religious communities in the three Salonica lists combined

As for the general lists published in *Basiret*, a major setback is that not all the donors were identified with the same indicator. Donors were sometimes identified by

religious affiliation⁵⁷¹ or ethnic affiliation.⁵⁷² In other cases, the donors were listed with their names or were sometimes listed according to bureaucratic posts,⁵⁷³ professional groups,⁵⁷⁴ or regions. Some of the individual donations indicate that the individuals acted in collaboration. Financial institutions and prominent figures in banking and insurance, for example, donated individually. However, they donated money at the same time thus their names were published on the same list.⁵⁷⁵ Zarifi donated 50,000 piastres, *Le Societe Ottoman de Change et de Valor (Kambiyo ve Esam Şirketi)* donated 75,000 piastres and Credit Lyonnais donated 43,956 piastres.⁵⁷⁶ According to *La Turquie*, bankers and financial actors all met at Halil Şerif's mansion prior to making their donation.⁵⁷⁷ This example proves that the donation campaign could be accompanied by private social gatherings, which implies that the elites perceived these events as a chance to promote their status and at the same time such occasions enforced social obligations. Another example of the collective nature of donations is the donation of sailmakers. Although their names are listed individually, four sailmakers participated in the campaign at the same time.⁵⁷⁸

It is also worth mentioning that in addition to high-ranking bureaucrats, and financial institutions, people from the lower stratum of society also contributed and their donations were published. Coffeehouses were among the places which hosted donation journals.⁵⁷⁹ Lastly, towards the end of 1876, lists include entries showing

⁵⁷¹ *Basiret*, no.1885 and 1886.

⁵⁷² *Basiret*, no.1885.

⁵⁷³ *Basiret*, no.1887.

⁵⁷⁴ *Basiret*, no.1886 and no.1900.

⁵⁷⁵ For the list of financial actors, see *Basiret* no.1887.

⁵⁷⁶ *Basiret*, no.1887, 10.08.1876

⁵⁷⁷ *La Turquie*, 155.

⁵⁷⁸ For the names of sailmakers, see the donation list published in *Basiret*, no. 1889.

⁵⁷⁹ Donation list from a coffeehouse in Zeyrek is published in *Basiret* no.1949.

that certain places donated more than once, Philippopolis for example send donations 16 times while Aydın province send donations for 13 times.⁵⁸⁰

With respect to the composition of donations submitted to the War Relief Commission, 87% of the donations were donated as a group, while the individual contributions made up 13% of the donations.⁵⁸¹ This shows that Ottoman society preferred to contribute to the aid campaign collectively. 54% of the collective donations were regional donations, excluding the capital city. 17% of the collective donations were collected in various units of civil officialdom. The third largest group in collective donations was the neighborhoods of the capital city. Other collective donations came from occupational groups and financial circles.

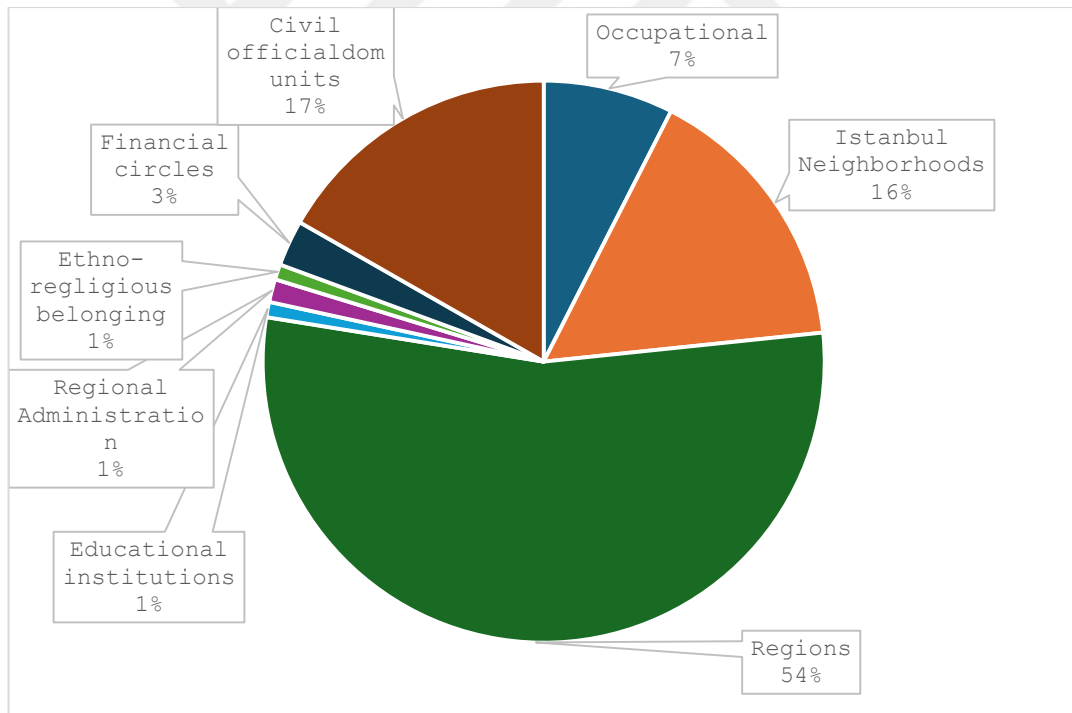


Figure 6. Breakdown of collective donations

⁵⁸⁰ *Basiret*, no. 1901.

⁵⁸¹ The calculations are based on the following 37 lists: 1-11, 19-27, 42, 45-51, 59-68, which were submitted to the *iâne-i harbiyye komisyonu* and were published in *Basiret* between July 10, 1876, and October 7, 1876.

Tracing individual donations allows the researcher to pinpoint the ways in which individual donors identified themselves. Most donors, 41%, preferred their position in civil officialdom as their individual identification. 14% of the donors used their family as an identification. The majority in this category are the female donors who were almost exclusively identified with reference to their husbands. Other donors in this category used their family names (*-zade*) as their identification. 11% of the donors used their occupation (all occupations excluding civil officialdom) as an identification. 11% of the donors preferred a regional belonging, mostly by referring to their neighborhood.

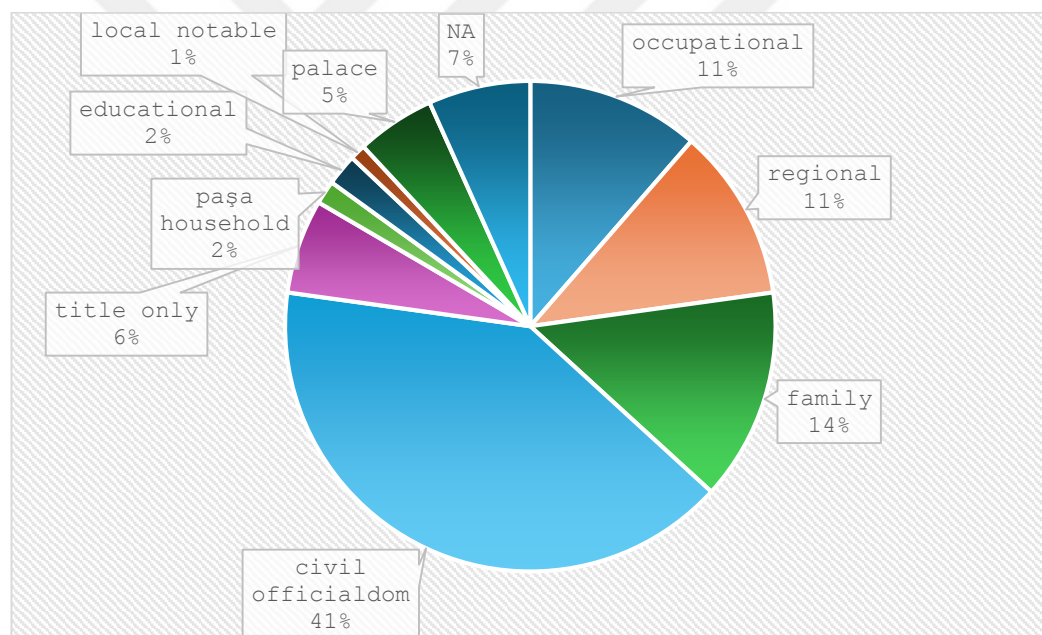


Figure 7. Individual donors' identification

Analysis of individual donors' occupations reveals that majority of the donors, 25%, were part of civil officialdom. The second largest group among the donors was the high-ranking bureaucrats, amounting to 11% of the individual donors. Merchants, small traders and moneylenders made up 8% of the donors. Thus, the

members of the civil officialdom were the largest group in aiding the Ottoman soldiers.

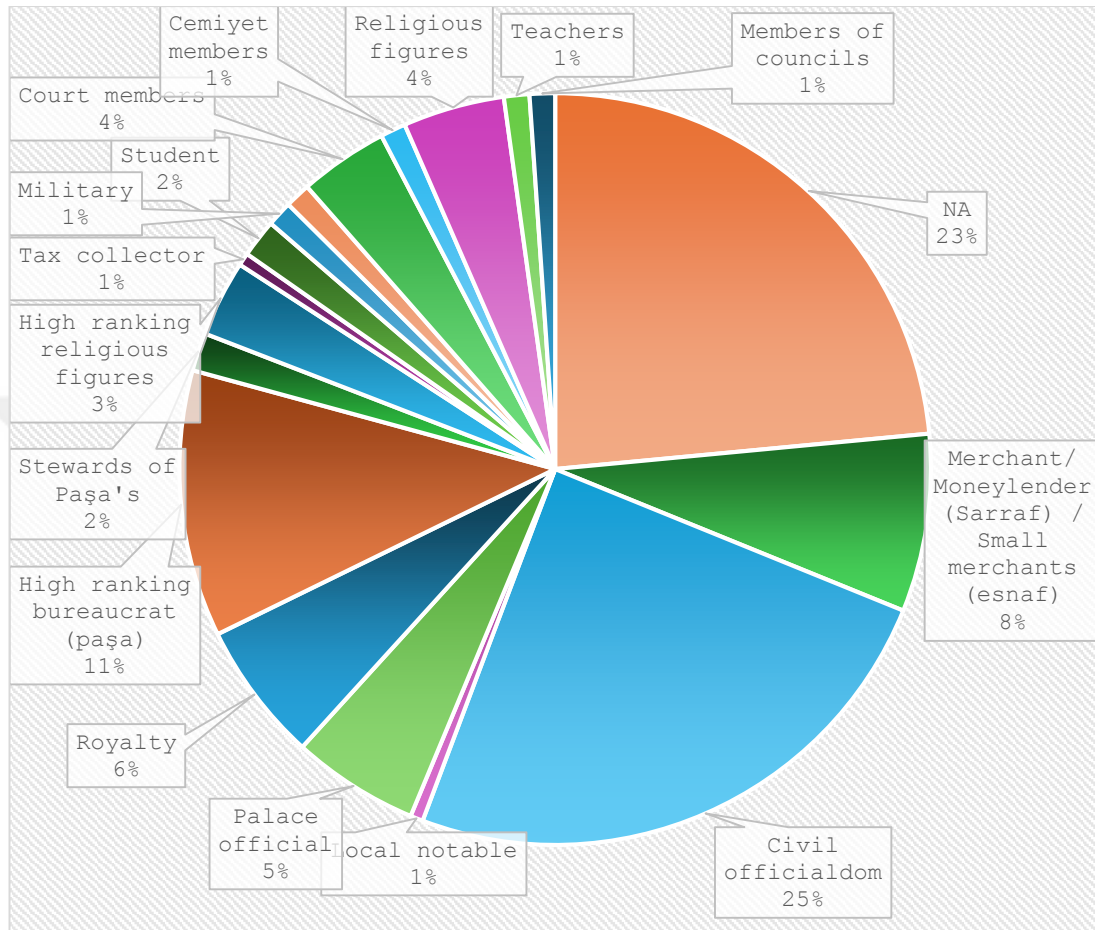


Figure 8. Breakdown of individual donors' professions

There are two important setbacks to donation lists published in *Basiret*. First, they do not represent the entirety of the empire. Provincial donations are generally lumped together into the total sum, preventing further analysis on the details of the donations and the individuals who participated in the campaign, unless they are documented separately. Second, they do not reflect all the provincial efforts in provisioning the army. Various methods were utilized in the provinces to support the

Ottoman army such as sending (*irsalat*),⁵⁸² buying of provisions,⁵⁸³ renting,⁵⁸⁴ and contract-based provisions.⁵⁸⁵ The documents on these types of provisions do not include the details about the donors or the ways in which they were obtained specifically.⁵⁸⁶ Therefore it is not possible to come up with definitive comments about the material donations and the ways in which other provisioning methods were executed. *Basiret*'s articles on material donations are valuable insofar as they illuminate the ways in which certain groups were formed in donating, exemplifying the existence of different patriotic circles. As will be demonstrated below, this will also be reflected in the cultural practices that accompany the donations.

3.2.4.2.4 Politics of defining: From *iâne-i cihâdiyye* to *iâne-i harbiyye*

The transition from *iâne-i cihâdiyye* to *iâne-i harbiyye* was not immediate, but it was gradual, and it had a practical purpose. As scholars have underlined, this transition had already started during the Crimean War.⁵⁸⁷ The replacement of the notion of jihad with the term “war” indicates a transition, which is less religious and more inclusive when viewed from the context of the Tanzimat reforms. The term *iâne-i cihâdiyye* is continued to be used in archival documents, newspaper and memoirs along with *iâne-i harbiyye*. Even though these two terms are used interchangeably, the choice of wording sometimes depends on the agents involved in the specific context. In cases where the author or the subject involved are non-Muslim, *iâne-i harbiyye* is preferred. Güllü Agop preferred the term *iâne-i harbiyye* when

⁵⁸² For an example of sending (*irsalat*), see *Basiret* no.1673.

⁵⁸³ For an example of buying of provisions, see BOA. ATASE ORHK. 110/9/1/2/11/0/157; *Basiret*, no. 1675.

⁵⁸⁴ For renting, see BOA. ATASE ORHK 110/9/1/2/15/0/10.

⁵⁸⁵ For contract-based provision, see Cora, “Providing Services and Bargaining.”

⁵⁸⁶ For example, 61 out of the 115 donated horses were sent to Vidin, as one document indicates. BOA. ATASE ORHK 110/9/1/2/17/0/211.

⁵⁸⁷ Cora, “Providing Services and Bargaining”

announcing that the revenue from Namık Kemal's *Vatan* play was going to be donated to the auxiliary troops fund⁵⁸⁸ while *Vakit*'s publishers, when referring to Güllü Agop's announcement and commenting on the importance of the play, used the term *iâne-i cihâdiyye*.⁵⁸⁹

In a similar vein, *Basiret*'s publications about the Armenian women's contribution did not involve any Islamic discourse and emphasized fatherland while the same newspaper preferred a more Islamic language when narrating the contribution of women from Beşiktaş, as discussed above. The first couple of donation lists are labelled as *iâne-i cihâdiyye*, but in a short time the naming switches to *iâne-i harbiyye* and continues that way. Incorporation of slightly different terminology in certain contexts reveals the need to construct different discourses in mobilizing diverse patriotic spheres. This transition is also linked with the discussions about the naming of jihad and the war effort.⁵⁹⁰ Naming the donations mattered and the topic was publicly discussed in the newspapers.

3.2.4.2.5 Ways of disseminating the patriotic ethos and collecting donations: From shadow theater (*hayal*) and *meddah* to theater, balls, and novels

The patriotic ethos materialized through different cultural expressions among the Ottoman society throughout 1876. The Ottoman press provides ample evidence for the multiplicity of ways in which different groups instrumentalized diverse methods in mobilization and collecting donations. While these methods reflect the transformations of Ottoman society in general and the capital city in particular; the motivations of the participating groups bear the potential to shed light on the

⁵⁸⁸ *Vakit*, no.282, p.4

⁵⁸⁹ *Vakit*, no.282, p.3

⁵⁹⁰ See 2.2.9 for the discussion on the concept of jihad.

relations between the Ottoman state and society. The diverse methods of collecting donations reveals that the relief campaign acted as a venue which allowed the public for creating different “patriotic spheres.”

Traditional forms of entertainment and social gathering became one of the ways of collecting donations. According to *Çaylak*, a coffeehouse in Şehzadebaşı declared that the revenue from shadow theater (*hayal*), story tellers (*meddah*) and musical performances which would last for four days, and four nights was going to be donated to Military Gifts Society (*Hediye-i Askeriyye Cemiyeti*), and that the owner of the coffeehouse would also give away beverages.⁵⁹¹ The same paper also advertised that there was the possibility of organizing a ball in *Beyoğlu* for fund raising. The *cambazhane* as a more traditional artistic sight was also involved in performances for the purpose of collecting donations and the artists (*cambaz esnafı*) participated in the donation campaign by donating six animals.⁵⁹² Elaborating on the social and cultural characteristics of the coffeehouses Kırılı’s study reveals that theatrical forms of the coffeehouses, shadow theater and story tellers in particular acted as a mechanism for the “theatricalization of the social life.”⁵⁹³ This example therefore suggests that acts of such theatricalization could be adopted for relief work and it may be speculated that patriotism could have influenced the content of the performances.

The coffeehouses, however, were not only artistic production sites, but also functioned as the center of a “dense oral network”⁵⁹⁴ throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. By the second half of the nineteenth century, coffeehouses also functioned as places where newspapers and books were sold and

⁵⁹¹ *Çaylak*, no. 68.

⁵⁹² *Basiret*, no. 1886.

⁵⁹³ Kırılı, “The Struggle.”

⁵⁹⁴ Kırılı, “The Struggle,” 182.

read out loud, thus as sites of information transfer. This was particularly crucial during periods of conflict. Hristo Stambolski⁵⁹⁵ disparaged the closing down of certain coffeehouses precisely because he frequented these places for their newspaper collection. Not everyone had to buy the recent issues of the newspapers instead they could read them through the coffeehouses. The use of the coffeehouses as sites for collecting donations was therefore a practical method, because these places were also frequented by both local and transitory groups.⁵⁹⁶ The incorporation of traditional theatrical forms as charity events into mobilization must surely have helped to inform the public and increase the contribution to the aid campaign.

In addition to these traditional methods, modern forms of artistic and literary production were also incorporated into the donation campaign and served as tools to bolster patriotism. As a powerful medium which has the potential to create and transform public opinion, theater drew the attention of the Ottoman intelligentsia, particularly the Young Ottomans in their intellectual and political endeavors. Namık Kemal's patriotic play "*Vatan Yahud Silistre*" was instrumentalized both to bolster public enthusiasm and as a way in collecting donations. It should be underlined that collecting donations through theater performances was not a novel invention⁵⁹⁷ but the incorporation of a patriotic discourse was something new.

Revenue from seven performances of *Vatan Yahud Silistre* were donated to be used for the auxiliary troops. Spanning over different districts of the capital city, these performances reached out to a considerable number of Istanbul residents,

⁵⁹⁵ Hristo Tanev Stambolski (1843-1932) was born in Kazanlık, Bulgaria. He was educated at the Mekteb-i Tıbbiyye-i Şâhâne (1858-1868) and later taught at the medical school and contributed to the production of medical books. Mevsim, "Sunuş," 10.

⁵⁹⁶ Kırılı, "The Struggle."

⁵⁹⁷ Gedikpaşa Theater witnessed charitable performances for Darrüşafaka or for funding the committee, which was vested with the duty to reform the Ottoman theater, with the support of Foreign Minister Halil Paşa. Sevengil, *Türk Tiyatrosu Tarihi*, 233-234. Greek, Armenian and Jewish communities performed plays to fund hospitals and schools. Turna, "The Ottoman Stage."

outside of Beyoğlu.⁵⁹⁸ Patriotic plays were not limited with Namık Kemal's *Vatan*. While *Vatan* continued to be performed throughout 1876, with modifications such as inclusion of patriotic anthems, Plevna turned out to be a glorified symbol amidst all the difficulties and setbacks. The singing of Plevna anthems and the performance of Ahmet Mithad's *Zeybekler* play in 1877⁵⁹⁹ are instances which reveal the relation between patriotism, intellectual production and modern genres, all intermingling in the nineteenth century urban transformations. Another patriotic performance happened in January 1878 which was organized under the guidance of the mayor, Galib Paşa. The announcement in *Vakit* advertised the play by informing the readers that the revenue was going to be donated, there would be a patriotic speech in the play and the theater would be decorated with flags.⁶⁰⁰

The announcement of Namık Kemal's *Vatan* play is an example of how modern political theater is advertised within the context of mobilization and aid to soldiers. After elaborating on the play, its significance given the political context and the author's reputation, *Vakit* calls out for the public to attend the play, incorporating patriotic prose into its call and asking for the people not to refrain from making such a small amount of donation.⁶⁰¹ Güllü Agop's brief and not very religious announcement is combined with a layer of patriotism, decorated with some Islamic symbols such as God's flag, and heroic simile.⁶⁰² Yet, the overall tone of the article still deploys wording such as fatherland and volunteer compatriots (*vatandaş*) and their needs for the jihad. This combination reveals that these concepts could be

⁵⁹⁸ These districts include: Beyoğlu Kadıköy, Bağlarbaşı (*cambazhane*), Emirgan and Ortaköy. Turna, "The Ottoman Stage."

⁵⁹⁹ Sevengil, *Türk Tiyatrosu Tarihi*, 255.

⁶⁰⁰ *Vakit*, 789.

⁶⁰¹ "... feda-yı cana hazırlanmış olan gönüllü vatandaşlarımızın ihtiyacı-ı cihâdiyelerine medar olmak üzere şu vesileyle de davet olduğunuz beş on kuruşluk îânenen çekinmek gibi bir şaibe ile kendinizi vicdanınızın muahezesine uğratmayasınız. Efendiler! Silistreyi görmeye gidiniz!" *Vakit*, no.282.

⁶⁰² *Vakit*, no.282.

deployed side by side and the reason might stem from the fact that the article is referring to auxiliary troops, which included non-Muslims. The ambiguity of deploying the concept of jihad and the attempts at including the non-Muslim populations within this ethos becomes evident in the debates on the inclusion of non-Muslims in the Ottoman army.

Another interesting practice of the period was the donation of book revenues to the aid funds. While it is mostly a symbolic gesture and a limited practice, the topics of the books are illustrative of the diversity of patriotism. Doctor İstamtiyadis donated the revenue from his book, *Gazi Osman*, which was a theater script.⁶⁰³ In a similar manner, Esad Efendi donated the revenue from his book, *Hükümet-i Meşrûta* to the aid fund. The two other books, *Aşk-ı Vatan* by Zafer Hanım and *Risale-i Cihâd* by Halet Efendi were dedicated to the aid campaign in a similar manner.⁶⁰⁴

Following the steps of *Muhbir*, *Vakit* published a special issue on July 31, 1876, the revenue of which would be donated as *iâne*. Different to *Muhbir*'s special issue, this publication was full of propaganda pieces, both in poetry and prose. This issue included patriotic pieces, news from the Balkans, a letter from Ali Suavi, which he had sent from Paris, an article on the rules of Islam, two scripts, one of which narrates how a young man tries to persuade his mother to volunteer for the war, and a long patriotic article which also calls for the youth to volunteer for the war and is signed as Kemal. The issue additionally published a list of donations and an article on the medical requirements of war by Aziz Bey, the director of the medical school.

⁶⁰³ *İzmir*, no.12

⁶⁰⁴ Halet Efendi included the following note to his readers: "Hasılatı iâne-i harbiyye komisyonuna teslim olacaktır." Zafer Hanım on the other hand expressed her gesture by emphasizing a common theme in female donations, which was to underline their inability to join the war effort. (*Hayfa ki ben silah tutmak şerefinden mahrum bir acize bulunmuşum*) Thus, she claimed that she penned the book and donated the revenue to the wounded soldiers' fund. Transliterated by Zehra Toska in Zafer Hanım, *Aşk-ı Vatan*.

Sabah also joined the effort and dedicated the revenue for a specific issue to the war cause.⁶⁰⁵

Another method for increasing participation in the campaign was to create a sense of “competition” among the readers. On September 6, 1876, *Basiret* published an anonymous letter (*varaka*) calling for the participation of different shopkeeper groups into the donation campaign. Setting the carpenters’ donations as an example, the letter distinguished between a public donation (*umumi iâne*) and private donation (*hususî iâne*.) This distinction is interesting in revealing both the terminology of and justification for *iâne*. Saluting the carpenters for initiating a donation register through the guild warden (*kethuda*), the letter called for other small traders to join the campaign by way of initiating donation registers in the name of their guilds. This practice is labelled as a private donation. Public donation, on the other hand, is identified as participation in the general campaign. The difference between these two ways of participation underlines the significance of group participation, collegial group, in this example.⁶⁰⁶ This letter is published prior to the compulsory donation campaign therefore the public donation implies a different meaning. What one can infer from this letter is that to increase the participation, *Basiret*’s editorial staff tried to create a “competition” among the collegial groups. This sense of competition is articulated through a differentiation between a public act and a private act.

⁶⁰⁵ *Sabah*, no.218.

⁶⁰⁶ “... gerçi şimdiye kadar umum sırasında onların da iâne etmiş olmaları derkar ise de o umumi olup şimdi dülger esnafı gibi onların da başkaca birer hususî iânede bulunmalarının dülger esnafından ibret alarak teşvikat-ı lazıme icrasını sayesinde yaşadığı mülk ve millete bir hizmet-i mahsusada bulunmak üzere her esnaf kethüdalarının nazar-ı hamîyyetlerini celbe...” *Basiret*, no. 1900.

3.2.4.2.6 Donation societies

So far, civil initiatives, which were formed to support the Ottoman soldiers have been described. Individual participation and local ad-hoc committees were established from the Herzegovinian uprising. Concurrently, there were other societies which collected donations and worked in close cooperation with the auxiliary troops. One of the reasons for this collaboration was the fact that the volunteer units were not always supported by the state. Some of them were funded and organized by individuals, while others rested on the donation of individuals. One of the earliest societies which was founded to support the auxiliary troops was *Gönüllü Asâkir-i Muavine Techiz Cemiyeti* (Equipping Auxiliary Troops Society). This society was formed in July 1876 around the time when volunteer units were being formed. It functioned under the Ministry of War (*Bab-ı Seraskeriyye*) and it was responsible for organizing the volunteer units and collecting donations for them. Coordinating the volunteers, this society was involved in preparing the volunteer units for fighting, providing their subsistence and collecting donations, both in money and in kind. The donations they received were published in the newspapers.⁶⁰⁷ The relief commission collected donations for the military while this society collected donations for the volunteer units. Midhat Paşa presided this society and Mahmud Paşa, Hurşid Paşa, Sahib Bey, Ziya Bey, Şakir Bey and colonel Hidayet, from the tannery (*Debbağhane Miralayı*) were its members.⁶⁰⁸

Another society was the Military Gifts Society (*Hediye-i Askeriyye Cemiyeti*) which had a similar function with that of Equipping Auxiliary Troops Society, but they were not officially recognized. They were established by the constitutionalists and their meeting place was the Bayazıd Military Guesthouse (*Bayazid Askeri*

⁶⁰⁷ For examples of these lists, see *Basiret*, nos.1865 and 1867 published in mid-July 1876.

⁶⁰⁸ *La Turquie*, July 12, 1877.

Misafirhanesi). They cooperated with *Asâkir-i Milliye Cemiyeti* (*Local Guards Society*) and were engaged in collecting donations to the volunteer units which the *Asâkir-i Milliye Cemiyeti* (*Local Guards Society*) coordinated. The Military Gifts Society was established in the autumn of 1876, later than the Equipping Auxiliary Troops Society. It functioned until it was abolished in the spring of 1877.⁶⁰⁹ *Basiret* published the donation lists belonging to this society and on November 2, 1876, *Çaylak* published an article regarding donations and praised this society highly, using a patriotic language, promising to donate the revenue from the publication of the following issue.⁶¹⁰ Students of the Kasımpaşa Military School raised a total of 1001 *piastres* as *iâne* and handed it to the *Hediye-i Askeriyye Cemiyeti* to help fund the soldiers winter clothing.⁶¹¹ *Basiret*, published a commentary to this piece and praised the success of this newly established military school.⁶¹²

The references to this society and the Local Guards Society in secondary literature differ significantly as to the details of their dealings and why eventually it was abolished. However, there is no doubt that this society was regarded as a serious threat by Abdülhamid II, and he quickly intervened. While the initial donation campaign and the volunteering efforts were conducted under the Military authorities, soon the initiatives of the constitutionalists seem to have gained pace. During the initial period of his reign, Abdülhamid II did not target the Society immediately. However, in February 1877, Abdülhamid II removed Midhat Paşa from office, sent him to exile and appointed Ahmed Vefik as the new head of the committee. Ziya Paşa, the committee leader was appointed as a governor to Syria.⁶¹³ The crucial thing

⁶⁰⁹ BOA. İ. DH. 752/61390.

⁶¹⁰ *Çaylak*, no. 92.

⁶¹¹ *Basiret*, no. 1954

⁶¹² This school was established in 1875, as part of reforming military education.

⁶¹³ Tansel, "Ahmet Vefik Paşa," 122.

according to Mardin was the establishment of military units who were loyal to Midhat Paşa and Namık Kemal.⁶¹⁴ The society was eventually abolished in March 1877.⁶¹⁵ After its abolishment, Namık Paşa was vested with the duty to look into this society and its transactions with the claims that the society was not handling the donations in a proper manner.⁶¹⁶ The implication for fraud and misuse of the funds could have been devised as a strategy to justify the closing down of the society. The fact that the constitutionalists organized military units under their control was surely effective for making Abdülhamid II limit this society. However, this was also representative of a disruption in the established power relations. Having the support of the populations, organizing their own aid fund and organizing soldiers through these channels could have been perceived as a claim to power.

3.2.4.3 Compulsory donation

Despite all the fervent support for the relief campaign, the Ottoman government was forced to conduct a compulsory donation campaign. A total of 336,837 Ottoman pounds was collected because of this initial campaign.⁶¹⁷ By the end of November 1876, the Ottoman state started to discuss compulsory donations and *Basiret*, announced the compulsory donation at the end of December 1876.

⁶¹⁴ Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*.

⁶¹⁵ BOA. İ. DH. 752/61390.

⁶¹⁶ BOA. İ. DH. 752/61390 “...müşevveş ve muhasebatı dahi muhtaç-ı tedkik olduğu rivayet olundugundan bu komisyona ait hesapların reviyet ve tetkikiyle neticenin ilanınin..”

⁶¹⁷ Akyıldız, *Para Pul Oldu*, 174. To put the donation amount in perspective, it is necessary to provide some additional information regarding other donation practices and an estimate in the total spending during the Balkan Crises. During the famine relief in 1874, a total of 52,994 Ottoman pounds were collective in the first month of the relief campaign. The amount of donations reached to 60,630 Ottoman pounds in six months. Erler, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kuraklık*, 211. While the amount of voluntary donations during the Balkan Crisis was much more than the amount collected during the famine relief, the donations were indeed very small when compared to the war budget, as will be discussed below.

The compulsory donation was a state-led and structured campaign which stated that man above 15 years of age were supposed to donate 10 to 20 piastres depending on their income.⁶¹⁸ The compulsory donation was accompanied by the establishment of a commission under the Public Finance Administration, which was entrusted with the duty to collect and report the donations. The process of collecting this compulsory donation required organization and regulation by the state. Each district was designated with a total sum of donations, which was then distributed according to the district's economic power. The payment could be made by coins and *kaime* in return for a receipt. Ottoman government would send the receipts to the districts and the local power holders, such as neighborhood imams (*eimme-i mahalata*), shopkeepers warden (*esnaf kethüdası*) and patriarchs, would be responsible for breaking down the total amount of donation among the local population. *Basiret* criticized the fact that religious leaders were prominent in this process and argued that local administration should have taken more responsibility.⁶¹⁹

The Ottoman state justified the call for compulsory donation on the following reasons: the voluntary donation campaign did not suffice to cover the war expenses, *kaime* project had failed to support the treasury and the war brought yet another financial burden on state budget.⁶²⁰ All these had forced the government to impose a compulsory donation on the Ottoman population and the male population above the age of 15 were required (*mükellef ve mecbur*) to make the designated payment. The article underlined that if the number of vouchers were higher than the population of a certain region, local notables were asked to pay for the extra vouchers by either

⁶¹⁸ BOA. İ. MMS. 55/2496.

⁶¹⁹ Sağlam, *İstanbul Şehir Mektupları*, 543.

⁶²⁰ BOA. İ. MMS. 55/2496.

directly taking on more responsibility or aiding the people who could not meet the expectations.



Figure 9. Compulsory donation receipt worth 20 piastres.⁶²¹

Curiously, the draft of the state statement on compulsory donation emphasized that the initial campaign was carried out predominantly by Muslim subjects. The call for this compulsory donation was to make sure that the financial burden did not fall on the Muslim subjects alone.⁶²² However, as the aforementioned analysis of the donation lists reveals, the burden did not fall on the Muslim subjects alone; Christian and Jewish Ottoman subjects participated in the donation campaign, with large sums. This point was omitted in the compulsory donation ordinance⁶²³

⁶²¹ BOA. TS. MA. e 551/92.

⁶²² BOA. İ. MMS. 55/2496.

⁶²³ BOA. C. ML. 29/1397.

and *Basiret* did not articulate the ethno-religious composition of the donations in the announcement about the compulsory campaign.⁶²⁴

The state aimed at collecting 180,777,500 piastres with the compulsory *iâne* but could only collect 49,969,414 piasters. One of the reasons for the gap between the expected and realized amounts lies in the fact that donations collected in certain provinces such as Erzurum, Trabzon, Tuna and Bosna were spent in the provinces.⁶²⁵

Despite all the efforts of collecting donations, the amounts raised were not sufficient to cover the war expenses. Set aside the amount raised with the voluntary donation campaign, the 180 million piastres, which the government aimed at collecting with the compulsory donation would not suffice to cover the war expenses and the government set out to print paper money worth of 7 million Ottoman pounds. 2.5 million was to be spent on the immediate war costs.⁶²⁶ The financial difficulties were also discussed in the Ottoman parliament and these discussions provide insights into the donations and the finances of the war effort.

By the time the Ottoman parliament convened in March 1877, compulsory donation had been in existence for more than three months, and the constitutionalists' relief efforts were curbed down by Abdülhamid II. One of the ways in which relief is discussed in the parliament revolves around a tension between the capital and the provinces. The deputies emphasize the participation of the periphery in the *iane* campaigns while at the same time underlining the unsatisfactory participation of the capital. Provincial deputies constantly criticize the notables of Istanbul and the high-ranking bureaucrats for not contributing sufficiently to the war efforts. Süleyman Bey, the Nish deputy, commented that the population of the capital needed to

⁶²⁴ *Basiret*, no. 1972.

⁶²⁵ Akyıldız, *Para Pul Oldu*, 183.

⁶²⁶ Akyıldız, *Para Pul Oldu*, 186.

contribute to the donation campaign and participate in the voluntary units, similar to the Ottomans residing outside the capital.⁶²⁷ Similar comments were emphasized by the Erzurum deputy Hamazasb Efendi and Nafi Efendi, Haleb deputy. These discussions all reveal a tension between the provincial representatives and the representatives of the capital. Istanbul deputies on the other hand, defend their resistance to participating in the donation campaign by claiming that they had doubts about the ways in which these donations were spent. The notables of Istanbul, and particularly the ministers, were targeted. Their initial contribution is declared as insufficient and most of the provincial deputies agree that the ministers needed to contribute to the relief efforts more. It is imperative to note that all these discussions took place in a session which focused on the financial situation. Initial suggestions included a possible increase in taxes and a reduction in the salaries of civil officialdom. Yet, as the above analysis of the donation lists reveal, the highest group to contribute to the donation campaign was the civil servants. Their comments need to be understood as articulations of their “duty” as the representatives of their regions. Their aim was to underline the participation of their region in the patriotic campaign and encourage the participation of the high-ranking bureaucrats instead of imposing more taxes on the Ottoman subjects. Such propositions also signified an accumulation of power on the part of the parliament as opposed to the government.

In February 1878 the state conducted a major revision with regards to the committee responsible for the donation; and the War Relief Commission which ceased to exist with the ceasefire, was amalgamated into the Refugee Commission (*İane-i Muhacirin Encümeni*) and the remaining money was transferred to the municipality, to be spend on the refugees.⁶²⁸ After the ceasefire, the Ottoman society

⁶²⁷ Us, *Meclis-i Mebusan*, vol.1, 235.

⁶²⁸ BOA. İ. DH. 763/62215.

continued to aid both the state and the society, by helping the refugees and providing relief to the Refugees' Commission. Similar aid mechanisms were put in effect for the displaced populations. In the Prince Islands, under the supervision of Yanko Efendi, a concert was held to aid the *muhacirin*. The revenue from the concert and the donations in money and kind were all used for helping the displaced populations. Another concert, again in one of the Prince Islands, was held to aid the refugees. Various plays were performed in which the revenue would be donated to the Refugee Committee.⁶²⁹

3.3 Volunteering for the Ottoman Army

In a meeting about enlisting non-Muslims into the army in 1865, Ahmed Cevdet Paşa commented against their enlisting, underlining three points. He argued that their participation in the army would require the enrollment of various religious leaders in units, which would presumably lead to a complicated situation. Second, he argued that there could be conflicts among Muslim and non-Muslim soldiers, which could possibly result in the destruction of the military order. Lastly, and most importantly, he argued that the central concept in mobilization and fighting was *ghaza* and with the inclusion of non-Muslims the concept of *ghaza* and Islamic martyrdom would be jeopardized.⁶³⁰

Identifying religious ideology as the main impetus behind the Ottoman military system, Ahmed Cevdet claims that the concept of homeland (*vatan*) would fail to provide such an impetus. Replacing religious zeal (*gayret-i diniyye*) with patriotism (*gayret-i vataniyye*), as is the case in Europe according to him, is doomed

⁶²⁹ For the details of these examples and the aid to refugees in general, see İpek, *Rumeliden Anadolu'ya Göçler*.

⁶³⁰ Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'rûzât*, 114.

to fail because the soldiers would recall their villages⁶³¹ upon hearing the word *vatan*. Instilling patriotic zeal into the minds of the Ottomans would require a long time, and the army would remain soulless (*ruhsuz*) until such a goal is achieved. Careful to identify the overarching power and influence of patriotism and nationalism in the West, Ahmed Cevdet perceives religious zeal and patriotism as mutually exclusive and claims the latter's ineffectiveness for the time being.

Along with logistical and ideological reasons, Ahmed Cevdet, curiously, adds another reason to exclude the non-Muslims. What looks like a glorifying comment about the sacrifices of Muslim soldiers, indeed enforces a cultural disposition, emphasizing the tension on how to integrate non-Muslim populations as equals into a social system that favors Muslims as *millet-i hakime*. According to him, Muslim soldiers would only ask for dry bread and ammunition during battles while the non-Muslims would require their payments at the beginning of every month and would not be fit for such difficulties. In addition to the obvious outcomes of insufficient subsistence on the battlefield, narratives about the atrocities include details about how soldiers would plunder and assault civilians for food.⁶³² Telling as his comments may be about the provisioning of the army, his comments for the exclusion of non-Muslims are handled in a surprisingly different way by the state and the volunteer soldiers during the Balkan Crisis.

Ahmed Cevdet's reservation about accepting non-Muslims into the Ottoman army was going to be challenged at a certain historical juncture, in which non-Muslims, along with various groups, such as *ilmiye* students, participated in the

⁶³¹ He refers to the main square in the village, "*köylerindeki meydanlar*." Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'rûzât*, 114.

⁶³² For the atrocities of the irregular troops and the lack of payment and rations during the Crimean War see Badem, *Ottoman Crimean War*. Consul Blunt wrote from Salonica in August that the violence, particularly the plunder and theft attributed to the *başıbozüks* was the result of lack of food. From Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby, August 28, 1876. FO. 424/43.

Ottoman army as volunteer forces. Terms such as “*vatan*” and “*vatandaş*” made their way into the vocabulary of both the state and the society, and these concepts were instrumentalized along with references to religious duties and jihad. A rhetorical shift that allowed the use of religious martyrdom and a patriotic understanding of homeland, *vatan*, side by side, resulted in novel ways of mobilizing the Ottoman society. Language of mobilization emphasized the religious duties, Islamic law, the protection of the homeland and the sultanate. The convergence of patriotic and religious rhetoric implies that an analysis on the evolution of the concept of imperial belonging and patriotism should not disregard the military aspect.⁶³³

The aid (*iâne*) campaigns of the Balkan Crisis were part of a larger mobilization which included, in addition to donations, giving oneself to the war effort and participation in the war as a volunteer. Volunteering for the war was an extension of the aid campaign, and it served an important function in patriotic mobilization. In addition to its rhetorical value, voluntary units provided manpower, at least as a temporary solution with major setbacks, and they allowed various ethno-religious groups to define, create and negotiate their imperial identity and allegiance to the Ottoman state. The Ottoman state tried to maintain and control these groups, and the political outcomes of the violence associated with the irregular units in an increasingly threatening context with respect to Ottoman sovereignty.

By delving into the details of the formation, composition, utilization and press coverage of volunteer units during the Balkan Crisis, this section will highlight the following points: (1) This process was not restricted to the Muslims or the Circassians and it included different ethno-religious groups, which had diverse

⁶³³ A point that Burak Onaran underlines in *Padişahı Devirmek*. By drawing on some of the existing literature on the history of the notion of citizenship in the late Ottoman Empire, Onaran argues that the military aspect has been overlooked in the literature regarding Ottoman citizenship. Onaran, *Padişahı Devirmek*.

motivations in joining the war effort. (2) Formation of these units were part and parcel of larger political discussions about the Ottoman imperial identity. (3) It was an important turning point regarding the discussions on notions of equality and compulsory military service, and it served as an example in future discussions on the inclusion of non-Muslims in the Ottoman army. (4) Similar to the rhetoric of aid, the campaign for the voluntary units incorporated two ideologies: Ottoman patriotism, *Osmanlılık* and religious zeal through jihad. (5) While the impetus behind the formation of volunteer forces during the Serbian War was quasi-civilian, these practices were repeated during the Ottoman Russian War with an increasing state involvement, turning some of the patriotic practices into a top-down mechanism. In other words, the Ottoman government incorporated the quasi-civilian initiatives into proper mobilization and aimed to achieve a more centralized and controlled enlisting in a war which was conducted in two frontiers against the Russian Empire. (6) Focusing on the social and cultural aspects of warfare, this section aims to reveal the ways in which Ottoman society engaged with mobilization and how mobilization was merged into socio-political transformations of the period.

3.3.1 Military theory

Military historians analyze the volunteer troops within the context of a shift in military organization, which is a move towards “total war.” Initially used as a concept to define the First World War, the term “total war” has been appropriated in defining the transformations of military conflicts over the nineteenth century and situating them on a path towards the World War I. This approach implies a linear move towards total war and regular warfare, excluding the use of irregular

soldiers.⁶³⁴ Exemplifying the use of varied irregular warfare methods during the nineteenth century, one major criticism of this approach has been to reject such linear understanding of the transformation of warfare. Hybrid warfare was not an exception and the period of recurring unrest in the Balkans proves an important example in explicating the hybrid nature of warfare.⁶³⁵

“Modern warfare,” another term that is used to define warfare in nineteenth century was not limited to any one set of characteristics, and it contained a variety of different means, such as the incorporation of civilians and use of modern technologies.⁶³⁶ In addition to incorporation of irregular forces in conflicts worldwide, civilian populations were involved in the war effort both as people participating in mobilization and as people who are targeted by the conflicts.⁶³⁷ The Spanish colonies witnessed the use of irregular warfare in 1868 both in the insurrection in Cuba and the Second Carlist War during the second half of the nineteenth century and imperial powers incorporated local military support for their imperial projects.⁶³⁸ By the 1828-1829 Russo-Turkish War, integrating Balkan volunteers into the Russian army had become a traditional policy.⁶³⁹

Two wars of the nineteenth century, the Franco-Prussian War and the American Civil Wars are identified as the events which marked the transition from the *Kabinettskriege*, to people’s war witnessing the mobilization of the entire populations.⁶⁴⁰ *Franc tireurs*, the guerrilla bands incorporated by the French, blurred the distinction between civilians and military personnel⁶⁴¹ and their legacy would be

⁶³⁴ Beşikçi, “Başıbozuk Savaşçıdan Makbul Tebaaya,” Forster and Nagler, “Introduction.”

⁶³⁵ Beşikçi, “Başıbozuk Savaşçıdan Makbul Tebaaya.”

⁶³⁶ Beşikçi, “Başıbozuk Savaşçıdan Makbul Tebaaya;,” 88 Black, *War in the Nineteenth Century*, 9.

⁶³⁷ Beşikçi, “Başıbozuk Savaşçıdan Makbul Tebaaya,” 89.

⁶³⁸ Black, *War in the Nineteenth Century*, 138.

⁶³⁹ Bitis, “Balkan Irregulars.”

⁶⁴⁰ Forster and Nagler, “Introduction”; Jones, “Fighting this nation,” 173.

⁶⁴¹ Jones, “Fighting this nation,” 173.

carried into the Balkan Conflicts of the 1870's. Identified as a hybrid war, the Franco-Prussian War is marked as the moment of transition from cabinet's war to people's war.⁶⁴²

In defining the characteristics of people's war and the transformation of warfare in the nineteenth century, the following qualities are underlined in literature. The role of public opinion, civilian participation as militias, the force of ideologies and their relation to public sentiment, use of industrial weaponry, changes into the nature of conscription, the state efforts in influencing public opinion and coercing the populations into warfare, which eventually led to the transformations of the state and society at large. These characteristics have been elaborated in detail with reference to European wars and imperial ambitions.

The discussion on the concept of total war has the potential to shed light onto the social aspect of mobilization and the participation of civilians. As an extension of the *iâne* practice, forming volunteer forces was a phenomenon of this period and they proved important in revealing how the Ottoman state utilized and incorporated these practices.

3.3.2 Earlier irregular formations

The use of irregular units by the Ottomans had always been an integral part of warfare, making the notion of hybrid warfare a more illustrative framework⁶⁴³ than the concept of total war. Irregular troops had been part of the Ottoman wars against Russia in the nineteenth century⁶⁴⁴ and during the Cretan uprising.⁶⁴⁵ During the

⁶⁴² Jones, "Fighting this nation," 174.

⁶⁴³ Beşikçi, "Başbozuk Savaşçıdan Makbul Tebaaya," 90.

⁶⁴⁴ Köremizli, "Osmanlı-Rus Harpleri," 260.

⁶⁴⁵ "...asakir-i şahaneden bir bölük ile yerli muvazzaf ve gönüllü askerinden beş yüz kişi..." *Tasvîr-i Efkar*, no.486. 27.05.1867.

Crimean War, the use of irregular units, also known as *başıbozüks*, resulted in protests by foreign diplomatic personnel and Ottoman subjects.⁶⁴⁶

Irregular warfare was deployed not only by the Ottoman state but by different actors in conflicts during the Balkan Crisis. The Bulgarian uprising in 1876, the Greek irregulars in Thessaly, Epirus and Macedonia, or the Bosnian Muslim warfare against the Austrian occupation in 1878 all witnessed the use of irregular forces.⁶⁴⁷ Involvement of civilians in warfare rested on diverse mechanism which involved the incorporation of ethno-religious groups by way of negotiations with the community leaders in the rural areas and the involvement of volunteers through the incentive of urban populations. Politically inclined societies took an active role in organizing the logistics regarding the volunteer units and the experiences of the individuals were published in the press, which played a crucial role in disseminating ideas, experiences, information and political campaigns.

The hybrid nature of warfare and its reliance on populations underlines another crucial aspect of nineteenth century warfare; its relationship with urban populations and the fact that mobilization had to be carried out in an increasing urban context. This reliance is labelled as a shift in tasking and reflects the fact that military organization was part of a “more urban, populist and demotic” style “than the political cultures of the courts and cabinets of the eighteenth century.”⁶⁴⁸ This transformation is also closely related with the patriotic, quasi-civilian aid campaigns and the voluntary involvement in war efforts, both as soldiers and as medical personnel. As will be exemplified below, volunteering for the war effort was an extension of the aid campaign, both rhetorically and logistically.

⁶⁴⁶ Badem, *Ottoman Crimean War*, 377-394.

⁶⁴⁷ Black, *War in the Nineteenth Century*, 137.

⁶⁴⁸ Black, *War in the Nineteenth Century*, 4.

Major cities emerged as sites of specific groups of volunteers, and these were propagated through the press. Volunteering for the war was not limited to negotiations between communal leaders and the state, as will be discussed below, but witnessed the participation of intellectuals, people in positions of power and prestige, and the urban populations, including the capital, which was traditionally exempt from military service.

3.3.3 History of irregular warfare in the Ottoman Empire

Auxiliary troop formation was a phenomenon which existed in the Classical Era. Mercenaries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were labelled as “*levend*” but additional terminology included *gönüllü* (volunteer) and others.⁶⁴⁹ *Levend* meant a mercenary force, either *piyade* (infantry) or *süvari* (cavalry), with the ability to use firearms.⁶⁵⁰ These soldiers were linked with individuals in positions of power, such as a Vizier or a *beylerbeyi* (provincial governor) and a change in the position of their protector would result in their dispersal, which would eventually lead these men in arms to commit crimes and become unruly. *Levends* were united under their leader, *bölükbaşı*, who was responsible for training and arming them. Following their formation, they would seek to draw up a contract with either the local administrator or with central administration.⁶⁵¹ Although the role of *levends* in social unrests is disputed,⁶⁵² it is clear from the shift in the meaning of the term that this word came to symbolize a certain mode of behavior that is associated with

⁶⁴⁹ Other terms for the auxiliary troops of the early modern era are *sekban*, *sarıca*, *deli*, *faris*. Uyar and Erickson, *Osmanlı Askeri Tarihi*, 91-92; İlgürel, “*Levent*.”

⁶⁵⁰ Uyar and Erickson, *Osmanlı Askeri Tarihi*, 168.

⁶⁵¹ Uyar and Erickson, *Osmanlı Askeri Tarihi*, 169.

⁶⁵² Notwithstanding the fact that they were involved in rebellions and banditry, some scholars question the centrality of their role in social unrest and argue that their involvement may not have been as central as is claimed. *Osmanlı Askeri Tarihi*.

violence and the word *levend* actually gained a secondary meaning, denoting criminals.

The 1828-29 Ottoman Russian War marks the first use of the term *başıbozuk*, to differentiate the auxiliary troops from regular army.⁶⁵³ With the onset of this war, a general mobilization, *nefir-i amm*, was put into practice to provide as many men as possible to the army. The term *nefir-i amm* indicates the armament of civilians in situations when regular army is not deployed or is not sufficient and the term was still in use during the Bulgarian Uprising.⁶⁵⁴ The number of voluntary soldiers, mercenaries and tribal warriors was estimated to be more than 80,000 and to differentiate these units from the regular army, they were labelled as *başıbozuk*. Both in the 1841 revolt of Nish and the Vidin revolt in 1849 *başıbozuk* were mobilized to suppress the revolts. The *başıbozuk* forces, resorted to violence which caused much trouble to the authorities.⁶⁵⁵

The term *başıbozuk* does not appear in the dictionaries until 1856.⁶⁵⁶ The earlier terminology for defining the irregular troops is *levend* and *ansar* in the dictionaries. *Levend* is defined as a volunteer soldier and *ansar* is defined as an auxiliary force with reference to the Hegira and defined within a specific Islamic context. The term *asâkir-i muavine* appears in Bianchi's *Dictionnaire Français-Turc* published in 1843.⁶⁵⁷

⁶⁵³ Uyar and Erickson, *Osmanlı Askeri Tarihi*, 283. Earliest records in the archives containing the word *başıbozuk*, hint at the negative connotation of the word before the nineteenth century. While most of the documents containing *başıbozuk* date from 1829 and onwards, a few documents exist dating before the Russo-Ottoman War of 1828.

⁶⁵⁴ Eldem, *İzlenimler*.

⁶⁵⁵ İnalcık, "Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi," 54-56.

⁶⁵⁶ Bianchi's Dictionaries (editions 1835-37; 1843; 1850) do not have either a separate entry or use the term *başıbozuk* in the definitions.

⁶⁵⁷ Bianchi, *Dictionnaire Français-Turc*, vol. 1.

The Redhouse Ottoman-English dictionary of 1856 defines the term *başibozuk* as “one whose clothes are not uniform”⁶⁵⁸ and the English-Ottoman volume defines the term civilian as “*başibozuk, askerden olmayan*” (someone not part of the military). Additionally the word irregular is also explained with the term *başibozuk*.⁶⁵⁹ Redhouse English Turkish Lexicon of 1877 defines the word irregular with the word *başibozuk* and adds that the military usage of the term irregular signifies *başibozuk neferi*.⁶⁶⁰ During the Crimean War, according to Badem *başibozuk* soldiers were officially called war *asâkir-i muvazzafa*, however the term *muvazzaf* denoted participants of the regular army, people who were conscripted.⁶⁶¹ Despite the lack of agreement among the scholars regarding the labels during the Crimean War, *başibozuk* soldiers and other types of auxiliary forces were not conscripts, and there was a different procedure for their participation with the Ottoman army during the conflicts.

By the late nineteenth century, the meaning of *başibozuk* was fixed, indicating irregular soldiers however, it is important to note that the original meaning of the term as someone who did not belong to military order, helps clarify the relation between the term *başibozuk* and the notion of disorderly. In the 1890 Turkish English Lexicon *başibozuk* is defined as both an irregular soldier and a civilian, as someone who is not in uniform and *başibozuk asker* is the equivalent of an irregular soldier. The word *bozuk* is defined as irregular, not subjected to regular military organization. By 1901, *Kamus-i Türki* defines *asâkir-i mauvine* as “*asâkiri*

⁶⁵⁸ Redhouse, *An English and Turkish dictionary*, 525.

⁶⁵⁹ “Irregular: ittiradsız; nizamsız; intizamsız; kaidesiz; yolsuz; shazz; başibozuk.” Redhouse, *An English and Turkish dictionary*, 175.

⁶⁶⁰ Redhouse, *Lexicon English and Turkish*.

⁶⁶¹ Ayın, *Tanzimat'tan sonra Askeralma Kanunları*, 13; Zürcher, “Ottoman Conscription System,” 440.

muntazamaya yardım etmek üzere esna-i harbde cem ve sevk olunan başıbozuk askerler.”⁶⁶²

This brief survey of the term *başıbozuk* reveals that the meaning of *başıbozuk* had multiple layers and it was not fixed. These men in arms, initially were recruited along the lines of mercenary forces, and after the establishment of *kura* system (drawing of lots) in 1843 and the modernization of the military forces throughout the nineteenth century, they represented an irregular formation that never became part of the proper Ottoman military system but was always used as a backup force. The definitions of the various dictionaries reveal that the term, and these men had a cultural significance, and the meaning of the term transformed in time, only to be fixed by the time of the Balkan Crisis.

Defining the *başıbozuk* with reference to belonging to military forces, being subjected to orderly behavior and their clothing implies that *başıbozüks* became symbols of non-orderly behavior and this secondary meaning would quickly turn into an international phenomenon, having a wider discursive function. With modern informational technologies, violence could easily become a public matter and the atrocities in the Balkans became a matter of public discussion. This coincided with the raise of philanthropy in the European public and the increasing influence of morality in political debates and the image of the *başıbozuk* gained an international recognition and served as a justification for political campaigns.

One of the reasons for the defeat in the 1828-1829 War, is attributed to the mishandling of the *başıbozuk* units, which fought without the support of the regular army, reducing their discipline and fighting capacities.⁶⁶³ Ottoman administration did

⁶⁶² Şemseddin Sami Efendi, *Kamus-ı Türki*.

⁶⁶³ İnalçık, “Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi,” 54-56; Uyar and Erickson, *Osmanlı Askeri Tarihi*, 294.

not provide these units with conventional logistical support,⁶⁶⁴ which reduced the burden on the administration and the regular army at a heavy cost that fell on the civilians. Another commonality of these units was that they could desert the battlefield very quickly, a quality that made them unreliable as opposed to the regular army. Apart from the men deployed through tribal networks, they were mostly peasants without land and men from towns and cities without any profession. These units would make their contracts generally with the local administrators or the governors. A small number of them were contractually bound to the state.⁶⁶⁵

With the Crimean War, the Ottoman irregular force, *başıbozuk* gained a worldwide recognition as the symbol of despotic oriental. Building on the earlier depictions of the “barbaric Turk” since the Greek Revolution in literature and in arts, *başıbozuk* became an object of both a fascination and a condemnation. Fascinated with their uniforms, Edward Money depicts the uniforms of the *başıbozuk* soldiers and includes pictures of various irregular units in his book *Twelve months with the Başıbozuk*.⁶⁶⁶ See below for an illustration of the *başıbozuk* from a Russian newspaper. Condemnation on the other hand stemmed from the brutality of the irregulars. From the beginning of their deployment during the Crimean War, *başıbozuk* atrocities were reported and discussed by the foreign authorities. Regular soldiers were ordered to prevent *başıbozuk* from plundering and committing atrocities and Sultan Abdülmecid issued a firman ordering the punishment of *başıbozuk* for their unruly behavior.⁶⁶⁷ British officers even attempted to form a disciplinary unit to control the *başıbozuk*. With the Balkan Crisis, especially with the Bulgarian atrocities, the *başıbozuk* became the epitome of the barbaric oriental.

⁶⁶⁴ Uyar and Erickson, *Osmanlı Askeri Tarihi*, 294.

⁶⁶⁵ Uyar and Erickson, *Osmanlı Askeri Tarihi*.

⁶⁶⁶ Money, *Twelve Months*.

⁶⁶⁷ Badem, *Ottoman Crimean War*.

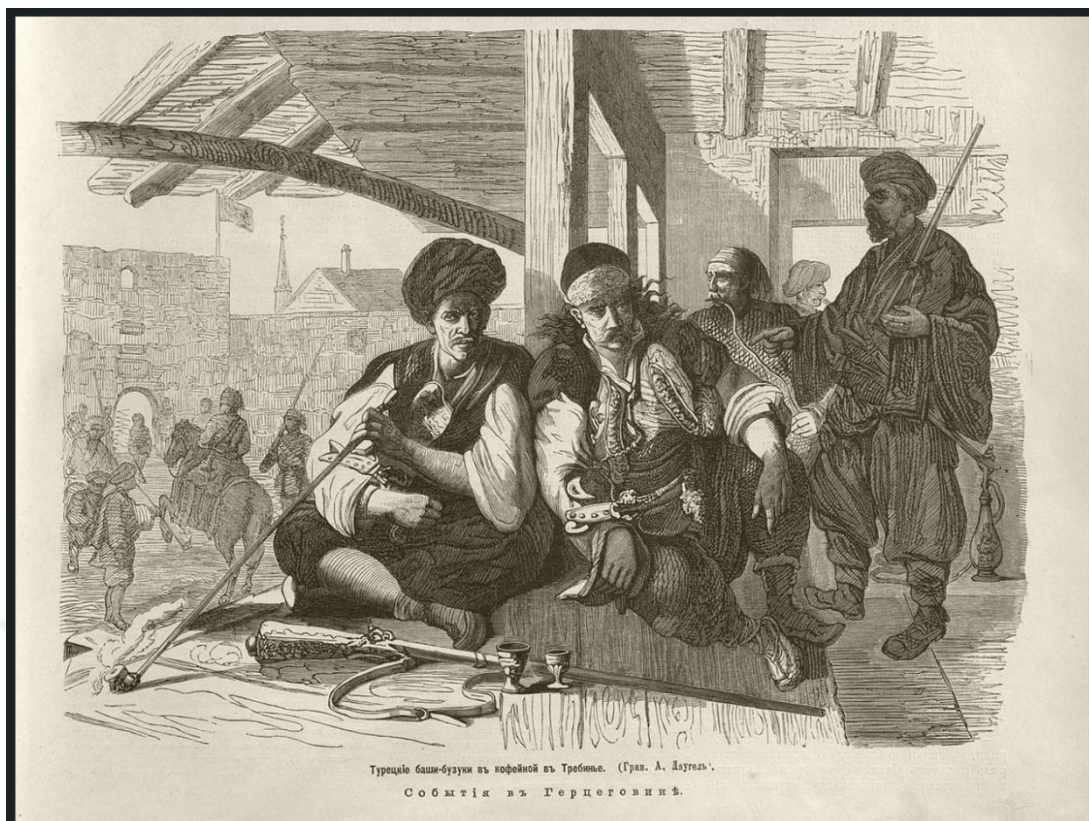


Figure 10. *Başıbozuk* illustration from the Russian illustrated press. The image is titled as “Turkish *başıbozüks* at a coffeeshop in Trebinje.”⁶⁶⁸

3.3.4 Voluntary units during the Balkan Crisis

The Balkan Crisis witnessed the incorporation of volunteer units by different parties with various motives and distinct discourses. For the Ottomans, volunteer units formed an important component of the fighting force, however there was a major problem. *Başıbozuk* had such a negative image both internationally and domestically that the state had to invent a new term for irregular forces and to create new regulations to prevent uncontrolled violence against the civilians. Despite the continuing use of the term *başıbozuk* in some of the official correspondence during the Balkan Wars, there clearly was an attempt to change the naming of the irregular

⁶⁶⁸ *Vsemirnaja Illjustracija (World Illustrated) Всемирная Иллюстрация*. 1876. No.374, 161.

units and their uniforms, which was a response to the earlier European fascination with and the instrumentalization of the *başıbozuk* and their legacy of violence in the recent years.

According to the military historians, the reasons for the inclusion of irregular units during the Balkan conflicts are the irregular nature of warfare stemming from militia organizations, banditry and tribal unrest,⁶⁶⁹ and the insufficient number of soldiers and lack of a systematic and effective conscription system.⁶⁷⁰ The creation of independent detachments (*müfreze*) was another factor for the continuation of the use of irregular troops. These independent detachments were mission-oriented units composed of battalions and irregular groups⁶⁷¹ which served in suppressing local unrest and they could easily join the war effort, reducing the state preoccupation with logistics.

The initial uprising in Herzegovina reveals the utilization of militia groups from Europe to support an uprising against the Ottoman Empire. Following the unrest about taxes in the villages surrounding Nevesinje and the attack on traders by insurgents in July 6, there occurred an influx of fighters, revolutionaries, political activists and war reporters into Herzegovina and the conflict made its way into the European press quickly.⁶⁷² Labelled as *franc tireurs* by the contemporaries with reference to the French irregular forces of the Franco-Prussian War, the revolutionaries included individuals from Europe, being recruited by the Slavic revolutionary committees.⁶⁷³

⁶⁶⁹ Uyar and Erickson, *Military History*, 180.

⁶⁷⁰ Beşikçi, "Başıbozuk Savaşçıdan Makbul Tebaaya," 89-91.

⁶⁷¹ Uyar and Erickson, *Military History*, 184.

⁶⁷² Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*; xvii.

⁶⁷³ Grandits, *End of Ottoman Rule*.

The pan-Slav committees were actively involved in supporting any armed resistance to the Ottomans and among the recruits were not only Russian subjects but also recruits from Italy, the Red Coats. Italian volunteer fighters, following Garibaldi, were among the first volunteer groups to come to the aid of the insurgents in Herzegovina, which was followed by the establishment of a league which aimed to establish a Slavic-Hellenic confederation in the Balkans, in August 1876. The *franc tireurs* joined the resistance groups and their activities were reported in the press and later in their memoirs.⁶⁷⁴ Of course these paramilitary forces had more of a symbolic value, strengthening political engagements rather than contributing to the fighting.⁶⁷⁵ Limited was their fighting force, their symbolic value turned into an asset in influencing public opinion. They were followed by reporters from Germany, England, France, Italy and were part of a political campaign which highlighted the Ottoman governments misdeeds towards the Christian populations and championed the liberation of the Slavs.

Ottoman handling of the uprising in Bulgaria was harsh, including the killing of civilians and burning of villages. The Ottomans who conducted the atrocities came from three groups, Ottoman regular forces, irregular forces and the armed Muslim inhabitants of the region⁶⁷⁶ and the *başıbozuk* was once again the symbol of the atrocities in illustrations, opinion pieces and narratives.⁶⁷⁷ Influential as it may be as a cultural trope, the irregular forces occupied a central place in politics as well. The declaration of war by Prince Obrenovic included references to the irregular atrocities

⁶⁷⁴ For a correspondent's account, see Lazzaro. *La Serbia*. For the memoir of an Italian volunteer see Barbanti-Brodano. *Serbia*.

⁶⁷⁵ Guida, "Second Eastern Crisis."

⁶⁷⁶ Eldem, *İzlenimler*, 83.

⁶⁷⁷ Ivan de Woestyne, travelled in Bulgaria and narrated his journey in the Figaro in July 1876, and published his journey with the title "Voyage au pays des Bachi-Bouzoucks." Eldem, *İzlenimler*, 90.

in the Serbian lands⁶⁷⁸ and the British representatives in the Ottoman Empire, did not refrain from threatening the Ottoman government that should the Ottoman government fail to control the irregulars, British intervention would be on the table.

3.3.4.1 Types of irregular units

There were a variety of ways in which the Ottoman state mobilized auxiliary troops during the Balkan Crisis, such as *asâkir-i muavine*, *asâkir-i milliye*, *asâkir-i milliye-i sultaniye*, *asâkir-i mülkiye*, *mevkib-i hümayun* and *hamidiye* troops. Except for the *hamidiye* troops, all the other formations were defined as *gönüllü asker*. It is imperative to differentiate between these terms prior to delving into the details of these military formations.

3.3.4.2 Defining the terminology

Voluntary participation in the Ottoman war effort is defined by the term *gönüllü* (volunteer). The word volunteer and volunteer soldier (*gönüllü asker*) were part of the Ottoman linguistic realm and almost all the editions of the Bianchi and Redhouse dictionaries include these two terms.⁶⁷⁹

In the 1837 edition of *Dictionnaire Turc-Français* by Kieffer and Bianchi, the secondary meaning of voluntary (*gönüllü*) is defined as a voluntary soldier.⁶⁸⁰ The terminology for defining regular troops is *asâkir-i nizamiye*⁶⁸¹ and auxiliary troops are indicated with *ansar*.⁶⁸² In the 1843 edition, voluntary is defined as “*iradetli*,

⁶⁷⁸ Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, v.VIII, 12.

⁶⁷⁹ Except for the 1850 edition. Bianchi and Kieffer, *Dictionnaire Turc-Français*.

⁶⁸⁰ Bianchi and Kieffer, *Dictionnaire Turc-Français*. (1850)

⁶⁸¹ “*Troupes régulières (actuelles) de sultan.*” Bianchi and Kieffer, *Dictionnaire Turc-Français* (1837)

⁶⁸² “*Ansar: auxiliaires; ceux surtout qui se joignirent à Mahomet sous en grande vénération.*” Bianchi, *Dictionnaire Français-Turc*. (1837)

ihitvari.⁶⁸³ While *ihitvari* is used to define certain phrases such as voluntary movement, (*ihitvari hareket*), the secondary meaning of voluntary has to do with voluntary soldiers that is translated as *gönüllü askeri*.⁶⁸⁴ Auxiliary troops are defined as *ensariye askeri* in the 1843 edition, and *auxiliaire armee* indicates “*imdada gelen asker, muavin asker*.”

By the Balkan crisis, the voluntary forces are defined predominantly with the term *asâkir-i muavine* and *gönüllü*. *Asâkir-i muavine* is a broad term that indicates auxiliary troop, while *gönüllü* is used both in the archives and more frequently in the press. Once the voluntary troops are established, they are referred to as *muavine birlikleri* to define their difference from the regular army soldiers, *nizamiye*. Such a classification was needed for organizing the armed forces and combining the voluntary forces with the regular army units. *Gönüllü* is explained as “*kendi hahiş ve arzularıyla*” both in the regulations and the press. The emphasis on voluntariness is essential to underline the target group, men who draw an empty lot in the *kura*. In other words, those who were not obliged to serve in the military were expected to support the Ottoman war effort by becoming volunteer soldiers. Another term that is almost always used in this context is *hamiyyet*.

With its widespread usage both with reference to *iâne* and the volunteer soldiers, *hamiyyet* has, by this period turned into a word that signifies patriotism. This transition has been attributed to the Young Ottoman intellectuals, especially to Namık Kemal, who is known as *Vatan Şairi*, and the mobilization campaign reveals that there was a rhetorical shift both in the state documentation and the public discourse. The mobilization during this period thus can be identified as the apogee of

⁶⁸³ “Qui se fait sans contrainte, de pure volonté.” Bianchi, *Dictionnaire Français-Turc*. (1843)

⁶⁸⁴ “volontaire, celui qui ser dans une armee sans y etre oblige.” Bianchi, *Dictionnaire Français-Turc*. (1843)

patriotism and the social mobilization that had been advocated by the members of the Young Ottomans.⁶⁸⁵ What makes this period of mobilization interesting, is the fact that responses of the Ottoman intellectuals' during the past decades against the socio-political transformations of the empire and the increasing tension with respect to protecting the empire since the Creten events, seems to have contributed to both the language and the practice of the Balkan mobilization.

Phrases such as *vatan uğruna hizmet etmek*, *vatan uğruna feda-ı can*, *muhafaza-ı vatan*, *hamiyyet-i vataniye*, *hamiyyet-i diniye*, and *muhabbet-i vataniye* are frequently used in the official calls and the newspapers. The term *vatan* is translated as *patrie* in the 1843 edition, *hubb 'ül-vatan* is defined as the "love of the homeland" and "*vatan yolunda*" is defined as "for the love of the homeland."⁶⁸⁶ Additionally, *vatandaş* is also part of the patriotic language of the period. The Armenian volunteers, for example, are announced as the brave patriots in *Vakit*.⁶⁸⁷

Drawing on Peter Burke's reservation about the road to intellectual revolution from settled ideologies, Reinkowski cautiously underlines the setback of pinpointing isolated terminologies in defining ideological transformations.⁶⁸⁸ This reservation proves useful in identifying the terminology of Balkan mobilization. While the quasi-secular patriotic terminology is easily discernible, the notion of jihad and Islamic martyrdom also prevails. Advertising the staging of Namık Kemal's *Vatan* play, an article in *Vakit* combines the patriotic and religious zeal.⁶⁸⁹ This article invites the readers to attend the staging of Namık Kemal's play and claims that the past events would help to understand the difficulties that the Ottoman compatriots (*düşman*

⁶⁸⁵ Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*.

⁶⁸⁶ Bianchi, *Dictionnaire Français-Turc*. (1843)

⁶⁸⁷ "Ermeni vatandaşlarımızdan 300 neferi müteceviz şıcan-ı vatanperveran", *Vakit*. No.275.

⁶⁸⁸ Reinkowski, "The State's Security," 196.

⁶⁸⁹ "cümlemizin selameti için feda-yı cana hazırlanmış olan gönüllü vatandaşlarımızın ihtiyacat-ı cihâdiyelerine medar olmak üzere" *Vakit*, no.282.

karşısında bulunan vatandaşlarımız) are facing against the enemy and that they are fighting jihad with *rayet-i nusret* (flag representing god's help) and *seyf-i celadet* (brave swords). Other articles depicting the participation of Kurdish volunteers also use Islamic martyrdom as an important motivation.

In a similar vein, the petitions from Aydın are imbued with Islamic references. In addition to serving the state and the homeland (*devlet ve vatana hizmet*) jihad and god's path (*cihad ve fisebilillah*), honor of martyrdom (*şeref-i şehadet*), mujahid and ghaza are used to express the will of the volunteers. These telegrams are indeed interesting because they reveal the immediate formation of voluntary units, ready to join the war effort, as they claim. The total number of soldiers was roughly around 2,300⁶⁹⁰ and according to the telegrams all units were formed after having received the official announcement. Despite their willingness, the government does not accept their offer, claiming that the expected number of volunteers has been achieved and that they would be called in the future, if need be.⁶⁹¹ It should also be noted that the language of all the telegrams is not the same. The telegram from Aydın uses the Islamic terminology explicitly while the telegram from İzmir, signed by Hacı Ahmed is rather brief and only include the term sacred duty (*hizmet-i mukaddese*.) In one these telegrams the term "*vatandaş*" is used however the term here implies people from the same region.

The articles in the newspapers reveal the Ottoman intellectuals' preoccupation in defining the ways of imperial belonging, both as a continuation and a response to Tanzimat period, the telegrams from the potential volunteer soldiers on the other hand reflect how the individuals from the Western Anatolian villages engaged with the mobilization campaign.

⁶⁹⁰ 52 from İzmir, 500 from Aydın, 500 from Nazilli, 300 from Bergama, around 1,000 from Aydın.

⁶⁹¹ BOA. A. MKT. UM. 01489/00046. July 1876.

3.3.4.3 Regulations for the volunteer units

The guiding principles behind the incorporation of volunteer soldiers were defined in the *Kura Kanunu* (the regulation for the drawing of lots) of 1870 which was a supplement to the military regulation (*nizamname*) of 1869. *Kura Kanunu*, which outlined the general guidelines for accepting individuals into military service, included three articles on irregular troops.⁶⁹² Volunteer soldiers were accepted based on their health and their age, with the condition that they must not have committed an offence and that they would accept six years of military service (*nizamiye*). People who had completed their six-year service in *nizamiye* and six-year service in *redif* could again be conscripted as volunteers. These soldiers were expected to join the army of their region.⁶⁹³ The regulation allowed people from regions which were exempt from military duty to become volunteer soldiers and serve in whichever unit they wished to join.

These articles provided the general guidelines for voluntary military service however, during the Balkan Crisis, additional regulations were needed as new voluntary formations emerged. Additional regulations regarding the *asâkiri-i milliye* units provide detailed instructions and another regulation for the *muavine* units was issued in 1877 to clarify certain details and organize these troops.

3.3.5 *Asâkir-i muavine* and the accompanying association

During the Bulgarian uprising, the initial Ottoman response rested on the utilization of local irregular units, composed of volunteers. The call for *nefir-i amm*, resulted in the arming of local populations, labelling it as a defense mechanism. Volunteers from the region were armed and sent to villages where Bulgarians were revolting.

⁶⁹² *Düstur-ı Askeri*, sections 67-68-69.

⁶⁹³ For a summary of these articles, see Ayın, *Tanzimat'tan sonra Askeralma Kanunları*.

According to Baring's report, who was known for his pro-Ottoman inclinations,⁶⁹⁴ Aziz Paşa, the governor of Philippopolis and the governor of Edirne, Mehmet Akif Paşa, were responsible for arming the volunteers and sending Ahmed Ağa to Batak.⁶⁹⁵ Ahmed Ağa was later executed for the crimes committed in Batak village, which included murdering of civilians, mutilation, decapitation, rape and kidnapping.⁶⁹⁶ Ahmed Ağa was not the only figure to lead voluntary units into massacre and the Bulgarian uprising was not the only event to witness the irregular units throughout the Balkan Crisis. As will be demonstrated below, volunteering for fighting and/or defense was implemented in various ways, engaging different groups within the empire and at certain points volunteers turned into symbols of Ottoman unity.

Irregular troops had been employed in the Balkans starting from June 1876, with the initiation of war preparations and as we have seen, both civil and official initiatives were formed in spring and summer of 1876 aiding the volunteer units. While the Serbian and Montenegrin War officially started on July 1, 1876, the increasing tension between the Serbian Prince Milan Obrenovic and the Ottoman government alarmed a possible war thus both parties were already preparing for an armed conflict. At the beginning of May, volunteer units in Sofia and Tırnova were armed on the possibility of the need to use them in combat.⁶⁹⁷ According to the British Consul J. E. Blunt, Albanian *başibozuks* and reserve soldiers were forming a *corps d'armee*, which threatened the Christian populations in Macedonia and Upper Albania. He comments that these units were paid badly, were not under the control of

⁶⁹⁴ Eldem, *İzlenimler*, 902.

⁶⁹⁵ FO 434/43, no. 602.

⁶⁹⁶ Eldem, *İzlenimler*.

⁶⁹⁷ BOA. A. MKT. MHM. 480/53.

any authority and that they were keen on plundering and pillaging.⁶⁹⁸ Other reports underline the violence of these irregular troops throughout the conflicts.⁶⁹⁹ The earliest Ottoman correspondence regarding *asâkir-i muavine* troops before the official declaration of war is from mid-June 1876 and indicate that both Muslim and non-Muslim volunteers were participating in the war preparations.⁷⁰⁰

Abdi Paşa, who was previously the Minister of Police (*Zabtiye Müşiri*) was appointed to commend the irregulars in July 1876. He was of Circassian descent and was famous for his military skills.⁷⁰¹ Commenting on his appointment, Henry Elliot wrote that Abdi Paşa could be able to control the “wild mountaineers” which, according to Elliot, was necessary to prevent them from committing atrocities and to avert any public indignation in Britain.⁷⁰²

Pristina was one of the centers where the Ottoman troops gathered in preparation before going on to the battlefield. By July 3, there were around 2,000 irregulars located in Pristina, with another group of 6,000 to 8,000 expected to arrive shortly. According to a letter sent to Consul Blunt, while Pristina was calm despite the presence of many irregular soldiers, Mitrovitza was in great agitation, with drums and trumpets continuously calling the irregular soldiers to arms.⁷⁰³ Irregular troops were accompanied by drums, and they performed a procession in various locations. As staged performances, processions were part of the mobilization campaign which aimed at increasing the involvement of masses and bolstering patriotic sentiments.

⁶⁹⁸ FO. 424/42, no.188.

⁶⁹⁹ FO. 424/42, no.154. In a report to the Earl of Derby from Henry Elliot regarding the force and the distribution of the Ottoman Army, the irregulars are depicted as forces keen on plundering and Elliot adds that they were used in Herzegovinian and Nish. In another confidential letter to Mr Layard, British Vice-Consul Blakeney comments on the unruly nature of the irregular units and how regular soldiers were preoccupied with preventing them from plunder and theft. FO. 424/66, no.29.

⁷⁰⁰ BOA. ATASE OSKHK. 110/9/1/2/5/0/45.

⁷⁰¹ Mehmed Süreyya. *Sicill-i Osmani*, 52.

⁷⁰² FO. 424/42, no.157.

⁷⁰³ FO. 424/42, no. 190.

Procession of the *asâkir-i milliye* units from Salonica and the Albanian units in the capital⁷⁰⁴ reveal the symbolic value of public performances in disseminating the war ethos. The formation of irregular units therefore served as an opportunity to strengthen a patriotic rhetoric while at the same time accompanied by staged events, they served to create an incitement to participate in the war effort.

The official decree about the volunteer units is announced in *Takvîm-i Vekayi*‘ on July 15, 1876.⁷⁰⁵ This decree, along with the publication of the donation list of the high-ranking bureaucrats, announced the establishment of a committee which would organize the volunteer units and the accompanying donations for these units.

Identifying the already existing demands from the Ottoman subjects to participate as volunteers as a justification, this official decree announces the committee members, provides information on the logistics of becoming a volunteer soldier and charts the basic guidelines for involvement. The article announced that the committee would meet every morning at the Ministry of War (*Bab-ı Seraskeri*) and would accept the participation of those who were moved by patriotic and religious zeal to conduct corporal service to the army.⁷⁰⁶ *İttihad* had already published the same call, informing its readers about the same committee three days earlier, on July 11.⁷⁰⁷

İttihad’s publication is in line with archival documentation which suggests that the official decree about the formation of volunteer units was send out earlier, possibly on July 10 or July 11, because it reached the western Anatolian regions on July, 12.⁷⁰⁸

⁷⁰⁴ “Arnavud yiğitlerin bando ile geçit yapıp gemilere binmeleri” *Vakit*, no.275.

⁷⁰⁵ The publication of this call and the organizing committee dates slightly earlier in other newspapers. For example, *İttihad* announced the committee on July 11.

⁷⁰⁶ “hamiyyet-i diniye ve vataniyesi şevkiyle bedenlen ibraz-ı hizmet.” *Takvîm-i Vekayi*‘, no.1827. *İttihad* used the same wording in their publication. *İttihad*, no.2, p.2, 11.07.1876.

⁷⁰⁷ *İttihad*, no.2, p.2, 11.07.1876.

⁷⁰⁸ BOA. A. MKT.UM.1489/46. One of the telegrams indicate that official decree announcing the formation of volunteer troops with their own flags reached Bergama on July 12, 1876.

Underlining that the volunteers were a mixed group, coming from both the capital and provinces, the article highlights one important characteristic of these units, that they would not look like or act like *başıbozuk*. Newspaper announcements underlined two characteristics which would help to differentiate these troops from *başıbozuk*, and to remove the negative connotations attached to the irregular units. These were changes in uniforms and serving under the regular army. The article underlined that these volunteers would be differentiated from *başıbozuk* by way of uniform and that they would be subjected to regulations and would be under the guidance of military personnel.⁷⁰⁹ These volunteers were to wear a single uniform, and the money for these uniforms would be collected by donations from those who were not able to offer bodily service. These units were to be sent to the front under the guidance of military personnel. A similar article, with the emphasis on the attempts to regulate the voluntary troops, was published in *Vakit*, on the same day,⁷¹⁰ pointing to the fact that the reconfiguration of the volunteer units was a government policy. It also represented a wider concern and the need to inform the public to increase participation among both the Muslim and non-Muslim populations by combating the unfavorable image of the warring Ottoman.

The reconfiguration of the voluntary units reflects the desire to prevent any further damage to the Ottoman prestige due to irregular troops. *Başıbozuk* and their outfits had become a symbol in Western press and art, representing the “barbarian orient” and the emphasis on the change of the uniforms reveals that the Ottoman state was very much aware of the outcry in European public crystallizing in the *başıbozuk* image. The international conventions that had been taking place were

⁷⁰⁹ “Bu vechile vatan uğruna hizmet edecek gönüllüler başıbozuk tarzında olmayıp bir dereceye kadar taht-ı intizam ve rabıtada bulunacakları gibi kendilerine bir tarzda olarak potur ve salta ve yekrenk kuşak dahi verileceğinden” *İttihad*, no.2, p.2, 11.07.1876.

⁷¹⁰ *Vakit*, no.270. 11.07.1876.

another motivation for the Ottoman state to prevent unruly violence. Disassociating Ottoman auxiliary troops from violence was necessary, and it was a matter that surfaced in the diplomatic sphere. Due to the insufficient number of regular soldiers Ottoman state had no choice but to consult to irregular forces, but they had to invent a method which would not evoke the hatred against the *başıbozuk*.

The restructuring of irregular troops in 1876 also served the purpose of opposing the widespread belief in the mistreatment of non-Muslim subjects, which was a recurring theme in international events and the justification for humanitarian interventions. The Ottoman ruling elite tried to reconfigure the most derogatory image and turn it into a symbol of patriotic unity to relieve some stress regarding the “Eastern Question.” This desire would also contribute to mobilizing the diverse groups within the empire, especially the non-Muslims. As will be discussed below, the change from *başıbozuk* to *asâkir-i muavine* aimed to create a patriotic mobilization, which could incorporate non-Muslims, and this would not have been possible with the existing image and the name of the irregulars.

The second method was to situate these units under the control of regular army officers. Commenting that a high number of volunteers were enlisting as volunteers, *Basiret* was careful to use the same rhetoric when publishing about the irregular units and how they were to be headed by a regular army officer (*nizamiye zabiti*) to prevent unruly behavior and that they were ordered to follow the rules and regulations on the battlefield.⁷¹¹ Similarly, Mahmud Celaledin Paşa comments that the integration of the voluntary units into the regular army was an attempt to prevent the *başıbozuk* violence, albeit without much success.⁷¹² In a similar vein, arguing that

⁷¹¹ “başlarına birer de asakir-i nizamiye zabiti verilip muharebede nizamın mugayiri hiçbir gûna hal ve harekette bulunmamaları ve bir dereceye kadar da usul ve nizamı tanımaları iktiza edeceği kendilerine emr ve tenbih olunmaktadır.”

⁷¹² Mahmud Celaledin Paşa, *Mir'at-ı Hakikat*, 169.

the *başıbozuk* units had become the symbols of violence, Midhat Paşa was hesitant about sending the voluntary troops to the front directly, not to trigger an uproar.⁷¹³

Başıbozuk violence was retold and visualized in various mediums and became part of a struggle at the image frontline.⁷¹⁴ The violence in the Balkan region paved the way for the construction of certain stereotypes throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. One of these stereotypes is the Ottomans as an “anti-human specimen” (a term which Gladstone used to define the Turks in his famous booklet *The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*) and the second major stereotype is conceiving the Balkan communities as inherently violent.⁷¹⁵

The Ottoman officials resorted to a similar stereotype when writing about the atrocities conducted by the irregular troops. In *Mirat-ı Hakikat*, Mahmud Celaledin Paşa puts the blame on the Circassians and Turkmens, hinting at a correlation between being prone to violence and ethnicity and writes as if the Ottoman army was not consciously using the irregulars and their violence as a strategy.⁷¹⁶ Irregular troops were an integral part of the Ottoman mobilization both before and during the 1877 War. Attempting to differentiate between the Ottoman government and the irregular units’ violence, Mahmud Celaledin Paşa also highlights the transformation of the volunteer units’ participation in the war effort by describing the government’s attempts to reorganize the voluntary units. According to Karal, Midhat Paşa’s vision of abolishing the *başıbozuk* units came up as a topic in the first dispute between Midhat Paşa and Abdülhamid II.⁷¹⁷

⁷¹³ Kocahanoğlu, *Midhat Paşa’nın Hatıraları*, 201.

⁷¹⁴ For the war of images during the Balkan Crisis see Baleva, “The Empire Strikes Back.”

⁷¹⁵ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*.

⁷¹⁶ Beşikçi, “Başıbozuk Savaşçıdan Makbul Tebaaya,” 96.

⁷¹⁷ Midhat Paşa, who oversaw drafting the Imperial Decree following Abdülhamid II’s enthronement, included the abolishment of *başıbozuk* units along with the establishment of a parliament. The other points he emphasized in the draft had to do with the abolishment of slavery, reduction of the number of state bureaucrats and the protection of bureaucrats against unlawful dismissal. All of these were rejected by Abdülhamid II. Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, v.VIII, 6.

Like *başıbozüks*, *zeibeks* were also part of the brutal imagery of the Ottoman irregular soldiers. *Zeibeks* were voluntary units from Western Anatolia, and they were known for their notorious fighting skills. These groups were part of the Ottoman war effort during the Balkan Crisis. *Zeibeks* gathered in Smyrna to travel to the capital. Macpherson, a British surgeon working for the Stafford House Committee, expressed in his memoir that Smyrna was full of *zeibeks*, waiting to go to Istanbul.⁷¹⁸

3.3.6 Recruitment of volunteers

The term voluntary soldier implies an agency and willingness on behalf of the subjects involved. However, it is impossible to come up with exact explanations about the individual's degree of voluntariness. A definitive discussion on the degree of voluntariness is bound to fail. Yet, by delving into the details of this process, this research aims to shed light on the dynamic and multi-faceted nature of this phenomenon and situate it within the context of the socio-political developments.

While some individuals may have volunteered by an individual incentive, others were part of a communal process which included negotiations with the state. The Jewish participation in the local guard units is interpreted in relation to the formation of a Jewish-Ottoman identity, in a period which is defined by changing notions of imperial belonging. Aiming to create a favorable position for the Jewish community, influential figures called for participating in these units.

Other groups, such as the softas, or the madrasa students, may have been mobilized through Islamic patriotism however, as a group that had been exempt from military service, their participation indicates that they may have aimed to consolidate

⁷¹⁸ Macpherson, *Under the Red Crescent*, 21.

their position. Forming a large and powerful group in the capital, softas were aware of the participation of non-Muslims as volunteers in the war effort and this might have provided them with the impetus to join the military forces.

The Circassians on the other hand, regarded their participation in the Ottoman army to create a link between the community and the state and use this relation in a way that would benefit their community. As migrants who had been settled relatively recently in the Ottoman domains, these communities benefitted from this bargain by keeping their communal ties intact, preventing their dissolution in the Ottoman territory. The Ottoman state corresponded with the community leaders for the recruitment.⁷¹⁹ Use of communal leaders or influential people in forming voluntary units was not unique to the Circassian communities. The voluntary units almost always had a leader who gave the units its name. The Ottoman state therefore refrained from direct involvement in recruiting volunteers and worked through intermediaries. Direct involvement of state agents would have jeopardized the process by linking the recruitment of volunteers with drafting. Creating their own propaganda mechanism, intermediaries made the process applicable in a variety of different social and cultural settings allowing a multitude of propagandistic language to work through different spheres of Ottoman society.

The recruitment of irregulars does not always indicate a great degree of “voluntariness,” for violence and coercion was also part of the process. The threat of being labelled as an enemy, as someone who defied their patriotic duties, must have played an important role in this process. In certain cases, there was explicit violence and deceit. A town crier in Edirne, for example, is reported to consult to physical violence when recruiting volunteers and claimed that the volunteers were to be paid

⁷¹⁹ Beşikçi, “Başıbozuk Savaşçıdan Makbul Tebaaya.”

by the British Government. Upon investigation by the British vice-consul, these allegations were not verified.⁷²⁰

3.3.6.1 Ottoman Christians as volunteers

Participation of non-Muslim Ottomans as conscripts in the army began in 1835 and this practice was limited to the navy. The general rule in conscription excluded the non-Muslims from military service, obliging them to pay exemption tax, *cizye*. The Tanzimat Edict proposed that all Ottoman subjects were equally responsible in the protection of the homeland, although no explicit regulation regarding military service was included. Despite the emphasis on the equal responsibility, non-Muslims were only occasionally accepted in the navy but after the declaration of the Tanzimat Edict, accepting non-Muslims into the army and how to incorporate them had become a matter of debate.

The first official attempt to remove *cizye* and include non-Muslims in the military service happened during the Crimean War, in 1855, a policy that the Ottoman state failed to implement. With the *Islahat* Declaration, *bedel* continued and the issue of non-Muslim participation in the Ottoman army remained unresolved. The First Ottoman Constitution, once again, declared the equal responsibility of all Ottoman subjects in military service but non-Muslim participation in military service was not realized until 1909.

The debates on the inclusion of non-Muslims in military service revolved around three themes, how to maintain a functioning army with diverse confessional groups, how to fulfill the different religious requirements in each military unit, and most importantly, how to compensate for *cizye* or *bedel* financially. These issues

⁷²⁰ From Vice-consul Dupuis to Sir. H. Elliot, July 11, 1876. FO. 424/42.

were debated over the decades within different elite circles, never to achieve any resolution. Within this context, the two wars in the Balkans witnessed the voluntary participation of non-Muslims in the Ottoman military. Fighting on the battlefield and participating in the guard units in major cities, non-Muslim participation in the war effort proved useful for both parties. While the state tried to benefit from the volunteer soldier on different levels, non-Muslim groups negotiated their imperial identity and tried to strengthen their position in a transforming empire. Participation of intellectuals and the instrumentalization of press for their cause reveals that the political discussions leading to the First Constitutional Era defined the impetus behind the participation of different groups in the mobilization.

A document from mid-June 1876 indicates that a voluntary unit composed of 60 non-Muslim and 440 Muslim volunteers had arrived in Sofia.⁷²¹ Ali Şefik Bey an adjutant major (*kolağası*), was vested with the duty to dispatch Christian volunteers and was sent to Nish as early as July 4, 1876. The appointment of Ali Şefik Bey for organizing the Christian volunteers indicate that the Ottoman state was willing to accept the participation of Ottoman non-Muslims in the war effort from the onset of the hostilities. A telegram from Bursa, dated July 14, shows that the enrollment of non-Muslims was not unique to Istanbul, but Christian Ottomans from Bursa were willing to join the war effort as volunteers. According to this telegram volunteers demanded their own flag for the unit and the local officials had been aware of the enrollment of non-Muslim as volunteers in other regions through press publications. In addition to underlining the inclusion of non-Muslims from different cities into the Ottoman war force, the document reflects on the importance of newspapers for the dissemination of knowledge in times of crisis. This document suggests that the

⁷²¹ BOA. ATASE. OSKHK 110/9/1/2 /5/0/45.

newspaper coverage of non-Muslims forming volunteer units in the beginning of July was indeed a news that circulated at least in some of the regions which were not far from the capital.⁷²²

On July 11, 1876, a petition by Ottoman Greek subjects appeared in the newspapers such as *Vakit*, *Basiret* and *Stamboul*.⁷²³ Ottoman Greeks submitted a petition to Grand Vizier, requesting that they participate in the war and aid the Ottoman soldiers (*asâkir-i şahaneye muavenet etmek*). According to *Vakit* their request was accepted, and Greek subjects started to be enlisted in the voluntary units. This article reveals that their participation was voluntary, and the organization of this unit was not part of the regular army procedure but would function alongside the army. This commentary by *Vakit* is followed by the petition, which starts by defining the homeland and highlights the loyalty of the Greek subjects. It justifies and advertises their participation as an important component in the fight against the Eastern Question by showing the unity among the Ottoman nation and is signed by the Greek volunteers (*millet-i Rum gönüllüleri*). Eastern Question is defined as an imaginary concept brought forth by malicious people (*bedhahan*) and the unity among the Ottoman subjects would prevent these perils (*mahz-ı ahtar*). By participating in the war effort, they claim to prove that the Ottoman subjects are united as one (*cism-i vahid*) with the affection of unity and thus they would destroy hostile ideas.⁷²⁴ The emphasis on the unity of the Ottoman subjects against the imaginary Eastern Question proves that a patriotic imperial identity was regarded as

⁷²² BOA. A. MKT. UM. 01486/00064.

⁷²³ *Stamboul*, referring to *Vakit*, informed its readers about these developments. The newspaper summarized the petition and informed its readers about the commission responsible for the voluntary troops. *Stamboul*, 263.p.1.

⁷²⁴ “Biz bu şeref ve mefharete nailiyetle kâm-bîn olur isek nice yıllardır şark meselesi namıyla bedhahanın hayalhanelerinde deveren eden taaruza-ı mevhumenin sırf-ı eser-i hayal ve mahz ihtara’-ı düşman olduğunu ve her sınıf Osmanlı evladlarının muhabbet ve ittihaddan terekkeb etmiş bir cism-i vahid olduklarını gösterip” *Basiret*, no. 1862.

a unifying concept which would serve as a strategy to counterbalance the international pressure regarding the condition of the non-Muslim populations. This petition for voluntary enlisting and the associations with philanthropic aims show that in the capital, there was, to a certain degree, a cooperation between the non-Muslim and Muslim populations along the lines of patriotism.

The petition is followed by a comment on another expected petition, this time by the Armenians regarding their participation as volunteers. The petition from the Armenian community to join the war effort as volunteers was published on July 16 in *Basiret* and articulated Armenian community's willingness to sacrifice their lives as volunteers. Like the Ottoman Greek community's petition, Armenians were also asking for this sacrifice to be accepted by the state, with a patriotic language.⁷²⁵ The Armenian support for the patriotic cause was first articulated in the Armenian assembly in May 1876. The patriarch of Istanbul, Nerses Varzhabedian, had made a speech underlining the Armenian community's unity with the Ottoman Empire, which was supported by the other members of the assembly.⁷²⁶ The Armenian press published about the participation of Armenian volunteers in the war effort in mid July 1876.⁷²⁷

An article titled "Delil-i İttihad" (Proof of Union) was published in *Vakit* on July 15, praising the unity of Muslim and non-Muslim volunteers. Likening the army head quarter to a public exhibition (*sergi-i umumi*), the patriotic unity of the Ottoman subjects, *Osmanlılık*, was acclaimed as a great solution to the Eastern Question. This "exhibition" countered the allegations about the unfavorable condition of Ottoman Christians, especially the claims about tensions between them and students from

⁷²⁵ *Basiret*, no. 1865.

⁷²⁶ Ueno, "For the Fatherland," 103.

⁷²⁷ For the references to the newspapers see note no. 88 in Ueno, "For the Fatherland," 109.

religious schools. Additionally, the article claimed that during the Crimean War, Christian subjects provided monetary assistance to the Ottoman army but this time they were offering to be volunteers, and this was precisely the reason for the incitement among the enemies of the empire.⁷²⁸

A report from the irregular troops committee from mid-October comments that the number of volunteer, including non-Muslims, who had been trained and sent to the battlefield had reached 13,285, and Çivizade Dimostini Efendi was responsible for forming a volunteer unit from the Ottoman Christians.⁷²⁹ Dimostini Efendi continued to enroll Christians as volunteers throughout the Serbian War and right after the declaration of the Russian War, the Ottoman government allowed Dimostini Efendi to recruit Christian volunteers once again. He was allowed to form a regiment composed of 3,000 Christian volunteers on the basis that the Christian volunteer's service during the Serbian War was beneficial and their participation in the war effort created a positive rumor (*şayia-ı hasene*).⁷³⁰ In almost two months, Christian volunteers from Dersaadet, who joined the war effort by Dimostini Efendi, were ready to be dispatched and the number of infantries in arms (*silahendaz*) was 503, waiting to receive their guns.⁷³¹

According to Süleyman Paşazade Sami, Dimostini Efendi was a member of the *Asâkir-i Milliye Cemiyeti* (Local Guards Society).⁷³² Dimostini Efendi's participation in the Local Guards Society and his continued engagement during the Russian War proves that the enrollment of the non-Muslims in the military was

⁷²⁸ *Vakit*, no. 274.

⁷²⁹ BOA. İ. DH. 733/60092.

⁷³⁰ "... zikr olunan Hristiyan gönüllülerin Sırp muharebesinde hizmetlerinden hayli istifade edilmiş" 30.04.1877. BOA. İ. DH. 745/60933.

⁷³¹ BOA. ATASE ORHK 110/9/1/3/18/0/69, 19.06.1877.

⁷³² His name is written as İzzetlü Dimosti Efendi. Süleyman Paşazade Sami, *Süleyman Paşa Muhakemesi*, 71.

instrumentalized as a state mechanism, not just a machination of the constitutionalists. Yet, as will be discussed in detail below, it is clear that the pro-constitutionalists wished to take advantage of the phenomenon of volunteering and sought to create new mechanism which would eventually be curbed down by Abdülhamid II.

Another Christian Ottoman, Haji Ovadis organized a volunteer unit composed of both non-Muslims and Muslims in Aydın as an expression of Ottoman patriotism.⁷³³ Another unit composed of Christians was formed in Pergame and the press wrote about these units as an example of the fraternity of the Muslims and non-Muslims.⁷³⁴ These volunteers brought with them a new symbol of Ottomanism, that of the cross and the crescent on their banners. The fact that this banner was depicted as a symbol of unity served as a dual purpose. It allowed the Ottomans to participate and strengthen their belief in the Ottoman subjecthood. It also gave the government a chance to ward off international pressure, which rested on the narrative of oppressed Christians and the oppressor Ottomans. According to Midhat Paşa, to refute the accusations regarding the mistreatment of non-Muslim populations, Muslim and non-Muslim volunteers were united under this banner and these units would march around the capital representing the patriotic unity of the Ottoman subjects.⁷³⁵ Ahmet Midhat claims that the units with cross and crescent were indeed Dimostini Efendi's units and, similar to Midhat Paşa, argues that these flags represented the unity of Ottoman subjects regardless of their creed.⁷³⁶ The newspapers included the drawing of this banner in their publications.⁷³⁷ The banner was discussed not only among the

⁷³³ *La Turquie*, July 5, 1876

⁷³⁴ *La Turquie*, July 5, 1876.

⁷³⁵ Kocahanoglu, *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 201-202.

⁷³⁶ Ahmed Midhat Efendi, *Üss-i İnkılap*, 160.

⁷³⁷ *La Turquie*, July 19, 1876.

foreign diplomats, but the drawing also made its way into foreign observants' narratives.

Not only the banner but also the experiences of the non-Muslim volunteers were published in the newspapers, contributing to the patriotic ethos by underlining the unity among the Ottoman subjects. Describing their journey in the Balkans and experiences with the local population, non-Muslim volunteers published a letter in *Basiret*, on January 7, 1877, right around the time when the Salonica *milliye* units, which included Jewish and Christian Ottoman volunteers, were marching around the capital. In this letter, the individuals define themselves as members of the volunteer units (*asâkir-i muavine-i Hristiyaniye efradından*) and narrate that they had participated in the various battles, including Aleksinich,⁷³⁸ which was a critical position during the Serbian War. During these battles they were wounded and sent to Nish hospital for treatment. Following their recovery, they received decorations and were allowed to go back but according to their narrative, they rejected going back and instead demanded to continue serving in the war effort.⁷³⁹ Their demand was accepted, and they travelled to Tîrnovi. The rest of the letter is a long depiction of how well they were treated by the locals and the kinds of offers they received during their stay, such as mending their uniforms, receiving money, rice and other dishes and being taken to the bathhouse (*hamam*). They commented that non-Muslims of the region approached them and inquired into enrolling as volunteers. They concluded their narrative by asking its publication to reveal the ways in which locals treated them and to inform their families about their well-being. The letter is signed

⁷³⁸ In addition to Christian volunteers, softas were also dispatched to the same region and they fought against Chernaiev's volunteers.

⁷³⁹ "can ve başımızı millet-i Osmaniye uğrunda fedaya daima hazır ve muheyya bulunduğumuzu beyan etmiş olmamıza mebni bizleri silk-i askeriyye kabul buyurup" *Basiret*, no.1980, 7.01.1877

by non-Muslim Ottomans of different ranks.⁷⁴⁰ The letter is followed by a commentary by *Basiret*, which thanks both the patriotic Christians (*Hristiyan vatandaşlarımızın muhabbet-i askeriyyelerini*) and the locals of Tırnovi, emphasizing the unity among the Ottomans.

This letter may of course be fabricated to bolster participation in the war effort and accentuate the patriotic ethos at a time when the Ottoman forces were successful. There is yet no concrete evidence to regard this letter as authentic however, official correspondence regarding the volunteer units reveals that some members of the Christian troops did not want to leave Nish⁷⁴¹ confirming that some of the non-Muslim volunteers continued to serve with the Ottoman army even though they could go back. The detailed narrative about the ways in which they were hosted by the locals implied that the insurgents were not the majority, and that Ottoman sovereignty was supported by the local people. The letter is intended to manifest that the participation of non-Muslims did not jeopardize the Ottoman military ethos and that instead of inter-communal friction, unity prevailed. By underlining that they received decorations, the letter advertised for the official recognition of their service. The detailed description of how they were welcomed by the locals in tears and emphasizing the word *karındaş* repeatedly, the letter aims to instill a sense of brotherhood, to sanctify military duties among the Ottoman subjects and thus reject the claims of disunity (*Osmanlılara azv olunan imtizaçsızlık*). In the capital, those who volunteered were registered in the record books and were trained in Beykoz under the guidance of colonel Hidayet Bey of *Debbağhane*.

⁷⁴⁰ “Asakir-i muavine-i Hristiyanıye birinci bölük yüzbaşısı Yanko, asakir-i merkume mülazım-ı evveli Yorgi Efendi, mülazım-ı sani Nişan Ağa, serçavuş Yani, 1.çavuş Aziz, Yahudi ikinci çavuş Yusuf, Ermeni ikinci onbaşı Kirkor, birinci onbaşı Kasti(?) ve sair bölük neferatı ”

⁷⁴¹ BOA. ATASE. OSKHK 110/9/1/2/5/0/35.

Participation of Christians as volunteers, continued during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877. Non-Muslim volunteers from Zağra-ı Cedid, demanded that they would be sent to the front with their Muslim compatriots in May 1877, which was accepted by the state.⁷⁴² *Asâkir-i muavine* units composed of the residents of the capital joined the *Selamlık* ceremony on August 20, 1877, and each soldier was awarded with a hundred *kaime*.⁷⁴³

After the establishment of the *Asâkir-i Mülkiye* units in November 1877, the official declaration was read out in the Armenian patriarchate, which was followed by a voting on Armenian participation in the voluntary guard units. It was accepted and thousands of Armenians subscribed as volunteers.⁷⁴⁴ Abdülhamid II later decorated non-Muslims from this voluntary guard unit and invited them to the Friday Ceremony.

Among the newspaper articles, which praised the participation of non-Muslims volunteers, one requires further scrutiny. On July 19, 1876, leading newspapers published a declaration by the softas, praising the volunteering of non-Muslim Ottoman subjects.⁷⁴⁵ The declaration starts by stating that even though the Empire had enough soldiers to combat the enemy, the softas formed a voluntary unit and joined the war effort, which was regarded as divine service. The Christians, however, joined the volunteer forces despite the lack of such religious imperative. Celebrating the companionship, the softas announce that they would not obstruct the Christians from conducting their religious duties. The declaration is concluded by reminding the Christians some of the requirements of Islam, that is not to harm the civilians, not to plunder and commit atrocities.

⁷⁴² BOA ATASE. ORHK 110/9/1/3/121/0/637.

⁷⁴³ *Ceride-i Havâdis*, 3477, p.3.

⁷⁴⁴ Gülsoy, *Osmanlı Gayrimüslimlerinin Askerlik Serüveni*, 120.

⁷⁴⁵ *Vakit*, no.277; *Basiret*, no.1869; *Stamboul*, July 19, 1876.

The tone of the declaration is both celebratory but at the same time patronizing. It claims a hegemonic position by touching upon a crucial issue, that is the conduct of both Islamic and Christian rituals in the army. While Ahmed Cevdet Paşa had problematized the inclusion of various religious leaders in the army, here the softas are portrayed as if they are able to say the final decision on this matter. Speaking from an authoritative position, the softas warn the Christian volunteers about not committing brutal acts by references to the rules of Islam. Despite this tone, the softas formed yet another *asâkir-i muavine* unit, without any superiority over the Christians with respect to military status. The impetus for such a tone, even the gesture of thanking, must have its roots in their participation in the *coup d'état*, which overthrew the Ottoman Sultan and the Grand Vizier recently and in the notion of *millet-i hakime*.

3.3.6.2 *Talebe-i ulum* as volunteers

Softas, or the madrasa students (*talebe-i ulum*) were an important component of the political developments of the 1870's. After the abolishment of the Janissaries, the Ottoman ulema had sided with the Sultan in the formation of the new army and thus achieved a position of power. Ulema filled in the power vacuum following the dismantling of the Janissaries, who had been the driving force behind any reactionary movement. The ulema, in filling the reactionary void, had an "ideological rationale ... and the means of communication"⁷⁴⁶ to circulate their political agenda. They were also the largest organized group in the Ottoman capital. Since the beginning of the military reforms of Mahmud II, the ulema not only had the upper hand in supporting the crown in suppressing the Janissary rebellion but they also gained an important

⁷⁴⁶ Levy, "The Ottoman Ulema," 13.

position as providing *imams* for the Ottoman armed forces. After the complete elimination of the Janissaries, their power was curbed down but the softas continued to play an important role in the political events in the decades to come, such as the Kuleli incident.

Almost all the participant of the Kuleli incident were either from military or religious background, including ulema, softas and sheikhs. The leading figure, Sheikh Ahmed, who was a volunteer during the Crimean War, declared his main motivation in joining the Kuleli incident, as a resentment to reforms. One of the important features of the Kuleli incident is that diverse groups came together to oppose the ruling power, in which the ulema and the softas were an important component.⁷⁴⁷ The preparation of a rebellion in 1867 by the *Meslek Cemiyeti*, again points to the incorporation of softas as an important factor in creating a wide movement with mass support.⁷⁴⁸

By the 1870's, according to Davison, there was a "Muslim feeling," which had been accumulating due to various reasons such as the financial problems of the empire, the famines and the agricultural setbacks, the increasing reaction to the Tanzimat policies, all contributing to the growing resentment among the Muslims, softas in particular.⁷⁴⁹ The increasing international pressure, the revolts in the Balkans and the growing opposition to the rulers added an impetus to the agitation in the capital.

There is a difference of opinion as to the numbers of the softas in the capital. While Gallenga estimates the number to be no less than 20,000, others offer numbers between 5,000 to 60,000.⁷⁵⁰ Heyd estimates the number to be around 5,000 in the

⁷⁴⁷ Onaran, *Padişahı Devirmek*, 87.

⁷⁴⁸ Onaran, *Padişahı Devirmek*.

⁷⁴⁹ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 331.

⁷⁵⁰ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 325; Gallenga, *Two Years*, 53.

1830's and 1840's⁷⁵¹ which is around the same estimate that Karpas provides for the year 1882 that is 5,560 in Istanbul.⁷⁵²

Different groups were instrumental in the coup of 1876, such as the liberal opposition arguing for a constitutional regime and the conservatives, arguing against the government and expressing uneasiness about the concessions to Christians.⁷⁵³ The softas with their march in the streets of the capital on May 10, were key figures in the creation of a public unrest through demonstrations which would lead to the deposition of Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim Paşa and Sheikhulislam Hasan Fehmi Efendi and eventually to the deposition of Sultan Abdülaziz. While most of the literature focuses on the increasing tensions in May 1876, the softas had been performing demonstration since the fall of 1875.⁷⁵⁴ Halting their lessons and marching in the streets, softas were instrumental in consolidating a public reaction to the government.

Another factor that Davison underlines with respect to the outcome of the softa demonstration is the consolidation of a patriotic sentiment at a time when the local uprising in Herzegovina had recently spread to Bulgaria. Gallenga even claims that the softas had been forming units, going to Bulgaria and other regions in the Balkans to stir up the Circassian units and lead them into committing atrocities.⁷⁵⁵ His depiction of the softas differ significantly from the Ottoman narratives, he claims that there was no other power in the capital to rival softas and that they had “achieved the storming of the Bastille.”⁷⁵⁶ There is no proof for the participation of

⁷⁵¹ Onaran, *Padişahı Devirmek*, 79.

⁷⁵² Karpas, *Ottoman population*. Also, see the relevant footnote in Onaran's study. Onaran, *Padişahı Devirmek*.

⁷⁵³ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*.

⁷⁵⁴ Eldem, *Selahaddin Efendi'nin Evrak ve Yazıları*, vol.1, 26.

⁷⁵⁵ Gallenga, *Two Years*, 55.

⁷⁵⁶ Gallenga, *Two Years*, 64.

the softas in the Bulgarian uprising however, the allegations about the arming of the softas possibly relates to their volunteering during the Serbian War.

The accounts underline that the softas were arming themselves with guns and knives and some even underline the intrigues of the Russian representatives which all contributed to the increasing tension between the Muslim and non-Muslim populations. These allegations of the foreign representatives must be taken with a grain of salt for they serve to the consolidation of the belief in the mistreatment of the non-Muslims. However, evidence shows that the softas were an important component of oppositional movements and they were regarded as a group with public support thus they had been involved in various conspiracies against the government. They would form temporary alliances with different groups, but this does not mean that they had a well-defined political agenda. Their motivation may rather have stemmed from their desire to continue having a seat in important decisions and to secure the continuity of a beneficial relation with the state. In this sense, the softas' acts reveal that they functioned as an important group, which had the means to mobilize large crowds. These events and their participation in the war effort are in line with recent research which opposes the decline of the ulema in the late Ottoman period. The softas, who did not refrain from expressing their discontent, regarded it as important to participate in the mobilization campaign, although they were exempt from military service.

Two months after the demonstration and the deposition of key figures in government and of the Sultan, the softas were now enlisting as volunteer soldiers to fight in the Balkans. On July 20, 1876, 4,000 medrese students were dispatched to Edirne as volunteer soldiers with trains. These units necessitated the preparation of

3,000 shoes (*çarık*) which needed to be ready by July 18.⁷⁵⁷ Around the same time, softas from Bursa, who had established a volunteer unit with their own flag, sent a petition demanding that they be united with the softas from Istanbul. Their demand was rejected due to military requirements⁷⁵⁸ and that they needed to subscribe as volunteers, by writing their names into the *defter* (list).⁷⁵⁹

Basiret announced that students from the religious school in *Fatih* district enlisted in the army as volunteers and the number reached 1,500 in a few of hours and that the number of volunteers from Rumelia had reached 6,000.⁷⁶⁰ *Stamboul* referred to this news but stated that the number was not as high as *Basiret* had claimed and reports that the students had to apply to Sheikhulislamate and they could join the voluntary units only with his approval. He eventually allowed the students to join the units on the condition that they follow the military rules and learn military practices.⁷⁶¹ Softas' participation in the war effort as volunteers was publicized in the newspapers, just as other groups were publicized, contributing to the efforts of portraying the mobilization as a multi-confessional and an all-encompassing patriotic campaign.

Named as *ilmiye taburları* (religious battalions) these units hosted volunteer students, and they were identified as part of the *asâkir-i muavine* force. Composed of thousands of medrese students, one of these units was sent to Edirne and served in the war effort until November 7, 1876, after which they returned to Istanbul via Priştine on November 11, 1876.⁷⁶² The exact number of soldiers in each battalion is not included in the official correspondence however a total of at least 3,500 volunteer

⁷⁵⁷ BOA. ATASE, OSKHK, 110/9/1/2/12/0/256.

⁷⁵⁸ They were all infantry soldiers therefore they could not unite with the softas from Istanbul.

⁷⁵⁹ BOA. A. MKT. UM. 01487/00031.

⁷⁶⁰ *Basiret*, no. 1859.

⁷⁶¹ *Stamboul*, no. 262.

⁷⁶² BOA. ATASE. OSKHK. 110/9/1/2/ 5/0/35.

softas were dispatched to the front in five battalions.⁷⁶³ Three of these battalions, numbers 2, 4 and 5 were still fighting on the battlefield, while the first and third battalions were on their way from Nish. The second battalion was positioned in Aleksinich, indicating that these battalions were dispatched to critical positions. Nish, Vidin and Novibazar were the major battlefields and Cherniaev attacked Nish, with his volunteer unit. The softas were later decorated for their contribution to the war effort.⁷⁶⁴

Narrating his experiences as an Ottomans surgeon in the Balkans during the Serbian War, Stambolski narrates about the enrolment of Christians and softas. According to his observations, Christian units had a red banner, which had a crescent and a green cross embroidered.⁷⁶⁵ The softa units, on the other hand, had a silk green banner embroidered with a red crescent.⁷⁶⁶ In addition to the depiction of the recruitment in the capital, Stambolski's memoir includes a long section on the softas during the battle. When Stambolski travelled to the region as a doctor leading a groups of medical school students, he witnessed that softas were involved in plundering along with Circassians. They would raid into the villages, plunder, steal and even kill civilians creating much discontent and commit acts of violence particularly in villages with high number of Christian residents.⁷⁶⁷

The Black Sea region also contributed to the war effort by organizing volunteer units. One such unit was organized by a *mollah* from Rize, according to the British vice-consul Billiotti. This *mollah* from Rize recruited 120 volunteers, most

⁷⁶³ Third Battalion consisted of 800 soldiers and the First Battalion had 600 soldiers so a total number of 3500 seems like a possible estimate.

⁷⁶⁴ Softas and Christian volunteers were awarded with the Mecidî Order. BOA. ATASE. ORHK 110/9/1/3/124/0/579; 110/9/1/3/124/0/580.

⁷⁶⁵ *Stamboul* described the banners as a red flag with white cross and crescent inscriptions. *Stamboul*, July 19, 1876.

⁷⁶⁶ Stambolski, *Bir Osmanlı Hekiminin Anıları*, 310.

⁷⁶⁷ Stambolski, *Bir Osmanlı Hekiminin Anıları*, 315-319.

of whom were *mollahs*. These volunteers were marching in the streets of Trabzon, with flags and weapons in their hands, singing prayers. Describing the scene as “very wild” and bearing “a strong stamp of fanaticism” the British representative also added that during this march Christian populations were threatened. With the arrival of the Turkish postal steamer, there came new groups of volunteers. Marching and recruitment via preaching continued in the town, sometimes accompanied by the Governor-General, other officials and crowds of people, both men and women. Billiotti is careful not to exaggerate the situation but, identifies it, as a symptom “of a feeling of unfriendliness towards Christians.”⁷⁶⁸

Softas’ participation in the war effort was not restricted to the Serbian War. During the 1877 War, softas were once again recruited into the army. This time softas from Konya region were called to pick up arms. A telegram from Konya⁷⁶⁹ reveals the ways in which softas were recruited during the 1877 War. A certain Ahmed Efendi from Malatya accepted being the chief (*sergerde*) of the unit and recruiting softas based on a religious motivation (*farzıyyet-i cihâd ve emr-i celil-i hilafetpenahilerine itaat*). Interestingly, the main preoccupation behind this correspondence is to recruit softas before the start of the three-month break (*şühur-ı selase*), during which the students would leave Konya. A factor which possibly contributed to the formation of Konya *ilmiye units* was the decrease in the number of already existing *ilmiye units*. By mid-June, a relatively high number of soldiers in one of the *ilmiye* battalions, İslam Efendi Battalion, were either dead, wounded and or have deserted so the battalion was reduced to four and the soldiers were redistributed.⁷⁷⁰ Softa units which were dispatched to the Eastern front during the

⁷⁶⁸ From Vice-consul Billiotti to the Earl of Derby, August 31, 1876. FO. 424/43.

⁷⁶⁹ BOA. ATASE. ORHK. 110/9/1/3/7/0/67.

⁷⁷⁰ BOA. ATASE. ORHK. 110/9/1/3/89/0/150.

Russian War wore white bands around their fez which allowed the observers to distinguish them from the other soldiers.⁷⁷¹

Softas were not only active on the battlefield as volunteers, but they also participated in protests during the war. After the fall of Ardahan fortress during the Russian War, softas gathered around Ayasofya square, on May 24, 1877, giving a patriotic speech which criticized the government because of the military defeat in the Eastern front. Softas then marched to parliament, demanding an explanation for the defeat during an ongoing session. A couple of softas were allowed to join the parliamentary session and they articulated their discontent. According to the parliamentary reports, upon hearing that the matter would be taken to ministers, they were convinced to end their protest for that day, hoping to hear from the ministers and planning to meet at Fatih mosque the following day. The second demonstration was never realized due to the declaration of martial law that very night.⁷⁷²

3.3.7 Individuals and groups

Vakit advertised about the voluntary participation of various groups such as Albanians and Kurds living in Istanbul, Iranians living in Istanbul and Izmit, Tatar and Circassians from *İslimiye* (Sliven), volunteers from *Karinabad* (Karnobat). In these articles, jihad is mentioned as an important motivation precisely when mentioning the Kurdish groups. This highlights the fact that the state tried to mobilize diverse groups with different rhetoric to make the most out of mobilization.

The multi-confessional participation served to support the idea of Ottomanism by emphasizing unity and coherence. However, highlighting the religious identity of the groups in question, indicates that these practices did not

⁷⁷¹ *The War Correspondence*, vol.1, 550.

⁷⁷² *Us, Meclis-i Mebusan*,, 288-289.

underestimate religious imperial identities. The attempts to mobilize Kurdish communities may be regarded as a continuation of the Tanzimat practice in increasing control over Muslim areas which had been resisting to centralization⁷⁷³ while at the same time incorporation of Islamic rhetoric synchronously with the idea of *Osmanlılık* seems to be in line with the growing Islamic emphasis among those who were critical of the degree of Westernization during the Tanzimat period.

Altunizade İsmail Efendi turned out to be an important figure in forming volunteer units in the capital. He received permission from the Sultan to form voluntary units, which he would finance on his own. Those who subscribed for İsmail Efendi's units resided and were trained in the tent camps, which were located in Çamlıca near Hünkâr Köşkü.⁷⁷⁴ He formed at least three units and was awarded with an Osmanî Order.⁷⁷⁵ While his participation in the mobilization with donations and forming volunteer units was an expression of his support for the state and a means to sustain his reputation as a charitable notable, some of the volunteers in his units viewed volunteering as a mechanism of desertion. Private soldiers (*neferat*) deserted their position in the military facilities (*Tophane-i Amire Sanayi Alayı*) and joined Altunizade Efendi's units, with the purpose of deserting these units. After their desertion in Batumi, they were apprehended and brought back to the military facilities in the capital.⁷⁷⁶ This example reveals that not all the volunteers acted with devotion but rather perceived mobilization as a chance to get away from their existing obligations.

Voluntary cavalry units from Bursa arrived in Istanbul in July 1877. These units were organized by the governor of Bursa, Veli Paşa and the necessary money

⁷⁷³ Hanioglu, *Brief History*, 86.

⁷⁷⁴ *La Turquie*, July 5, 1877, p.1.

⁷⁷⁵ BOA. İ. DH. 749/61219 and İ. DH. 746/60971.

⁷⁷⁶ BOA. ATASE. ORHK, 110/9/1/3/37/0/43.

for the formation of these units was provided by the officials and the notables of the region, who had formed a local committee for this purpose. Press publications illustrate that the individuals whose name's the units carried, did not necessarily bear the financial burden on their own but acted as intermediaries in gathering a group of men in arms and arranging the finances through philanthropic networks. These prominent men must have had connections with men who were willing to fight and the elite circles, who would support financially. Veli Paşa's position as the governor must have made it easier for him to raise money from the officials, and the article underlines that it was the civil servants and the notables of the vilayet who had contributed financially to this task. The cost of each cavalry was 3,000 piastres, making the total amount 6,000,000 for the 2,000 cavalries.⁷⁷⁷

Sons of prominent families joined the war effort as volunteers, and this received particular attention in the press. *La Turquie* announced the enrollment of Keçecizade İzzet Fuat Paşa and praised his act underlining his position as a young member of the grand families.⁷⁷⁸ Another son of a prominent family, Osman Hamdi Bey also joined the war effort. However, his participation in the war effort was different than İzzet Fuat Paşa's participation. İzzet Fuat joined the volunteer units, and he was sent to the Balkans to fight against the Serbian army. Osman Hamdi Bey, on the other hand, was probably enrolled in the guard units. His photograph with the military uniform, dated October 5, 1877, points to the fact that he may have been enrolled in *Mevkib-i Hümayun* units and never left the capital.⁷⁷⁹

⁷⁷⁷ *La Turquie*, July 8-9, 1877, p.1

⁷⁷⁸ *La Turquie*, July 13, 1876.

⁷⁷⁹ Osman Hamdi Bey's and İzzet Fuat Paşa's photographs also reveal that they wore different uniforms, underlining the fact that they were enrolled in the army in different periods and in different units. For Osman Hamdi Bey's photograph and the details about his life during the period, see Eldem, *Osman Hamdi Bey Sözlüğü*. For İzzet Fuat Paşa's photography and diary, see Keçecizade İzzet Fuat Paşa, *Genç Askerin Muharebe Hatıratı*.

3.3.8 *Asâkir-i milliye* units

At the end of August 1876, a dispatch (*tahrirat*) was submitted to the Ottoman government requesting the official approval of the formation of voluntary troops in Salonica, as *asâkir-i milliye* units. This dispatch indicates that voluntary units, composed of 400 office holders and members of the community (*memurin ve ahaliden*) were already formed, a regional regulation was published in the press and these units were in training.⁷⁸⁰ Given the increasing number of participation in these units, the document requests that some of these volunteers were to be accepted into the regular army with certain rules regarding their rank and year of service.

İstikbal, had already published the regulation of *Selanik askair-i milliye* units towards the end of August,⁷⁸¹ and this regulation corresponds to the general regulations about voluntary troops. These regulations include information regarding the subsistence and the functioning of the units, and the informative article underlines that these units were formed under the permission of the Ottoman government.⁷⁸²

The units were open to people from all communities (*millet*) if they were within the age limitations for military service and that they did not have any disability. Limitations on arms and travel indicate that these units were formed as local defense units, rather than combatant soldiers. Volunteers who needed to travel outside Salonica for trade purposes were required to inform the military headquarters before departure. During their travels they were not allowed to carry their arms, possibly to prevent any uncontrolled violence.

⁷⁸⁰ BOA. ATASE. OSKHK. 110/9/1/2/6/0/112.

⁷⁸¹ *İstikbal*, no.175 and no.181.

⁷⁸² “Bab-ı Ali’den müsaade alınmış olduğundan” *İttihad*, no.175. p3.

To promote order, these units would function under regular soldiers (*asâkir-i muntazama*) and military personnel such as corporals and sergeants would be appointed to these units. They would conduct 2-hour drills in the morning, after which they would continue with their daily routine. State would provide guns and if these volunteers would leave their district, they would have to leave their guns, additionally they were not allowed to carry their guns around the town. They would function as an emergency defense mechanism, for they were required to pick up their guns and get ready upon hearing three cannon shots. They would wear the same clothing, and they would be responsible for the sewing of their own uniforms. This would mean a less costly mechanism of recruitment for the state by encouraging local initiatives for the support of these units.

At the end of December 1876, *İttihad* published an article on *milliye* units and it is followed by Ahmed Midhat's comments regarding the duties of these units. Written with a patriotic language this piece calls these units *asâkir-i mustahfaza-i milliye* and it is emphasized that these units were not allowed to leave their districts, and they would serve as defense units. According to Ahmet Midhat, they were traditionally seen as the backup source when the regular army was dispatched to battlefield,⁷⁸³ indicating a search for historical legitimacy for this practice.

Salonica *milliye* units were called to Istanbul and in January 1877, they arrived at the capital.⁷⁸⁴ They were welcomed by high officials including Grand Vizier Midhat Paşa, SheikhuIslam and the commander-in-chief and they participated in the Friday Prayer Ceremony. By this time, a committee named *asâkir-i milliye cemiyeti* (local guard units society) was already formed in the capital, recruiting

⁷⁸³ *İttihad*, no.112, 30.12.1876

⁷⁸⁴ BOA. ATASE. OSKHK. 110/9/1/2/6/0/112; 110/9/1/2/1/0/169.

volunteers. *Asâkir-i milliye cemiyeti* was founded on December 31, 1876.⁷⁸⁵ The initial announcement made a call for both Muslim and non-Muslims to enroll as volunteers in the local guard units. Their headquarter was in the Bayazîd Military Guesthouse (*Bayazîd Askerî Misafirhanesi*.) They made two drills a week, Sundays and Fridays. The announcement claimed that the initial society was to set an example for others in the capital (*Dersaadetin sair cihetlerinde tecemmü edecek cemiyetlere merci olup.*) Prominent religious figures, teachers from religious schools and religious school students are identified as the first ones to enroll. The article defined the duty as a requirement of safety and identified the recruited soldiers as citizen soldiers (*ibtida-i selametimiz için silah taşıyan asker vatandaşlarımızdan olduğu hasebiyle.*) The historical precedent for this practice was expressed as the arming of the residents of the capital in 1829 (Hijri 1245 in the text.)⁷⁸⁶ The article then commented on the uniforms (*elbise*) and declared that the *milliye* units in Rustchuk had consulted Hungarians for providing them with uniforms and chose one of the prototypes, which had arrived from Pest. The article concluded by asking the resident of the capital if they would like to do the same as an expression of the good relations with the Hungarian. This inquiry into the residents' preference about uniforms was possibly devised as a strategy to strengthen the aura of participatory patriotism. The society was presided by Ziya Bey Efendi, and among its members were Mahmud Paşa, and Namık Kemal⁷⁸⁷ and Süleyman Paşazade Sami also frequented their meeting.⁷⁸⁸

⁷⁸⁵ *Ceride-i Havâdis*, no. 3277. The establishment of the society was announced in *Takvîm-i Vekayi* two days later. See *Takvîm-i Vekayi*, no. 1856.

⁷⁸⁶ "... Dersaadet mahallâtı ahalisi sabaha kadar şehrimizi muhafaza etmişlerdir ki bugün asakir-i milliyelik hizmetini ifa etmişler demektir." *Ceride-i Havâdis*, no.3277.

⁷⁸⁷ *Takvîm-i Vekayi*, no. 1856.

⁷⁸⁸ Süleyman Paşazade Sami, *Süleyman Paşa Muhakemesi*.

Defining the units as citizen soldiers, this society aimed to form guard units, which were only allowed to defend the cities in case of conflict. The controversy surrounding these units revolve around the fact that their members were predominantly pro-constitutionalists. The fact that the initial volunteers were from religious schools reveals that the cooperation between the pro-constitutionalists and the religious teachers and students continued to be in effect. Most of the accounts on the workings of the *asâkir-i milliye cemiyeti* are retrospective narratives and the tendency in literature is to define these units as a secret machination of the constitutionalist.⁷⁸⁹ The reference in their initial call for the establishment of similar societies within the capital and their emergence right after the establishment of a constitutionalist regime do not seem like a mere coincidence. The speculations about the reasons for their abolishment include references to their emphasis on *vatan*, and the fact that they downplayed the role of the Sultan.⁷⁹⁰ The concept of the citizen soldier on the other hand, taking its inspiration from the French model must have increased the suspicions about their ambitions. The concept of citizen soldiers is defined as a politically engaged group, who is willing to fight for their right and who is also engaged in some form of military force with the aim of protecting the community.⁷⁹¹ The explicit reference to the French Revolution must have

⁷⁸⁹ Şiviloğlu argues that the units were formed to defend the constitution. However, as this research reveals the phenomenon of volunteering during the period was widespread. The constitutionalists may have tried to manipulate it towards their own goals, yet even this was rooted in the larger context of mobilization. Şiviloğlu, *Emergence of Public Opinion*.

⁷⁹⁰ Şerif Mardin writes that they sent letters to the soldiers, prioritizing fatherland over the Sultan. Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*. Süleyman Paşazade Sami provides the letters that they send to the units. While the Sultan is referred to in this letter, the notion of fatherland occupies a more crucial place. Süleyman Paşazade Sami, *Süleyman Paşa Muhakemesi*. Kuntay writes that the uniforms of these soldiers included inscriptions such as *millet* and *vatan*, while Sungu writes that they were carrying flags with *vatan* inscriptions on them. Mahmud Celaleddin Paşa adds that volunteers would go to Mithad Paşa's house and celebrate their dispatch. Mahmud Celaleddin Paşa, *Mir'at-ı Hakikat*.

⁷⁹¹ Sharp, "Adoption of the Citizen-Soldier." The influence of Rousseau's thinking on the pro-constitutionalists, and particularly Namık Kemal have been analyzed by Mardin, and it is interesting to note that Rousseau supported the idea of citizen soldiers in his writings, and he declared that every citizen ought to be a soldier by duty. Bertaud, *Army of the French Revolution*, 40.

complicated the matter in the eyes of those who did not align with the pro-constitutionalist clique. *Basiret*, for example, lends support to the ties between the constitution and the forming of the *milliye* units. An article in *Basiret* describes that both Muslim and Christian Ottomans from Istanbul were enlisting in the *Asâkir-i Milliye* units and that the total number approached 40-50 units.⁷⁹² Two days later, the day after the proclamation of *Kanun-i Esasi*, *Basiretçi* comments on these units and interprets them in relation to diplomatic negotiations and the new constitution. Underlining the patriotic sacrifices of the people, *Basiretçi* writes the total number of the units as around 50 and adds that these units were to provide their own supplies, guns, and clothing.⁷⁹³

Yet, as the above survey indicates, the forming of voluntary units did not just come into being with the constitution. There was already an increasing patriotic fervent among Ottoman society and particularly among the residents of urban centers. This wave of patriotic donation and aiding the army had to be positioned against the negative imagery of the *başıbozuk* and had to be adopted to the changing political administration. Thus, these units and the accompanying society were both a solution to the immediate problems of the empire and at the same time it enabled the creation of an alternative elite network, which could challenge the government⁷⁹⁴ and which had, at least in theory, a military component to it. The fact that no resistance occurred during Midhat Paşa's exile shows that the military component was either not that strong or was perceived in a different framework by the individuals who participated in it. Additionally, the fact that these units were formed during a war with Russia should not be discarded and may help to explain, why the

⁷⁹² *Basiret*, no. 1968.

⁷⁹³ Sağlam, *İstanbul Şehir Mektupları*, 530.

⁷⁹⁴ Mestyan, "The Muslim Bourgeoisie," 222.

local guard units continued to be employed by the Ottoman government in the whole duration of the war. It should also be underlined that other *milliye* units existed in various localities throughout the empire.

3.3.9 Volunteering and the first Ottoman Constitution

The relation between the promulgation of the Ottoman Constitution and the volunteer units should not be analyzed only by looking at the *asâkir-i milliye cemiyeti* in the capital. The relation between participating in the mobilization and the establishment of a constitutional regime resonated differently throughout the empire. The promulgation of the constitution allowed the intellectuals, the pro-constitutionalist bureaucrats and the local power holders to openly celebrate and propagate for an alternative way of defining the relations between the subjects and the state. Much ink has been spilled to situate the First Ottoman Constitution within the international developments, which are very important in delineating the impetus behind the establishment of a constitutional system. However, little scholarly attention has been paid to the ways in which the Constitution affected the population and how Ottoman subjects are engaged with and related to these developments.

The First Ottoman Constitution was a product of an intense diplomatic atmosphere, the threat of a war with the Russian Empire, and the constant attempts at interventionist foreign policy. The timing of the declaration is a product of a meticulous political calculation, aiming to release some political pressure during the international negotiations taking place at the Constantinople Conference. The tug-of-war between elite circles created additional twists and turns into the process of establishing a constitutional government.

The repercussion of the recent armed conflict with Serbia was still a determining factor of the political and social context and the possibility of war with Russia had intensified the war preparations. Under these circumstances, the constitutional celebrations became part and parcel of mobilization in Edirne. In other words, ongoing mobilization gave a strong foothold for the people of Edirne to reflect on the new political system and combine it with the patriotic ethos. It provided a legitimate social impetus for boosting the aid campaign and for opening channels of communication that had the potential to shape the imperial discourse of subjecthood and the civic patriotism that was flourishing with the participation of pro-constitutionalist intellectuals. The power of the political discourse had made possible the participation of non-Muslims in the army, a topic that had not been resolved since the declaration of Tanzimat; while in Edirne the gathering of notables and locals in a major urban center paved the way for a propaganda mechanism that could not have been achieved otherwise.

On January 4, 1877, thousands⁷⁹⁵ of people gathered in the streets of Edirne to march to the governorship, headed by the religious leaders and local notables to submit a congratulatory telegram, to be sent to the Grand Vizierate. According to the news article in *Basiret*,⁷⁹⁶ this message, which included hundreds of signatures from the prominent people of Edirne, celebrated the promulgation of the constitution. Composed of religious leaders from all confessions, the groups marched to the governorship and read aloud the telegram accompanied by prayers. The metropolitan read aloud its Ottoman Greek version and celebrations continued with chanting praising the sultan and the Ottomans. Following this celebration, people encouraged

⁷⁹⁵ *Basiret* claims the number of participants to be around 4,000 to 5,000. Devereux, on the other hand, using British sources claims the number to be more than 2,000. Devereux, *First Ottoman Constitutional Period*.

⁷⁹⁶ *Basiret*, no.1980.

each other to subscribe as volunteers and the number of volunteers reached half a battalion in half an hour. Informing the government about the celebrations and the recruitment of volunteers, the telegram was published in *Basiret* with the title “İttifakname-i umumi” and after congratulating the constitution, the text underlined that the people in Edirne are forming units as a duty for the homeland. The reply they got, according to *Basiret*, suggested the postponement of the recruitment process. There existed no eminent threat and therefore there was no need for forming units.

This correspondence suggests that forming a volunteer unit was regarded as a way to prove loyalty and allegiance to the Ottoman authorities. Underlining the duty to protect the homeland and describing it as an alliance, celebrations for the constitution provided a legitimate ground for participating in mobilization. Another motive must have been the possible future elections. The notables aimed to express their allegiance and thus get a leverage before the elections. The constitutional joy provided a legitimate ground for social mobility with the hope for more equality. Devereux regards the celebrations in Edirne as a unique case and relates it to the already existing liberal tendency in the city. Even if this was the case, the event still reveals that some of the Ottoman subjects drew a link between volunteering for the state and the new political context.

3.3.10 Jewish volunteers

Another group from Salonica, the Jewish residents of the city, also sought to create new links with the Ottoman government through mobilization and donation. While the Ottoman press is not very informative on the composition of these groups, Ladino press provides details about their composition and the Jewish participation, which have become, in the words of Cohen, the “apotheosis of Ottoman Jewish

patriotism.”⁷⁹⁷ Regarding the special relationship between the Ottoman Jews and the Ottoman state as a myth, Julia Cohen identifies the Jewish allegiance as a process, which was born in the nineteenth century as part of a specific social and political context.⁷⁹⁸ Tracing how Jewish imperial identity was invented, negotiated and publicized, Cohen demonstrates that patriotism was an evolving project, and that the Balkan Crisis constituted a watershed moment for the non-Muslim Ottomans “to put their newfound citizenship in practice.”⁷⁹⁹ This practice included donations, religious ceremonies and volunteering.

Towards the end of August, the Salonica *milliye* unit initially witnessed the participation of four Jewish volunteers, and this was announced in the press with an optimistic note expecting a higher number of Jewish participations. *La Epoka*, Salonica’s Ladino newspaper published details about the Jewish participation in these voluntary units, emphasizing this as a way to honor the government.⁸⁰⁰ The Salonica unit, which later went to the capital, was composed of 100 to 150 Jewish volunteers, who would undergo military drills and were prepared to protect their city.⁸⁰¹ While Salonica Jews were participating in the *milliye* units, Jews from the capital were not eager to participate in the guards units, according to the Istanbul Jewish Press.⁸⁰²

Cohen identifies a multifold aim in Jewish participation in the patriotic campaign, creating a sense of brotherhood among the different ethno-religious groups within the empire, to elevate the Jewish community out of their

⁷⁹⁷ Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*, 31.

⁷⁹⁸ Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*, 4.

⁷⁹⁹ Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*, 15.

⁸⁰⁰ Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*, 31.

⁸⁰¹ Cohen provides two estimates for the number of participants: 108 Jewish and three Greek Orthodox according to *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums*, and 150 Jewish volunteers according to the *Jewish Chronicle*. Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*, 154-155.

⁸⁰² Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*, 32-33.

“backwardness,” claim a powerful position with respect to other non-Muslim communities, and to prove that they were the friends of the Ottoman polity. As an extension of the Tanzimat ethos, Jewish community had been involved in education and philanthropic work hoping to achieve a harmony with their neighbors. Journalists, religious leaders and reformers aimed to create enlightened and philanthropic subjects, and the Ladino press was an important mechanism to achieve these. Philanthropic and educational activities were propagated through the press, and these were evaluated in comparison to their non-Jewish neighbors, particularly Ottoman Greeks. Additionally, Ottoman Jews regarded it important to create a powerful position for their community vis-à-vis the Ottoman state therefore encouraged the Ottoman Jewish population to learn the official language and get hold of positions in state bureaucracy.

The Jewish volunteers were provided with the opportunity to consume kosher food and perform their religious duties. However, the news that some of the Jewish volunteers had rejected the kosher food, turned into a polemic in *La Epoka*. The editor in chief responded to these rumors underlining that the Jewish volunteers should not ignore their religious duty. One of the Jewish volunteers who had travelled to Istanbul with the *milliye* unit, wrote a letter to *La Epoka*, explaining the situation that they were offered kosher food, and they did not ignore their duties. What makes this polemic interesting is the apparent tension between maintaining religious identity and an imperial identity.⁸⁰³

After the declaration of war by the Russian Empire, large gatherings and ceremonies in the synagogues of the capital were organized and Jewish notables, and people from civil and military positions attended these ceremonies. Declaring Russia

⁸⁰³ Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*, 32-34.

as the common enemy, chief rabbi of Ahrida Synagogue, gave a patriotic speech which called the Jewish community to participate in the war effort against Russia. In the next couple of months, Jewish participation in the war effort increased, eventually leading to the formation of a Jewish unit with a special flag. This flag had a Hebrew prayer on one side and the star and crescent on the other side. This flag was an important symbol according to Cohen, for it provided the Jewish community with the assurance that they were not left behind and that they had their own unit, like the Christian unit with the cross and the crescent.⁸⁰⁴

3.3.11 Changes in recruiting volunteers during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877

The Russo-Ottoman War of 1877 required more comprehensive mobilization, leading to the formation of new *muavine* units. Most of the practices which occurred during the Serbian War continued throughout the Russian War but this time the state had to mobilize more resources and soldiers. From the onset of the Russian war, voluntary units were formed both in the Balkans and in the capital. The number of volunteers reached thousands, as one example from Prizren illustrates. Around 4,000 volunteers joined the war effort from Prizren in May 1877.⁸⁰⁵ Prizren had participated in mobilization during the Serbian War with 20,000 voluntary soldiers.⁸⁰⁶

The regulation regarding the auxiliary troops which were put into effect in 1877 stated that these troops were to be composed of people who were not part of the compulsory military system.⁸⁰⁷ All units would be sent to the front, and they would be under the control of the regular army. Another article in this regulation stated that volunteers were not allowed to leave the military service according to their will and

⁸⁰⁴ Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*, 38-39.

⁸⁰⁵ Gülsoy, *Osmanlı Gayrimüslimlerinin Askerlik Serüveni*, 116.

⁸⁰⁶ BOA. ATASE, OSKHK 110/9/1/2/12/0/140.

⁸⁰⁷ Beşikçi, "Başıbozuk Savaşçıdan Makbul Tebaaya," 104.

that they needed to follow the military regulations. These volunteers were to be rewarded with decorations such as *İftihâr*, *Mecîdî* or *Osmânî*.⁸⁰⁸ Majority of these units were not merged with regular troops and only the volunteers who were merged into the regular army would receive clothing and guns from the state. The rest needed to provide clothing and guns on their own. This practice allowed for the formation of aid initiatives around the empire, supporting these units.

Focusing on the Circassian troops, Beşikçi's analysis highlights two important points; first, his analysis reveals that the recruitment process included certain mechanisms that would defy the categorization of this process as purely voluntary. Despite the labelling, state officials would participate in the recruitment process, by travelling to the villages and declaring the Sultan's will about mobilization and the importance of participation in jihad. Second, the role of the Circassian notables as intermediary actors between the state and the community allowed for these communities to relate to the Ottoman state directly and provided them with a certain leverage. Circassian participation continued during the 1877 War despite all negative connotations. Beşikçi proposes 50,000 as the minimum number of auxiliary troops which served in the Eastern front and 15,000 to 20,000 in Western front during the Russian War.⁸⁰⁹

As stated above, with the Russian declaration of war, individuals started composing volunteer units. Dimostini Efendi was allowed to compose another Christian unit for the Russian war,⁸¹⁰ residents of Sivas declared their willingness to join the war as auxiliary units,⁸¹¹ Sheikh Shamil's son declared his willingness to join

⁸⁰⁸ Beşikçi, "Başıbozuk Savaşçıdan Makbul Tebaaya," 105.

⁸⁰⁹ Beşikçi, "Başıbozuk Savaşçıdan Makbul Tebaaya," 103-104.

⁸¹⁰ BOA. İ. DH. 745/60933.

⁸¹¹ BOA. İ. DH. 745/60942.

his forces with the Ottoman state.⁸¹² Two religious school students from Fatih decided to open up a flag and compose a volunteer unit, however their flag was confiscated on the grounds that they did not have an official permission to perform such an act.⁸¹³

While volunteering continued in such an atmosphere, the government was not satisfied with the number of soldiers dispatched to the front, particularly from the capital. Thus, a new state decree was announced for recruiting volunteers from the capital. By this time, the constitutionalists were undermined and Midhat Paşa had already been sent to exile. Auxiliary units were now called *asâkir-i muavine-i sultaniye* and the government demanded the formation of six units from the capital, composed of both Muslim and non-Muslim resident. These units were to receive training and would be sent to the front.⁸¹⁴

For these units, six flags were established around the capital to recruit both Muslim and non-Muslim volunteers and this was a duty imposed on every subject. The official call used the word “*farz-ı ayn*” to mobilize the residents of the capital.⁸¹⁵ The official correspondence regarding these units reveals two state mechanisms that aimed to increase participation. The first mechanism was a continuation of the older practice, the distribution of decorations for those who would prove useful in the war. The second mechanism was to provide military titles to individuals who bring volunteers to compose units. Those who would provide 50 privates (*nefer*) to these units would be given the title *mülazım* (lieutenant), enrollment of 100 privates would bring the title *yüzbaşı* (captain), 200 privates would result in the promotion to

⁸¹² BOA. ATASE. ORHK. 110/9/1/3/124/0/762.

⁸¹³ BOA. ATASE. ORHK. 110/9/1/32/0/147.

⁸¹⁴ BOA. İ. DH. 750/61267. July 11, 1877.

⁸¹⁵ “... muhafaza-ı mülk ve vatan herkese farz-ı ayn olup bu cihetle erbab-ı hamiiyetin elele tutuşarak ve silaha sarılarak...” BOA. İ. DH. 750/61267.

kolağası (adjutant major), and finally those who would enroll 500 privates would be promoted to being a major.⁸¹⁶ By offering decorations and military ranks, the government hoped to increase the number of volunteers and motivate the intermediaries in the recruitment process.

In August 1877 the state also tried to organize two types of military formation in the cities around the empire; volunteer units which would be sent to the front and military units which would stay in their city and form civic guards.⁸¹⁷ This shows that the government was not only preoccupied with the defense of the capital but they tried to regulate the volunteers and tried to increase the participation in mobilization all around the empire.

The increasing threat of Russian advance on capital, also necessitated a new formation for defending the Capital. This time another guard unit, with the name *Mevkib-i Hümayun* was formed, again with the participation of both Muslim and non-Muslims.⁸¹⁸ Their uniforms were announced in the newspapers.⁸¹⁹ The regulation regarding these guard units was similar to the Salonica regulation, for the members of these units would conduct their regular jobs after training and that they were required to take up arms when needed.⁸²⁰ Implementing new mechanisms to increase participation, people were now obliged to (*mükellef*) joining these units and those who did not join the units or did not show up in the drills were punished with conscription into the regular army.⁸²¹ According to the regulations, all the resident of

⁸¹⁶ BOA. İ. DH. 750/61267. 11.07.1877

⁸¹⁷ *La Turquie*, August 18, 1877.

⁸¹⁸ *La Turquie*, August 22, 1877.

⁸¹⁹ Their uniforms were composed of green jackets decorated with buttons and laces and green armored trousers. Prototype uniforms were presented in the Military Council, with two bureaucrats, Cemil and Münir Bey wearing them. People who were serving in these unit were required to tailor their uniforms according to these prototypes. *Ceride-i Havâdis*, no. 3479. 22.08.1877.

⁸²⁰ Gülsoy, *Osmanlı Gayrimüslimlerinin Askerlik Serüveni*, 119.

⁸²¹ “mevkib-i hümayun alayı taburlarına dahil olmağla mükellef olan efrad-ı ahaliden davete icabet etmeyenlerin neferlikle mezkur taburlara kaydıyla” BOA. ATASE. ORHK. 110/9/1/3/72/0/170.

the capital between the ages 20 and 40 were required to participate.⁸²² Enrolment in these units were conducted by sub-committees which were responsible for organizing the enrolment in each of the eighteen electoral districts.⁸²³ This practice shows the dire need of the state to recruit the residents of the capital and arm them as a precaution against a Russian advance and regular drafting was instrumentalized as a punishment for those who did not participate. Thus, by September 1877 the guard units were not voluntary anymore.

Later in November 1877 all the units both in the capital and the provinces were united under an umbrella term, *Asâkir-i mülkiye*. These units were composed of both Muslim and non-Muslim resident and Abdülhamid II promoted two Ottoman Greeks, two Armenians and two Jews from these units as *yaver* and invited them to the Friday Ceremony.⁸²⁴ *Mülkiye* units, *Garde Civique* as translated by Aristarchi Bey, were to be executed throughout the empire, and it was an obligatory service. The only exception was the members of the imperial family, the ministers, and deputies.⁸²⁵

The official order for the formation of civic guards reached Edirne on December 6, 1877. Upon the news, notables from all communities gathered to form a commission for the implementation of measures. According to a quotation from *Adrianople*, published in *La Turquie*, the committee estimated that Edirne would raise six to seven battalions of guard units.⁸²⁶ Ömer Fevzi Paşa, commander of the guard units in the capital, summoned the presidents of the committees of the capital

⁸²² *La Turquie*, August 22, 1877.

⁸²³ For the districts and the members of the committees see, *La Turquie*, August 21, 1877.

⁸²⁴ Gülsoy, *Osmanlı Gayrimüslimlerinin Askerlik Serüveni*, 120.

⁸²⁵ Aristarchi Bey, *Doustour-i Hamidie*, 352-356.

⁸²⁶ *La Turquie*, December 15, 1877, p.1

and ordered them to include five non-Muslim notables from each district into the guard units.⁸²⁷

La Turquie announced the formation of guard units around the empire and claimed most of the time that people were enthusiastically joining these units.⁸²⁸ Participation of non-Muslim individuals in the civic guard units were advertised in the press.⁸²⁹ One of the civic guard units, paraded through the city with bands and music on their way to receiving their arms, contributing to the performative aspect of mobilization against Russia.⁸³⁰ The same day, the civic guard unit of Scutari also received their arms.⁸³¹ Newspapers not always celebrated the deeds of the voluntary units, sometimes, and not very frequently, news about the punishment of irregular units were announced in the newspapers. Four *zeibeks* from Larrissa were punished publicly, creating a good effect.⁸³² Another article which reveals that the presence of volunteers in the capital sometimes caused tensions and resulted in the unruly behavior of these warriors, was published in *Stamboul* on July 21, 1876. This article depicted a few occasions on which volunteers caused trouble to the residents of the capital, physically assaulted them and benefited from stores and restaurants, without payment.⁸³³ These articles highlight that the unruly behavior of the volunteers was not limited to the zones of conflicts.

Representing the Greek support to the Ottoman government, Greek Patriarchate published a call for arms on December 24, 1877. The letter was intended

⁸²⁷ *La Turquie*, December 2-3, 1877.

⁸²⁸ Larissa, claimed the newspaper, witnessed the subscription of 1,200 inhabitants as guards in a single day.

⁸²⁹ Elias Effendi, director of the Foreign Ministry archives bureau, along with the non-Muslim employees under his order requested to be included in the civic guard units, which was favorably received. *La Turquie*, December 5, 1877, p.1

⁸³⁰ *La Turquie*, December 5, 1877, p.1. Their march happened on December 3, 1877.

⁸³¹ *La Turquie*, December 5, 1877, p.1.

⁸³² *La Turquie*, December 5, 1877.

⁸³³ *Stamboul*, July 21, 1876.

to be read in Greek churches around the empire, which was not realized empire wide, according to Mr. Layard. Having received an official memorandum from the Foreign Ministry, the Patriarch expressed his gratitude to the Sultan for allowing the non-Muslim populations to participate in the patriotic efforts along with the Muslims and underlined that these units would be local defense units aimed to establish security in the regions. This would make this duty easier, since it would not require the Christians to go to the front however, he added that the opportunity was open to those who wished to go to the war on voluntary basis. Emphasizing the Sultan's sovereignty through his qualities in providing equal justice to all his subjects and the Sultan's belief that all subjects should participate in the defense of the homeland, the Greek Patriarch defined the enrolment in these guards' units as a sacred duty and argued that the Orthodox Christians should participate in order to show that they were the faithful subjects of the Empire.

Aware of the power the religious establishments, the Ottoman government regarded it crucial to mobilize the non-Muslim populations through their religious authorities. The Patriarch on the other hand aimed to express that the Greek contribution to the war effort was an opportunity for the expression of an imperial identity. It was also a means for the Patriarch to underline his role as the leading figure of the Ottoman Greeks, during a period which witnessed a certain degree of "secularization of the institutional framework for the [Ottoman Greek] *millet*."⁸³⁴ According to Anagnostopoulou, the church hierarchy and the 'neo-Phanariots' who held prominent positions in Ottoman bureaucracy were supporters of Ottoman patriotism while the bourgeois was a supporter of Greek nationalism.⁸³⁵ The

⁸³⁴ For the power struggle between the Patriarch, the church hierarchy, the 'Neo-Phanariots' and the Greek bourgeois, see Anagnostopoulou, "'Nation' of the Rum," 84-85.

⁸³⁵ Anagnostopoulou, "'Nation' of the Rum," 85.

supporters of Ottoman patriotism differed depending on the role of religion in their ideology.

Creating a legitimate belonging to an imagined community during a patriotic campaign may be interpreted with Hobsbawm's idea of "proto-nationalism." This framework offers an accurate, but in some ways limited, conceptualization of both the mobilization of this period but also how the notion of *Osmanlılık* functioned among the subjects of the empire.

Inspired by Ernest Renan's systematic of inquiring into the origins of nationalism, Hobsbawm dismisses the role of language, ethnicity, religion when he analyses the formation of "proto-nationalism." Describing proto-nationalism as an articulation of a collective belonging, Hobsbawm identifies two types of proto-nationalism. While the first type is related to a more symbolic and supra-local form, the second type of proto-nationalism is linked to a state and its institutions and creates a political bond. The main component of proto-nationalism according to Hobsbawm is "the consciousness of belonging or having belong to a lasting political entity." This "membership of a historic (or actual) state present or past" triggers the production of a proto-nationalism by shaping the consciousness of the people. Framed in relation to the consciousness of the people, Hobsbawm's perspective offers an insight into the mobilization campaign during the Balkan Crisis.⁸³⁶

His conceptualization offers a window into the ways in which different groups within the Ottoman Empire responded to the mobilization campaign. Hobsbawm suggests that there are three components to proto-nationalism; the categories of nationality, political loyalty and political commonwealth. These elements apply to the Ottoman case with minor modifications. *Osmanlılık*, the

⁸³⁶ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*.

ideology of the Tanzimat period is the dominant ideological bond during the mobilization campaign. This imperial identity becomes a threshold for patriotic rhetoric. Political loyalty to the Ottoman empire is the indispensable legitimacy mechanism for every party, especially during the reign of Abdülhamid II. Finally, political commonwealth is defined through the historic roots of belonging among different ethno-national groups and its protection against the enemies is the main motor of the whole campaign.

3.3.12 Propagating voluntary soldiers: Patriotic plays and poems

In July 31, *Vakit* published a special issue in which the aid campaign is discussed around three major themes, donations, voluntary units and medical support to the Ottoman army. Including plays, letters, poems and opinion pieces, the special issue aimed to bolster patriotic feelings and increase participation in mobilization. One of the plays published in this issue is called “A conversation between a brave Bosnian volunteer and his mother” (*Bosna şecilerinden bir gönüllü ile anası beyninde vuku bulan muhavere*) and narrates how a young man tried to convince his mother to participate in the war effort as a volunteer.⁸³⁷ The play starts with depicting the tension between the son and mother, who is unwilling to send him to the front. The reason for her opposition is rooted in the fact that she does not have anyone else than her son to support her. The son, on the other hand, justifies his decision to join the voluntary units on patriotic grounds, and describes an atmosphere in which the men, both young and elderly all had written down their names in the list, evoking a sense of a collective sacrifice. The son then argues that it was his father’s last wish before

⁸³⁷ *Vakit*, 287, 31 Temmuz 1876.

his death that his son would be a martyr, marking the turning point in the play and his mother finally gives in.

The publication of such a play in the special issue reveals that promoting voluntary participation was an integral part of the aid campaign. Targeting the public, the play is written with a very simple language, imbued with repetitions. Artistic and literary details are lacking, and it seems like the aim of the play is to promote self-sacrifice for the defense of the empire. Equating *Osmanlılık* with voluntary participation, the young man emphasizes that once his name was written down, there was no way to erase it. The mother then responds by saying “I am a woman, but I am as well an Ottoman”⁸³⁸ adding that she would allow her son to go to the war. Revolving around the notion of *vatan*, and the requirements of being an Ottoman, the play ends with a song glorifying the volunteers. This short play was possibly meant to influence the reader by triggering an emotional response and reminding the sacrifices of the Ottoman subjects. The staging of Namık Kemal’s *Vatan* play during the mobilization and the publication of plays and poems in the press contribute to the fact that the Ottoman intellectuals incorporated different cultural practices into mobilization so that patriotism would not wane.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to show that the relief efforts of the Balkan Crisis showcased an alignment between the state and society which led to the expansion of civil practices and paved the way for the oppositional groups to challenge the existing power relations. Relief to the wounded soldiers opened a new venue for defining the

⁸³⁸ “*Kadınım lakin ben de Osmanlıyım arslan anasıyım*”

requirements of imperial subjecthood. Amidst the economic and political turmoil, two practices, left their mark on the period: Donating and volunteering.

By exemplifying the variety of practices and discursive articulations, this chapter analyzed the dynamics behind the aid to Ottoman soldiers. By focusing on the domestic donation campaign this chapter rejected the identification of the whole process simply as a compulsory state measure. The mobilization campaign exemplified the power of state propaganda and how the *Osmanlılık* identity became an important part of the war effort. Concurrently, the chapter also sought to show the dynamic nature of the Ottoman social composition and their involvement in the relief campaign. The emphasis on co-existence is important in shedding light on Ottoman subjecthood in a period which may be identified as a transition period from subjecthood to citizenship, from traditional confessional models to the notion of equal rights discourse.

The critical function of press in the relief efforts, and the incorporation of literary and artistic forms into the donation campaign revealed how the Ottoman society engaged with relief efforts. By juxtaposing the state perspective and the social perspectives, this analysis highlighted the transformation of the relief practice and emphasized the Ottoman subjects' efforts at shaping the state discourse. Ways of transforming the state discourse revealed the negotiations between the state and the individuals and groups, which were crystalized in the social and cultural domains, entangled within patriotism, mobilization, and public opinion.

The research on the volunteer units revealed that the phenomenon had domestic and international attributes. While volunteering for the war was encouraged by the government, it also necessitated a certain reconfiguration. Formation of the volunteer units also revealed the power struggle between the different groups among

the ruling elite. As a response to the changes in the political context, a wide spectrum of volunteers participated in the Balkan conflicts. Volunteering became an expression of patriotism which would serve as proof for the allegiance to the state. For the Ottoman army, it was a means to mobilize people for the battles, and for the communities it marked a turning point in showing their loyalty to the state.



CHAPTER 4

HUMANITARIANISM AND INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

This chapter will argue that the making of modern humanitarianism operated within the larger historical context, i.e. the Eastern Question and a diplomatic approach would not suffice to reveal the complexities of the period if humanitarian networks are left untouched by any historical analysis. By discussing the theoretical and methodological approaches to nineteenth century humanitarianism, the first part will explore the interconnected nature of the phenomenon and reveal the relations between humanitarian sentiments, the political developments and the institutionalization of international relief efforts. After a brief discussion on the development of aid work and its specific implications for the British, Ottoman and Russian Empires, the second section will analyze the international institutions which worked alongside the Ottoman army in ameliorating the wounded Ottoman soldiers.

Three institutions, which provided aid to Ottoman wounded soldiers during the Balkan Crisis, were the Stafford House Committee, the National Aid Society and the Ottoman Red Crescent Society. In addition to providing brief institutional history, the chapter also aims to reveal the ways in which agents of humanitarian efforts articulated their experiences, viewed others and conducted their work amidst violence. Tensions and ambiguities regarding relief work will be underlined, with a specific focus on individuals who participated in the British relief operations. Due to the limits of the archival research, this chapter will only focus on British agents and institutions. Participants from other regions, such as the French, Austro-Hungarian and American medical personnel who conducted relief work with the Ottoman army will be referred to only in passing.

The last section will elaborate on international aid for the Ottoman soldiers and the connections between humanitarian ethos and personal benefit. In addition to detailing the international donations, this section will highlight the ways in which these donations served as mechanisms for the refinement of the image of the ruler and the state. Additionally, such expressions of compassion helped to create transborder ties which were both political, sentimental and humanitarian. Notwithstanding the influence of pan ideologies during the period, all relief networks need to be interpreted as articulations of a wider global phenomenon.

4.1 Modern humanitarianism in the making: Relief in the nineteenth century

During the Balkan Crisis, aid to suffering in war was not entirely new but the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed an increasing preoccupation with rationalization of relief efforts in the three empires: British, Ottoman and Russian. This process had its roots in the Crimean War and the Franco-Prussian War, two periods which witnessed the emergence of international codifications, regulations and organized institutions. Contrary to the earlier relief efforts, most of which stemmed from religious motivations, keywords such as neutrality and impartiality were dominating the vocabulary of humanitarian discourse by the second half of the century. Defined as an abstraction, moral philanthropy or the belief in humanity of the earlier periods was transforming along with larger political and socio-economic changes and humanitarianism was gaining a concrete form through the structuring of its field of operation.⁸³⁹

Yet, the term humanitarian came to signify emergency relief to the wounded only by the time of the Great War. During the nineteenth century this term still

⁸³⁹ Davies, "Continuity, Change and Contest," 3.

resonated its theological roots.⁸⁴⁰ In the English language the preferred vocabulary for humanitarian efforts was aid or assistance⁸⁴¹ and the term humanitarian even had a certain negative connotation until the First World War.⁸⁴²

In the late 1850s and early 1860s, there was little affiliation with the Geneva Convention among the initial voluntary aid movements or the notion of neutrality.⁸⁴³ The emphasis on international law by civilian associations was also not widespread. By the time of the Balkan Crisis however, the notion of neutrality was a matter of debate and discussions revolved around defining the victims and the means to provide aid to them. The Geneva Convention came to occupy a significant place in the diplomatic arena starting with the Balkan Crisis.⁸⁴⁴ It should be underlined that the Geneva Convention and the notion of international law were utilized predominantly at state level as tools of international diplomacy.

Concurrently the notion of humanitarian intervention was created during the nineteenth century and the two empires, Ottoman and Russian, were crucial actors in this process.⁸⁴⁵ Notwithstanding the different periodization of the evolution of humanitarianism and humanitarian intervention, it is widely accepted that the Balkan Crisis was a turning point in the history of humanitarianism and relief work. Even

⁸⁴⁰ The word humanitarian was used for the first time in 1819. Previously the term referred to someone who believed that Christ was of humanly origins, not a divine entity. Davies, "Continuity, Change and Contest" to the Kosovo War," 3. The earliest example of a political group which identified its course of action as humanitarian is the formation of The Humanitarian League in 1891 in London, with their journal "Humanity." Davies, "Continuity, Change and Contest," 3-4.

⁸⁴¹ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 5.

⁸⁴² In addition to its theological meaning, the term humanitarian meant someone who believed in the idea of the "Religion of Humanity." The religion of humanity originally designated a "mystical bond of human solidarity," and the word humanitarian designated someone who believed in "benevolence towards humanity as a whole." Concurrently the term was used with a disdain, implying an excessive sentimental attitude. Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 5; Davies, "Continuity, Change and Contest," 3.

⁸⁴³ This was particularly the case for British relief work. The Geneva Convention initially had a minor effect in the shaping of relief organizations in England and the Geneva Convention did not refer to formation of voluntary associations explicitly. Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 14.

⁸⁴⁴ At certain moments during the conflicts, the Geneva codifications were embraced by the humanitarian agents and the institutions. The captivity of the British doctors by the Russian forces provides an interesting example for such a moment of conflict. See 4.2 for the captivity of the doctors.

⁸⁴⁵ Heraclides, "Humanitarian intervention."

during periods of non-intervention,⁸⁴⁶ there had been collective involvement in the Ottoman affairs through diplomatic means, such as the Berlin Memorandum, Istanbul Conference, London Protocol and the Treaty of Berlin⁸⁴⁷ which were complemented by relief efforts.

The notion of ameliorating suffering in war goes back in history and it was conceptualized through the notion of “just war.” Relief on the other hand was predominantly formulated within a religious rhetoric of charity, and it was confined to the private realm. By mid-eighteenth century, the practice of and the theory pertaining to relief underwent a significant change and the humanitarian reforms defined and shaped European societies in the late eighteenth century.⁸⁴⁸ The spread of industrialism, urbanization, reforms in modern state making, and the advancement in science and medicine, “encouraged the notion that human action could be mobilized to transform conditions long taken as inevitable.”⁸⁴⁹

The second half of the nineteenth century was a turning point in the consolidation of two phenomena; the establishment of a European consensus on humanitarian intervention and the emergence of modern humanitarianism, both of which were linked with imperial aspirations. Becoming a buzzword during the conflicts in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans, humanitarian intervention

⁸⁴⁶ Rodogno identifies two periods of non-intervention. The first during the Balkan Crisis and the second during the Armenian Massacres between 1886-1909. Rodogno, *Against Massacre*.

⁸⁴⁷ Heraclides, “Humanitarian intervention,” 228.

⁸⁴⁸ The concept of just war was the established framework for discussing the legitimacy of use of arms. The literature of just war is traced back to fifth century and was later revived in the twelfth century. The humanitarian reform is regarded as an outcome of the Enlightenment and the preoccupation with the individual. Philosophy became increasingly engaged with defining and popularizing the concept of humanity and the transforming international law made explicit references to the obligations of humanity. With these developments, compassion moved out of the private realm into the public realm, and it became organized, making collective action possible. The larger socio-economic transformations, particularly urbanization, expansion of the capitalist market and the industrial revolution brought with them great social upheaval and exerted an immense pressure in redefining and restructuring charity. See chapter two in Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*.

⁸⁴⁹ Calhoun, “Imperative to Reduce Suffering,” 76.

had been practiced and consolidated since the Greek War of Independence.⁸⁵⁰

Modern war time relief, on the other hand, had its beginnings in two conflicts involving the European powers, the Crimean War and the Franco-Prussian War. These two conflicts, especially in the field of military medicine, had a profound effect on state conduct and triggered a discussion on the necessity of civil medical intervention on the battlefield.

Situated within the context of late colonialism, modern humanitarianism is defined as a transnational, institutional phenomenon with a more secular and scientific conceptualization when compared with the earlier, and religiously motivated humanitarianism.⁸⁵¹ Although during the Crimean War no such modern humanitarian institution was in existence, the spread of war journalism and the impact of Florence Nightingale's work in war time medical measures had a profound effect on the ways in which states and individuals perceived, discussed and engaged with armed conflict and the resulting human suffering. The Franco-Prussian War set the stage for the emergence of key institutions such as the National Aid Society, and the replacement of ideology instead of religious motivations in aiding combatants and victims.⁸⁵² Thus the need to define a "victim" and claim moral obligations to aid this victim came to occupy a significant place in public discussions.

Barnett identifies three factors which differentiate modern humanitarianism from the previous acts of compassion. First, relief organization became more organized and was now part of governance. Second, according to Barnett modern

⁸⁵⁰ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*.

⁸⁵¹ Pre-modern humanitarianism was religiously motivated, rested on the ethic of sympathy and conversion was an important part of the process. Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stones*, 5.

⁸⁵² After the Franco-Prussian War relief work was enmeshed in the dominant ideological currents and the newly emerging Red Cross movement was situated within the discourse of serving the nation-state, which had become the dominant narrative of public mobilization. Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 49.

humanitarianism aimed to connect the immanent to the transcendent. Lastly modern humanitarianism is now directed at people who reside in foreign lands.⁸⁵³ The third factor is an important facade of this phenomenon, not only because it reveals the crucial transformation from charity to modern humanitarianism, but it is also illustrative of the fact that humanitarian efforts had become the ground upon which the Eastern Question was discussed. As opposed to charity, philanthropic action became larger in scale and was conducted not in its specific locality but across borders⁸⁵⁴ and it evolved, particularly in the international context along with the concept of humanitarian intervention.⁸⁵⁵ In other words, both humanitarian intervention and humanitarian action were consolidated in the nineteenth century over regions outside the European continent.⁸⁵⁶

Humanitarian intervention was profoundly related to growing national aspirations and nationalist movements became a centerpiece in relief activities during the Balkan Crisis. Humanitarian agents, doctors, volunteers and correspondents produced articles on the Eastern Question and ethnographic texts about the Balkan peoples.⁸⁵⁷ The propagation of nationalist ideologies among the upper echelons of the societies crystallized in the expanding relief networks and the ideological shift to

⁸⁵³ Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 22-23.

⁸⁵⁴ Calhoun, "Imperative to Reduce Suffering," 79.

⁸⁵⁵ Rodogno, *Against Massacre*.

⁸⁵⁶ Giannakopoulos, "British International Humanitarianism."

⁸⁵⁷ Georgina Mackenzie and Adelina Irby were the forerunners. They travelled throughout the Balkans between 1861 and 1863, and their travelogue became a popular and influential book in England. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 98. Irby was a British Protestant missionary who was engaged in relief to the region. Irby conducted educational reforms in Bosnia, establishing girls' schools. Georgina Mackenzie was a British subject of Scottish origin and after becoming acquainted with Irby, the two women travelled around the Balkans, conducted relief work and published books and gave lectures about the region. During the Bulgarian Crisis their "expertise" turned them into authorities in aiding the Christian populations of the region. G. Barbanti Brodano, an Italian who fought with the Serbians as a volunteer during the Serbian War, published a book titled *Serbia: Ricordi e Studi Slavi* (Serbia: Memoir and Slavic Studies) in 1877, which was a combination of his experience in Serbia and ethnographic and literary pieces about Serbians. Barbanti-Brodano, *Serbia*.

nationalist narratives took on a concrete form with the involvement of humanitarian agents and volunteer fighters in international conflicts.

4.1.2.1 International relief movement

From the seventeenth century onwards, regulating warfare was a debated topic and there were established networks of charities throughout Europe. Legal and political theorists were interested in elaborating theories on regulating war conduct beginning in the eighteenth century. The Crimean War had revealed the need for medical support for the fighting armies and Dunant's book, *A Memory of Solferino* is considered to be a timely publication building on the bitter experiences.⁸⁵⁸ One year after the publication of his book, Dunant participated in a committee, which was part of a Genevese charitable association, aiming to put his ideas into action.⁸⁵⁹ Gustave Moynier,⁸⁶⁰ already a member of the Genevese philanthropic society, mediated his introduction to the society. Soon, the two men became the leading figures in the establishment of the transnational humanitarian institution.⁸⁶¹ The initial efforts were followed by the foundation of ICRC, and the ratification of the Geneva Convention for regulating relief on the battlefield. The Red Cross International movement provided the impetus for turning humanitarian values into action.⁸⁶² Henry Dunant's

⁸⁵⁸ Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 68.

⁸⁵⁹ Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 68.

⁸⁶⁰ Gustave Moynier (1826-1910) was, along with Henry Dunant, one of the two founding figures of the International Red Cross movement. Born in Geneva Moynier, studied law and later worked in the Public Welfare Society, which was a philanthropic society comprised mostly of aristocracy. He was among the founders of the Institute of International Law and Moynier was initially influenced by Dunant's famous publication, *A Memory of Solferino*. Notwithstanding their initial efforts, the two figures soon had frictions and became rivals in philanthropic efforts. Ruegger, "Gustave Moynier."
⁸⁶¹ While Dunant is praised in most histories of the Red Cross, critical studies underline Moynier as "the real architect of the Red Cross movement." Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*.

⁸⁶² The first armed conflict that the International Committee was involved, was the Franco-Prussian War and it provided the Committee with the opportunity to execute temporary charity organizations aiding the belligerents. Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*, 105. The war turned out to be a watershed moment for the International Committee, resulting in the skepticism towards the movement, particularly due to the then-controversial involvement of the volunteers and the abuses of the Red Cross flag. The struggles of the International Committee during the Franco-Prussian War resulted in

vision was based on alleviating the suffering of individuals and not the salvation of communities.⁸⁶³ The Red Cross Societies, far from Dunant's vision of being transnational were integrated into the political agendas of the states, turned into patriotic institutions and took part in the militarization of the societies.⁸⁶⁴ Having one's own Red Cross Society showcased sovereignty and civilization.

The initial humanitarian group established in Geneva was called the *International Committee*, short for *International Committee for the Assistance to Sick and Wounded Soldiers*. The committees in other countries, which were established following the Geneva committee, adopted similar names. By the end of 1870s, the Geneva committee encouraged the national branches to use the term "Red Cross Society" in their names.⁸⁶⁵ The idea of forming a federation of aid committees was first discussed at the "Second International Congress of Hygiene, Lifesaving and Social Economy" in October 1876 at Brussels. The proposition of forming a federation of aid societies helped the founders of the International Committee to envision a structure which would transform the "unplanned and uncontrolled response of neutrals to the appeals of the belligerents in 1870."⁸⁶⁶ Such an organization would allow for more autonomous local branches and the International Committee would benefit from staying out of political disputes. An additional benefit would be that the regional societies would provide aid to both the belligerents and that they would provide aid to each other during the conflicts.

fierce debates about the role of the volunteers and whether abolishing the Geneva Convention or rewriting it. The efficiency of the German military medical system proved as a more powerful and reliable alternative than the International Committee for treating the sick and the wounded on the battlefield. Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*, 126-128.

⁸⁶³ Skinner and Lester, "Humanitarianism and Empire," 730.

⁸⁶⁴ Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 70.

⁸⁶⁵ Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*, 6.

⁸⁶⁶ Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*, 135.

The proposal was refused fiercely during the Brussels Congress. One of the arguments of the opposing camp was that such a federation would jeopardize the freedom of societies of choosing their own means of providing charity.⁸⁶⁷ The resistance to a federative structure illuminates the fact that the three concepts, which have been cherished as the ultimate contribution of the International Red Cross, impartiality, neutrality, and independence, were not yet shared ideals and there was no unanimous agreement on the matter. In fact, the use of Red Crescent instead of the Red Cross symbol by the Ottoman Empire, and the accompanying discussions revealed the need to redefine some of these concepts.

4.1.3 Humanitarianism during the Balkan Crisis

The humanitarian efforts of the Balkan Crisis should be viewed as a transition period in which it is possible to trace the remnants of the earlier discourse and practices on creating sympathy and arousing a Christian compassion. Even the conversional aspirations continued to exist, albeit within limits. Religious books were offered to the patients in the hospital and the pan-Slavic movement did not refrain from expressing Christian brotherhood.⁸⁶⁸ The British press still made use of references to the superior Christian charity in promoting donations to the victims of the Balkan Crisis. The diverse motivations of the humanitarians of the Balkan Crisis, proves that this was a transition period, in which some groups were motivated by the ethics of sympathy and religious motivations, others viewed their actions as part of a patriotic act, given their earlier experiences in the Crimean War against Russia.⁸⁶⁹ Other actors

⁸⁶⁷ Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*, 138.

⁸⁶⁸ The NAS officials in Belgrade, for example, distributed New Testament to the wounded Serbian soldiers in the hospitals. Report of Doctor Laseon, September 28, 1876, in "Reports of Operations of the Society in Turkey and Servia." BRCA. WAN 2/1/1.

⁸⁶⁹ Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire*, 156.

took on a more secular perspective underlining the superiority of Western medical know-how in alleviating the suffering. However, despite the limited similarities with the earlier relief efforts, the decisive trait of the larger transformation is explained with the notion of rationalization.

4.1.3.1 Rational compassion

The concept of “rational compassion” is, according to Gill, the distinguishing feature of the emerging phenomenon of humanitarian aid during the second half of the nineteenth century. The method of rationalizing compassion toward suffering strangers and creating new practices and institutions turned out to be a major preoccupation of the actors involved in relief work. Rationalization required expertise and a specific kind of awareness about the bodily suffering of people in distant locations. The root of such awareness is traced back to the late eighteenth century literary production in Europe.

Defining the early characteristics of the “humanitarian narrative” Thomas Laqueur draws attention to the detailed descriptions of pain, body and the concern with depicting the human body with meticulous physiognomic details in literary and scholarly production during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. He argues that the personal body, which was now the centerpiece of humanitarian narrative, had also become the “common bond between those who suffer and those who would help” and “the object of the scientific discourse through which the causal links between an evil, a victim, and a benefactor” were created.⁸⁷⁰ The press served as the main tool in spreading the suffering of distant peoples and promoting the modern humanitarian sensibilities. As one journalist noted during the 1870’s “[t]his “mass of

⁸⁷⁰ Laqueur, “Bodies, Details,” 177.

picturesque and minute detail,” created a feeling that the readers’ “sympathies have been brought forth almost as if [their] own flesh and blood had been sufferers.”⁸⁷¹ Such phrases evoked a sense of moral obligation and justified the empathetic attunements.

Eighteenth century English literature, which was widely affected by “a spectatorial sympathy”⁸⁷² created artistic and literary pieces which diversified the sentimentality. The literary examples of sentimentalism were followed by the sensationalism of the penny press, which contributed to a transformation of the concept of pain. This development was coupled with the medical innovations, particularly the enhancement of surgical anesthesia, all of which resulted in the revulsion from physical suffering and an obsession with pain simultaneously. The humanitarian reforms had also contributed to the redefinition of pain by claiming acts against violence as virtuous.⁸⁷³ The reconfiguration of pain resulted in the creation of a moral obligation which required new ways of imagining and conceptualizing human agency. Through the humanitarian narrative “ameliorative action is presented as possible, effective, and therefore morally imperative.”⁸⁷⁴

Linking this human action to the social changes, to the development of the modern state and to modern sciences, Calhoun underlines that such individual responses created “new understandings of responsibility.” This new responsibility lay at the root of the moral obligation to improve the conditions of the “less well-off” by “the well-off.”⁸⁷⁵ The well-offs, or the civilized Europeans justified their humanitarian efforts in a specific way and this attitude was not only limited to the

⁸⁷¹ Quoted in Gill, “Rational Administration.”

⁸⁷² Halttunen, “Humanitarianism and the Pornography,” 307.

⁸⁷³ Halttunen, “Humanitarianism and the Pornography,” 310-318.

⁸⁷⁴ Laqueur, “Bodies, Details,” 178.

⁸⁷⁵ Calhoun, “Imperative to Reduce Suffering,” 76.

humanitarian sphere. Writing to *The Times*, in 1876, Stratford Canning described the condition of the Serbian people as follows: “The Servians themselves may be deficient in civilization as affecting the principles or practice of governments and the imperative duties of humanity.”⁸⁷⁶ Such imposing outlook on the recipients of relief was not uncommon among the diplomats, the doctors or the correspondents, all the agents who contributed in the making of modern humanitarianism.

Rationalization applied to the economy of relief. According to Gill, the rhetoric of the humanitarians was becoming more secular, and the practices were justified through a capitalist perception. A key figure in modern humanitarianism, Loyd-Lindsay’s words, exemplifies this point: “it is possible to be as precise in the administration of relief to wounded and sick men in war as it is to be in ordinary mercantile transactions.”⁸⁷⁷ Those who cherished and pioneered in humanitarian activity belong to the upper segments of the societies. The Coutts & co. functioned as the main financial institution in the British humanitarian transactions and around twenty members of the Stafford House Committee had accounts in this bank prior to 1876.⁸⁷⁸ Such economic ties do not explicitly indicate economic motivations but shows that financial ties were instrumental in the making of philanthropic circles.

4.1.4 British relief during the Balkan Crisis

The driving force behind the British relief to soldiers, according to Gill, was not the instrumentalization of a shared ideal but a reshaping of the older traditions of charity within a new socio-political context. Important factors that contributed to the expansion of humanitarian concerns, particularly to wounded soldiers were the

⁸⁷⁶ Quoted in Kedourie, *England and the Middle East*, 12.

⁸⁷⁷ Quoted in Gill, “Rational Administration.”

⁸⁷⁸ Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire*.

troubling condition of the British military medical practice during the Crimean War and the moral duties of participatory citizenship.

By the time of the Balkan Crisis, the effects of investigative journalism were coupled with the Victorian culture of altruism all of which are regarded as the salient features of nineteenth century British humanitarianism.⁸⁷⁹ A third tenet, which was crucial in the formation of this phenomenon, was the increasing number of diplomatic posts in the region.⁸⁸⁰ The presence of diplomatic personnel in contested regions was crucial for relief administration and for constructing specific narratives about the conflicts through eye-witness accounts. Additionally, scholars underline one crucial fact about the relief efforts of the nineteenth century. They were part of a patriotic context, and they belong to and helped shape a discourse about the degree of civilization equated with just war.⁸⁸¹

Despite the fact that the relation between public opinion and foreign policy making is debated in the literature, the link between public opinion and the humanitarian efforts is more explicit during this period.⁸⁸² Never had the British public and the political leaders been so divided into two camps and this continued well into the second half of 1877.⁸⁸³ The summer of 1877 is regarded “as a revival of the summer drama of 1876”⁸⁸⁴ indicating waves of fiery debate and public engagement. The divide within the policy makers and the British public had an impact on relief efforts. Three groups led the aid to the Balkans; supporters of the

⁸⁷⁹ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*; Giannakopoulos, “British International Humanitarianism.”

⁸⁸⁰ Giannakopoulos, “British International Humanitarianism.”

⁸⁸¹ Heraclides, “Humanitarian intervention,” 228; Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 6; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 209.

⁸⁸² Foreign policy mechanisms were still under the influence of a small group of decision-making elites and this period was the golden age of traditional diplomacy. Yet humanitarian rhetoric needed to be accompanied by public opinion for it to create the desired social impact. Heraclides and Dialla, *Humanitarian Intervention*.

⁸⁸³ Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers*, 75; Heraclides and Dialla, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 159.

⁸⁸⁴ Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers*, 75.

Balkan nationalist struggles, groups at equal distance to the belligerent parties, and groups providing support to the Ottoman army, the latter being the smallest group.⁸⁸⁵

The events in Bulgaria, which were labelled as “Bulgarian Atrocities,” is interpreted as a spontaneous response to the atrocities. Scholars of humanitarianism and the Balkans viewed the public outcry as a “spontaneous outburst of indignation throughout Britain”⁸⁸⁶ and the claim that the public response rested on genuine sentiments about humanity, contributed to the creation of a moral consensus justifying humanitarian intervention.⁸⁸⁷ The “simulacrum of spontaneity” rested on a combination of press publications and actions of sympathizers.⁸⁸⁸

The Northern Echo was the leading contributory factor in the construction of an agitation campaign. Its publications on the Bulgarian issue were a mixture of eye-witness accounts and historical narratives recreating the clash between civilization and barbarism. Concurrently, the *Daily News* reported kidnapping of women and their enslavement in the harem. Such news, according to Gill, triggered a public reaction based on the earlier anti-slavery premises. Leading members of the anti-slavery movement were soon involved in the public debates and protests.⁸⁸⁹ The editor of *The Northern Echo*, W. T. Stead, called for organizing public demonstrations in various towns. Demanding the immediate removal of the “incapable ambassador at Constantinople,” the meetings claimed “in the name of Humanity, Civilization and Christianity” the expulsion of the Turks from Europe.⁸⁹⁰ The aim of the meetings was published in *The Northern Echo* by Stead as editorial pieces prior to the events and delineated their political rhetoric. Stead’s pieces were

⁸⁸⁵ Heraclides and Dialla, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 156.

⁸⁸⁶ Quoted in Gill. Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 80.

⁸⁸⁷ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 81.

⁸⁸⁸ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 81.

⁸⁸⁹ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 82.

⁸⁹⁰ Quoted in Gill. Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 83.

repeated in the meetings which were then published in *Northern Echo*, *Daily News* and *Times* as evidence of public outcry, triggering more demonstrations.⁸⁹¹

Building on such a campaign, Gladstone's pamphlet put in motion a chain of events with dire consequences for the Balkan Crisis. In compiling the necessary information for his pamphlet, Gladstone contacted pro-Bulgarian humanitarian agents.⁸⁹² Thus, his formulation of the events rested on the "expertise" knowledge of the humanitarian agents, and helped galvanize the public agitation. Gladstone's depiction of the Turkish race as "the great anti-human specimen of humanity," as destructors of civilization and law⁸⁹³ was a meticulously calculated representation which constructed a very specific Other. One that fell outside European civilization, law and humanity. His narrative was based on a civilizational fight between the anti-human, making the British, pioneers in the struggle for humanity.⁸⁹⁴ Cherishing the great services of free journalism "to humanity, to freedom and to justice" Gladstone identified *Daily News* publications on this matter as the most splendid.⁸⁹⁵ The pamphlet ended with a call for aid to Bulgarians through Lady Strangford's initiative.

Gladstone's relations with the humanitarian agents reveals just one facet of the intricate relation between the political campaigns and the humanitarian agents' narratives and exemplifies Gill's contrasting the aid efforts during the Franco-

⁸⁹¹ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 83-84.

⁸⁹² Gladstone initially conducted an interview with Lady Strangford, who organized a relief fund for the Bulgarian victims. Later he consulted with Humphrey Sandwith, Paulina Irby and James Lewis Farley, who were also actively engaged aiding the Bulgarians in the field. Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 85. In the "Preface" written by Gladstone in 1877 to Mackenzie and Irby's book titled "Travels in The Slavonic Provinces of Turkey-In-Europe," Gladstone glorifies the means of obtaining trustworthy information through humanitarian agents. He cherishes Mackenzie and Irby's publications about the Balkans for providing information "without passion or prejudice, as well as without reserve, the normal state of life among the subject races. Gladstone, "Preface."

⁸⁹³ Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors*.

⁸⁹⁴ It is imperative to note that Gladstone and his rhetoric does not represent the English view towards the Ottoman Empire in its entirety. Not all the Philhellenic and pro-Slav groups resort to such racist claims, most of them confined their arguments to the political realm by emphasizing the despotic and arbitrary nature of Ottoman rule. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*.

⁸⁹⁵ Gladstone, "Preface."

Prussian War with the Balkan Crisis.⁸⁹⁶ The embeddedness of the humanitarian agents in various socio-political circles challenges the claims about the proclaimed alienation of the actors from political action and lends support to the fact that relief work and humanitarian interventions were closely related with the perceived differences of the states along ethno-religious lines and these were interpreted with an oriental gaze.⁸⁹⁷

Scholars of humanitarianism find it imperative to highlight the relation between colonialism, expanding market capitalism and European political desire to change the world. Humanitarian motivations ran parallel to the colonial aspirations, and their desire to change the world had colonial overtones. “Their desire to save individual lives in peril” fell outside their immediate political surrounding and were based on Eurocentric conceptions.⁸⁹⁸ Individual aspirations were also at play during the period.

One common characteristic of humanitarian agents was that those who had attained “a degree of recognition in a particular field, often in connection with the Near East or North Africa” regarded it as “a matter of personal pride and status” in engaging with the matter and both their efforts and their representation in the press were “an integral part of the power structure of Victorian and Edwardian society.”⁸⁹⁹

The ability of the individual to intervene in suffering and its promulgation had certain requirements, such as compliance with the expectation, accountability,

⁸⁹⁶ A major difference between the British relief in the Balkan Crisis and the Franco-Prussian war, according to Gill is that participants of relief work during the Balkan Crisis belonged to networks, which included activists, correspondents, literary and scholarly figures and were deeply embedded in certain political goals. Gill, “Rational Administration.”

⁸⁹⁷ Heraclides, “Humanitarian intervention,” 227-229. British relief to Russia in the slightly latter period (from 1890’s onwards) was not without political engagements. For an inspiring study on British humanitarian efforts in Russia between 1890-1912 see Kelly, *British Humanitarian Activity*. Kelly supports the argument that British efforts were not based on pure humanitarian aims. Kelly, *British Humanitarian Activity*, 3.

⁸⁹⁸ Skinner and Lester, “Humanitarianism and Empire,” 730.

⁸⁹⁹ Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire*, 156.

and access to the sphere of operation.⁹⁰⁰ The press served as an important medium in the realization of this requirement. The expectations regarding the relief efforts and their accountability were carefully delineated in public meetings and newspaper articles. In this way modern communication technologies were key to the enhancement of humanitarian work. The dependence between news publication and humanitarian action was a two-way process. Representatives of the new technologies relied on agents stationed at the conflict zones providing evidence from the field and the humanitarian efforts were likewise dependent on press publication for subscriptions and volunteers. Public opinion was the force coming out of this bilateral endeavor of aid.

4.1.5 Russian relief during the Balkan Crisis

One of the key players in the Eastern Question, the Russian Empire, was deeply involved in providing aid and sending volunteers during the Balkan affairs. The decision-making elite were concerned with the preservation of balance with respect to foreign policy, yet the possibility of an increasing Austrian influence in the region was a matter of serious concern. The fate of the Slavs resonated on different levels among the intellectuals and the public. The moral imperative of Russia to act as a savior in the context of a humanitarian crisis was the overarching theme in the Russian public discussion. The increasing support for the Slavic cause and the emerging civil associations provided an added impetus to these discussions.

⁹⁰⁰ Gill, "Rational Administration."

4.1.5.1 The formation of the Russian Red Cross Society

After its foundation in 1867, the Russian Red Cross Society (RRCS) did not thrive rapidly.⁹⁰¹ From its establishment until the Russo-Ottoman War, the RRCS was preoccupied with structuring its administration and deciding on their field of activity in a period during which Russia was not involved in any military conflict.⁹⁰² Membership to the Society and private donations were the two methods of funding the society. The Franco-Prussian War and the famine relief campaign (1874) increased the subscriptions to the Society and by 1876 the budget of the Society was over half a million rubles.⁹⁰³

One of the problems that the Society was faced with, was educating and acquiring medical personnel. The lack of sanitary measures during the Crimean War forced the Russian authorities to increase the number of medical corps in the army. RRCS could not hire permanent medical personnel, especially doctors and feldshers, due to financial limitations, therefore they entrusted local committees to work in cooperation with the zemstvos.⁹⁰⁴ RRCS bargained with the Ministry of Interior with the aim of obtaining trained medical personnel, who were in state service but their offer was rejected, leaving the RRCS in dire need for trained medical corps.⁹⁰⁵ Despite the unsuccessful efforts of the Society in recruiting doctors, the conflicts in the 1870s helped the society to explore administration of relief.

⁹⁰¹ War Minister Miliutin initially had rejected the establishment of a relief committee which would organize volunteer medical personnel to provide services on the battlefield after the establishment of the Geneva Conventions. Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*, 39. Russians were not alone in objecting to assigning volunteer medical personnel on the battlefield. The French were also initially hesitant in sending volunteers to the battlefield. Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*, 47.

⁹⁰² In the first years RRCS tried to expand its subscribers and establish branches in various cities. By 1869 the Society had forty provincial committees, twenty-six women's committees and around 7,500 members. The most active local branches were in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, Odessa and Kiev. Ringlee, "Romanovs," 105-106.

⁹⁰³ Ringlee, "Romanovs," 107.

⁹⁰⁴ A couple of initiatives for educating women as nurses did not last long due to financial setbacks. See Ringlee, "Romanovs," 121-123.

⁹⁰⁵ Ringlee, "The Romanovs'."

Russian monetary aid to the Franco-Prussian war was little, but Russian doctors who volunteered to provide services to the wounded, provided the Russian Red Cross with invaluable insights into the dealing of medico-military requirements. Russia sent thirty doctors, the most talented ones, and supplies to the Franco-Prussian War.⁹⁰⁶ Pirogov, an important figure in Russian medicine, joined the Franco-Prussian War as an observer, visiting Prussian medical facilities. His report regarding the military medical services of the war and private aid in particular turned out to be influential in the restructuring of private medical aid efforts in Russia.⁹⁰⁷ What boosted the popularity of RRCS was in fact disaster relief work.⁹⁰⁸ The Society also aided the Russian Army in their Central Asian Expeditions in the 1870s.⁹⁰⁹ Their efforts in disaster relief or their cooperation with the Russian army in the conquest of Central Asia, did not change the attitude of the Ministry of War towards the Society however, these missions provided the Society with experience and knowledge about the technicalities of organizing sanitary aid to the army.

4.1.5.2 Russian aid during the Balkan Crisis: Pan-Slav committees and the Russian Red Cross Society

It was the Balkan Crisis that gave an impetus for the expansion of private relief in the Russian Empire. The petition by the Metropolitan of Serbia prompted Russian aid to the region, both in the form of monetary donations and by sending medical

⁹⁰⁶ Ringlee, "Romanovs," 131.

⁹⁰⁷ Pirogov supported the separation of private aid initiative from governmental mechanisms and proposed that the Society should be actively engaged in preparations in peace periods. Ringlee, "Romanovs," 132-134.

⁹⁰⁸ The first disaster relief work of RRCS was the donation campaign following the earthquake in Shemakhi in 1872. The Samara provincial committee was active in aiding the sufferers of famine in 1872. In 1875 RRCS provided relief to fire struck towns in Tambov Province. Ringlee, "The Romanovs'."

⁹⁰⁹ RRCS participated in the Russian campaign against the Central Asian Khanate of Khiva in 1873. According to Ringlee, neither Red Cross agents nor the Russian military personnel were considerate of the Geneva codifications during the campaign. Ringlee, "Romanovs," 155-156.

personnel.⁹¹⁰ The resistance of the Russian Tsar and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gorchakov to any unilateral military operation concerning the crisis in the Balkans rested on a defensive foreign policy which was in effect since the end of the Crimean War. However, Russian intellectuals had been increasingly preoccupied with pan-Slavic ideology since the establishment of the first pan-Slavic society in 1858.⁹¹¹ Ignatiev, the Russian ambassador to Porte between 1864-1877, favored increasing Russian influence in the Balkans, and he actively participated in Slavic benevolent societies.

While Gorchakov regarded the Eastern Question as essentially a European one, politicians and high bureaucrats with pan-Slavic tendencies regarded it as a crucial aspect of Russian interests. They underlined the Russian duty and responsibility of helping the Christian populations of the Balkans, suffering under the Ottomans. It was a historical duty of the Russian intelligentsia and the state to save the Balkans. Even though an imperialist policy in the Balkans was the uniting element among the pan-Slavic groups, they were not homogenous, and they differed from each other on the limits of Russian imperialism.⁹¹²

⁹¹⁰ Commenting on the lack of aid from Europeans, the Metropolitan bishop described the dire need for knowledgeable doctors and nurses. Ringlee, "Romanovs," 165.

⁹¹¹ One of the leading pan-Slavic institutions in Russia, the Moscow Slavic Benevolent Committee was established in 1858 under the Asiatic Department to increase Russian relations with the Balkans. It also had close connections with the Orthodox church, and it was interested in spreading Russian interest among Bulgarians. Seton-Watson. *Decline of Imperial Russia*, 92. Three other branches of the Slavic Benevolent Committee were established in St. Petersburg, Kiev and Odessa, respectively: 1868, 69, 70. Main activities of these committees were: donating to Orthodox schools in the Balkans, funding students, involvement in educational work, publication of newspapers, fund-raising. Yiğit Gülseven, "Rethinking Russian pan-Slavism," 338-339.

⁹¹² Ragsdale, "Introduction." Two main questions divided the pan-Slavs: Should the Slavdom include all those who spoke the Slav tongue or only Orthodox Slavs? The second major preoccupation was regarding Russia's position and whether Russia should have a dominant position or be treated as an equal. In analyzing pan-Slavism, Hugh Seton-Watson divides the political aims of the pan-Slavs into three groups, drawing parallels with pan-Germanism: (1) Those who aimed to establish a Greater Slavdom, which included all Slavs regardless of any difference, be it religion or history or state. (2) Those who aimed to establish a Lesser Slavdom, with an emphasis on Romanov dynasty, Russian state and Orthodox religion. (3) Those with Russo-Panslavic Imperialist ideology who wanted to extend the Lesser Slavdom to the whole Slavic world. Seton-Watson. *Decline of Imperial Russia*, 91. In addition to these differences, there were conservative, liberal, radical, socialist versions of Slavophilism in Russia. These differences in political aspirations and ideological outlooks however

The general tendency in Russian historiography about the effects of the fervent pan-Slavic campaigning on Russian policy is to regard it as an instance in which the ambiguous relation between the autocratic power and the public opinion is revealed. Power structure was still autocratic, but it was not totally distant from public opinion.⁹¹³ Indeed, when the 1877 War broke out, Russian government did not represent this war as a Russo-Ottoman conflict, but it was justified from within a humanitarian narrative, emphasizing humanity and protection of the Christendom.⁹¹⁴ The Tsar also believed that the war was justified as a humanitarian cause in the eyes of the Europe, due to the violence and atrocities that had been shaping public opinion. The humanitarian rhetoric was coupled with the notion of the honor of Russia and Tsar's duty to protect this honor, emphasizing that the Tsar was aware of public opinion and that he was on the same page with Russian society's concerns.⁹¹⁵

Thus, the literature underlines the fact that the Tsar had yielded to public pressure, but he also created a specific discourse about the war, which tried to justify unilateral action. The goal of liberating the Balkans from Ottoman yoke implied a sacrifice by the Russian state on humanitarian basis. Alexander's speech about the defense of the Slavs was indeed welcomed by the pan-Slavs.⁹¹⁶ Similar to the discussion in Britain, public pressure in Russia was partly based on shaping foreign policy through morality, which became an instrument in Russia's declaration of war. The war propaganda also included Alexander II as a compassionate soldier, acting out of altruism. Despite the articulation of the Slavic cause in the declaration of the

were united in a program which aimed at removing the foreign control from the Slavic communities and which was effective particularly against the Habsburg of the Ottoman rule. Jelavich, *Russia's Balkan Entanglements*, 157.

⁹¹³ Mamonov, "Autocracy," 214.

⁹¹⁴ Heraclides and Dialla, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 176. See 2.2 for the Ottoman response to these claims.

⁹¹⁵ Heraclides and Dialla, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 174-176.

⁹¹⁶ Kohn, *Pan-Slavism*. 214.

war, it should be underlined that the Russian authorities may have surrendered to public pressure but, as most of the scholar underline, they did not surrender to the pan-Slav ideology.

The public support for aiding the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans was the result of a campaign which included the workings of a diplomat, a famous publisher, a general and the Empress⁹¹⁷ and the Russian support to the Serbians and Bulgarians was not only about sending money and volunteers. For the members of the Russian Red Cross Society this conflict provided an opportunity to test their capabilities in armed conflicts and served as an instance through which modern medicine was spread in the Balkans. Doctors perceived their mission as an important case to prove that they had the necessary skills and experience vis-a-vis other doctors.⁹¹⁸ In addition to the competitive ambitions, their experiences allowed the Russian Red Cross to function more effectively during the War of 1877.⁹¹⁹ Ringlee proposes that the Russian Red Cross functioned as a soft power tool in Russian imperialism and the doctors and nurses who intervened in international conflicts or the Russian colonization in Asia, served as important agents in the expansionist endeavors.⁹²⁰

The initial involvement of the Russian Red Cross started off by the announcement of the central committee of aid to the refugees in Montenegro. When Montenegro was ratified in the Geneva Convention, the Russian Red Cross dispatched a group of medical personnel to Cetinje in November 1875, which was followed by other Russian medical units in Grakhov and Danilovgrad.⁹²¹ The

⁹¹⁷ The Russian ambassador to İstanbul, Ignatiev; a famous publisher in support of the Slavic cause, Katkov, General Cherniaev. Ringlee, "Romanovs," 166.

⁹¹⁸ The Russian doctors who volunteered in Montenegro and Serbia, later published their experiences and observations in the Russian medical journals as a contribution to scientific knowledge, bolstering their reputation. Ringlee, "Romanovs," 175.

⁹¹⁹ Ringlee, "Romanovs," 167.

⁹²⁰ Ringlee, "Romanovs," iv.

⁹²¹ Ringlee, "Romanovs," 170.

Montenegrin Red Cross hospital was directed by Russian doctors, Russian nurses served in this hospital and the Red Cross facility in Cetinje was managed by Russian representatives.⁹²² Local Red Cross Society in Montenegro was under the command of the Archimandrite, which only functioned on paper, according to John Furley.⁹²³ While the Russian aid in Montenegro was welcomed, Russian presence in Serbia turned out to be more complicated.

RRCS's involvement in Serbia was initially limited but with the intensification of the conflict, Serbian army's setbacks and the increasing pressure from the Russian public, the RRCS was forced to be involved in wider relief work.⁹²⁴ When the Serbians called for war, the pan-Slavic circles and the Slavic Benevolent Committees started a campaign in support of the Serbian cause. In addition to organizing campaigns, these committees recruited volunteers.⁹²⁵ Pan-Slavs viewed the Russian Red Cross as a mechanism to increase their influence by supporting their Slavic brothers in the Balkans.⁹²⁶ However the Russian Red Cross officials did not allow pan-Slavic groups or other volunteers, such as the Old Believers, to use the Red Cross emblem.⁹²⁷

In January 1876, the Russian aid to Herzegovina reached 360,000 rubles via a combined effort by the Slavic committees, the Russian Red Cross, Russian press and other unofficial means. According to Mackenzie's estimates two thirds of this sum

⁹²² M. Wassiltchikoff, the delegate of the Russian Red Cross Society, and M. De Speyer, secretary of the Russian Consul-General was the leading figures in this facility. Report by Mr. Furley, August 30, 1877. WAN 3/1/1.

⁹²³ Report by Mr. Furley, August 30, 1877. WAN 3/1/1.

⁹²⁴ Ringlee, "Romanovs," 171.

⁹²⁵ A huge gathering took place at the Moscow railway station by those wishing to witness the departure of people and the transport of a chapel and a banner, which was prepared by the ladies of Moscow, for the Serbian Army. Additionally, ambulances were sent to Serbia by the Russian Red Cross. From Lord A Loftus to the Earl of Derby, September 10, 1876. FO. 424/43. The press published images of the Russian volunteers, doctors and nurses going to the front in aiding the wounded and the famous Russian writers incorporated the volunteers in their novels.

⁹²⁶ Ringlee, "Romanovs," 165.

⁹²⁷ Ringlee, "Romanovs."

was donated by the Russian public. Students were active in the campaigns of the Slavic committees and intellectuals were involved in the campaign by declaring their willingness to join the effort by volunteering.⁹²⁸

The initial hesitation of the Russian government resulted in the curbing down of aid to the Slavic cause.⁹²⁹ Eventually, the state allowed relief to the Balkans on the condition that the government was not involved.⁹³⁰ Activities of the pan-Slavic committees, as Alexey Popovkin proposes, may be analyzed in three periods. During the first period, between summer of 1875 to the spring of 1876, the committees were active in aiding the Herzegovinian refugees. From the spring of 1876 to the spring of 1877 the committees provided relief to the Bulgarian refugees in addition to providing aid to Montenegro and Herzegovina. Volunteer units were formed and sent to the region during this second phase. In the final period, the War of 1877, the committees functioned as a support mechanism for the Russian government.⁹³¹

Yet, the Russian presence in Serbia was not without problems. The Serbian army lacked any proper medical arrangement, and the Russian Red Cross created additional problems throughout their efforts.⁹³² The military failure of the Serbians and the Russian volunteers, resulted in the increasing tension between the RRCS and the pan-Slavic organizations⁹³³ and the diminishing public trust.

⁹²⁸ Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 73.

⁹²⁹ Initially there were restrictions such as banning of the participation of government employees in the aid campaign, and certain places such as private homes and public prayer services were banned from collecting donations.

⁹³⁰ Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, 75.

⁹³¹ Popovkin, "Activities of The Slavic."

⁹³² In addition to problems pertaining to the distribution of medical stores, the Russian doctors and hospital directors were criticized for their mismanagement. Another matter further complicated the presence of the Red Cross personnel. Red Cross armbands were sold in stores and adventurers could buy these armbands and visit the hospitals and the rear lines. Ringlee, "Romanovs," 173. This practice might have been the reason for the Russian skepticism towards the British doctors. See the section on the captivity of the British doctors in 4.2

⁹³³ Throughout the Serbian War, The Russian Red Cross send 115 doctors, 118 nurses, 70 stretch bearers and 41 medical students to the field and the total amount of Russian Red Cross spending in Montenegro and Serbia was 895,417 rubles. This sum according to Ringlee was an incredible sum for a tsarist charitable society. Ringlee, "Romanovs," 174.

As an outcome of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877, the Russian Red Cross transitioned from private initiative into state domain. The quick advance of the Russian forces was quickly turned into a defensive in Eastern Anatolia, due to shortage of troops and problems in the supply chain.⁹³⁴ The Russian military authorities had organized medical services before the war, leaving out the Red Cross. The major obstacle was not the number of personnel and materials but their organization.⁹³⁵ Also, the pressing complexities quickly resulted in the growing support from RRCS. The reasons for the fall of Russian military medical services during the war were multifold⁹³⁶ but scholars highlight one problem, that the lack of communication between the military authorities and the medical agents lead to a disfunction between these two fields of operation.⁹³⁷

Ambulance services lacked in the Russian army and after the sudden increase in the number of casualties following major battles, military administration was forced to accept civilian, i.e. Red Cross, involvement in the ambulance services.⁹³⁸ The War of 1877 opened the Russian military to civilian support, particularly in forming ambulance units and this continued as an important part of the Russian military in the following decades. *Golos*, a prominent newspaper from St. Petersburg, published donation lists and advertised relief to Russian soldiers. The Russian public, led by the women of Moscow and St. Petersburg sew clothing for the soldiers and provided supplies to the hospitals.⁹³⁹

⁹³⁴ Ringlee, "Romanovs," 177.

⁹³⁵ Ringlee, "Romanovs," 184.

⁹³⁶ Poor sanitary measures, lack of supply and ambulance services, problems with logistic organization, the climate and contact with Turkish prisoners were among the factors that affected the medical structure. Ringlee, "Romanovs," 183.

⁹³⁷ Ringlee, "Romanovs," 183.

⁹³⁸ Russian nobilities were involved in forming ambulance units which would escort the privileged guard units. Ringlee, "Romanovs," 194.

⁹³⁹ Ringlee, "Romanovs," 197.

The War of 1877 witnessed a great number of volunteers, motivated by patriotism. Bureaucrats, medical professionals and adventurers volunteered to serve with the Russian Red Cross. In addition to the famous doctors of the period, senior medical students also volunteered. While the participation of female nurses seems to be an important part of relief efforts, the number of educated nurses was indeed not sufficient at the beginning of the war and women received accelerated courses to be eligible for service on the battlefield.⁹⁴⁰ Voluntary hospitals were established in the Eastern front by notables such as Grand Duchess Olga Fedorovna, Prince Sheremetev and the Finnish Red Cross and the Dutch Church in St. Petersburg.⁹⁴¹ This brief overview of the Russian Red Cross displays that the civilian involvement in the Russian military medical services was not without tensions and contestations. The Russian Red Cross, which was established prior to the Ottoman Red Crescent, was still undergoing institutionalization and the Balkan Crisis turned out to be a milestone for most of the international humanitarian institutions.

4.2 Ottoman soldiers as victims of war: International medical institutions

Instrumentalizing a victimhood discourse in aiding civilians was a common theme in humanitarian discussions. Helping the suffering Christians was unconstrained by the conventions of morality during the anti-Ottoman pamphleteering but aiding the Ottoman soldiers was easier said than done. Set aside the criticisms towards National Aid Society for their claim to impartiality, Stafford House Committee's efforts were labelled as "synagogues of Satan."⁹⁴² As discussed in chapter two, the Ottoman state tried to construct an image of the Ottomans as the real victims, and one of the ways

⁹⁴⁰ Ringlee, "Romanovs," 203.

⁹⁴¹ Ringlee, "Romanovs," 208.

⁹⁴² Quoted in Rebecca Gill. Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 116.

in which this discourse was taken up by the humanitarian society was to depict the Ottoman soldiers as victims of war and misconduct. This discourse was utilized primarily by the Stafford House Committee (SHC) during the Russian War of 1877 and to a certain extent by the National Aid Society (NAS).

The Ottoman diplomats, in their maneuvers for “good” publications had to deal with two types of negative images. One depicted them as barbarians and the other as a state incapable of supporting its soldiers. The second image served a critical purpose during the conflicts and filled in a major gap in the Ottoman military sanitary system. The Stafford House Committee and the National Aid Society were the two major institutions to provide aid to the Ottoman soldiers and the formation of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society (ORCS) during this period contributed to the enhancement of international relief networks in Ottoman lands. These elite networks allowed various actors to interact with each other, to build up careers or maintain certain political and economic leverages during times of conflict. Having received neither medical nor military education, Vincent Kennett-Barrington was among these first humanitarians to build up a career in aid work.

In August 1876, three months after his return from the Third Carlist War (1872-1876)⁹⁴³ Vincent Kennett-Barrington was once again travelling to a conflict zone, the Balkans. His first experience in providing relief on battlefield was during the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871)⁹⁴⁴ the period which witnessed the establishment of the National Aid Society, the precursor of the British Red Cross. After the Franco-Prussian War, Vincent Kennett-Barrington ventured into the Third

⁹⁴³ V. Kennett-Barrington traveled to the Carlist War in the following periods: April-May 1874; October 1874-May 1875; September 1875-May 1876. Morris, *First Aid*, 9.

⁹⁴⁴ V. Kennett-Barrington started working as a convoy agent for the NAS, assisting the distribution of goods and funds. His main responsibility was to make sure the supplies and funds were allocated, and his involvement in the logistics of the aid operations of the French forces, provided him with necessary experience and hands-on training.

Carlist War.⁹⁴⁵ His next mission was in Belgrade, aiding the Serbian army in the Ottoman-Serbian War, after which he arrived in the Ottoman lands in the latter period of the Balkan Crisis.⁹⁴⁶

Kennett-Barrington turned out to be a key figure in the British humanitarian aid to the Ottoman army. In addition to participating in and eventually leading the relief efforts during the conflicts, Kennett-Barrington was also involved in the establishment of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society, attending the meetings as an honorary member, with the title “Chief Commissioner of the Stafford House Committee.”⁹⁴⁷ When he was introduced to the Red Crescent Society in a general meeting on June 23, 1877, he was already an acknowledged relief agent. After the Balkan Crisis, Kennett-Barrington paused his career in relief and switched to working in commerce in London and later working in India.⁹⁴⁸ After a brief period, Kennett-Barrington was back in humanitarian work, and he was rewarded with an honorary title.⁹⁴⁹ Having participated in the NAS, later in the SHC and the ORCS, V. Kennett-Barrington was an important figure in relief to the Ottoman army during the formative years of international humanitarianism. He participated within an elite network, which involved European foreign representatives, British capital holders, members of the European aristocracy, local administrators, Ottoman diplomats and Ottoman local elites. These elite networks worked mostly in cooperation in

⁹⁴⁵ The Carlist Wars turned out to be conflicts which attracted the attention of many foreign observers. Observing, narrating and aiding military conflicts had started during the Crimean War and this phenomenon continued throughout the Carlist Wars. Morris, *First Aid*, 8.

⁹⁴⁶ Besides the enhancement in his career as a humanitarian, V. Kennett-Barrington developed an interest in producing war sketches, which were published in *The Illustrated London News*, *The Graphic* and *Le Monde Illustré*. Producing textual and visual narratives of the events, had become a distinguishing feature of the adventurers, who travelled around the world, from one conflict to another. Morris, *First Aid*, 10.

⁹⁴⁷ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 104.

⁹⁴⁸ Among his non-humanitarian works were his duty as the London Chamber of Commerce, and later he was involved in developing electrification in India. Morris, *First Aid*, 23.

⁹⁴⁹ He went back to aid work, participating in the Sudan Campaign and the Serbo-Bulgarian War (1885) with NAS. His time in the Serbo-Bulgarian War was recognized with a knighthood. Morris, *First Aid*, 25.

establishing philanthropic efforts, which would eventually help the actors involved to profit either financially or politically. In certain cases, these elite networks could help the locals to sustain their leverage during a period of sovereignty change in the violence ridden borderlands.

This section will (1) provide a survey of the workings of the three major international humanitarian institutions of the Balkan Crisis, the Ottoman Red Crescent Society, The National Aid Society and the Stafford House Committee. Through narrating their intermingled history, this section seeks to highlight the ways in which international humanitarian aid was construed by various actors. (2) The position of the Ottoman government in the given context was complicated and was flexible in adapting to the changing dynamics of the clash between the international diplomatic rhetoric and the requirements of the battlefield. (3) The social transformations which were brought about by the Tanzimat Reforms fit well into the expanding humanitarian phenomenon, allowing the Ottoman elites to take leading roles in establishing philanthropic circles. (4) Equally important was the navigation in international circles for sustaining political and economic leverages in times of conflict. Analyzing institutions and other international networks of medical aid to Ottoman soldiers, this section will (5) reveal the ways in which this period witnessed the institutionalization of international aid to combatants by highlighting the ways of conduct, the creation and the enhancement of related discourses that continued to resonate in the international realm and the Ottoman public sphere.

The first part focuses on the condition of the Ottoman military medical system at the onset of the crisis. The next section focuses on the general trends shaping the British aid to Ottoman soldiers. After providing brief information on the three institutions, the discussion will focus on three themes by highlighting the

international dealings of the agents involved in relief work. The aim of this part is to provide an analysis which goes beyond institutional history. Personal experience cannot be reduced to international codifications or institutional discourses, while defined and constrained by these structures, they also exceed, criticize and transform them. Thus, (1) the doctors' motivations in aiding the Ottoman soldiers, their perception of themselves and the Ottomans and the ways in which the Ottoman authorities and subjects interacted with them need to be placed under scrutiny to delineate their workings.

Additionally, the presence of the foreign medical personnel was not without controversies and conflicts. (2) The selection and acceptance of the medical personnel, the financial aspects and the captivity of the British doctors created moments of tension and were important steps in the institutionalization of international relief. Finally, (3) the violence and the realities of war had a transformative effect on relief efforts. These individuals could not conduct their services with a strictly neutral mindset which forced them to stay disinterested in violence to civilians. This led to conflicts and eventually a shift in the target groups of aid. Humanitarians found it imperative to be involved, deeply concerned with and eventually take part in preventing massacres and atrocities against civilians. Their accounts, on the other hand, were the building blocks of state policies, press narratives and public opinion, relying on their claims to authenticity as eyewitnesses.

4.2.1 Ottoman military medical system at the outbreak of the Balkan Crisis

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman government initiated various reforms in civil and military medical services.⁹⁵⁰ Establishment of the

⁹⁵⁰ Reforming the military education was an important component of the Tanzimat reforms, which has its roots in the military and education reforms during the time of Sultan Selim III. During the reign of

Medical School (*Mekteb-i Tıbbiyye*) in 1836 by uniting the existing institutions (*Tıbhâne-i Âmile* and *Cerrahhane-i Mamûre*) was a turning point in medical reforms. With some further modifications, such as changing the language of instruction to French and the appointment of Charles Ambroise Bernard,⁹⁵¹ the school reopened in 1839 with an additional title to its name, *Mekteb-i Tıbbiyye-i Adliyye-i Şâhâne*.⁹⁵² The same year, Ministry of Health, *Mekteb-i Tıbbiye Nezareti*, was established, and the following year another medical institution, *Tıbbiye Meclisi*⁹⁵³ was founded. The Crimean War had revealed the need for medical support during times of armed conflict and the field of military medicine continued to expand with new institutions, regulations and initiatives in the following years.

The first medical association of the Ottoman Empire, *Cem'iyet-i Tıbbiyye-i Şâhâne* (*Société de Médecine de Constantinople*) was established in 1856 originating in the collaboration between the European medical personnel serving in the Ottoman lands and the prominent figures in Ottoman medicine during the Crimean War. Its media outlet, *Gazette Medical d'Orient* was established in 1857, informing its readers on the association's work and medical issues.⁹⁵⁴ The members of this

Mahmud II, a western style medical school was established and by 1839 Ottoman Christians were accepted to the military medical school, and they started serving in the army as officers by the beginning of 1840's. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*. Medical reforms predominantly targeted the army and aimed at improving the health of the soldiers. Moulin and Ulman, "Particular Place of Medicine."

⁹⁵¹ Charles Ambroise Bernard (1808-1844) graduated from Josephinian Military Academy of Surgery in Vienna in 1838 and shortly after his graduation, along with another surgeon and a pharmacist, he travelled to Istanbul to establish a new medical school. Eyice, "Bernard, Karl Ambros." His anatomy classes and the use of cadavers marked a turning point in modern medical education. İlikan Rasimoğlu, "Foundation of a Professional Group," 76.

⁹⁵² The Imperial Military School of Medicine soon extended its facilities by establishing a clinic, printing-press, laboratories, botanical garden, museums and herbarium. Aykut, "Anatomical Things."

⁹⁵³ Council of Health (*Tıbbiye Meclisi*, or *Meclis-i Umur-ı Tıbbiye*) aimed to regulate health services in the provinces by establishing a proficiency exam as a requirement for medical services. Özbay, *Türk Asker Hekimliği*, 54-55.

⁹⁵⁴ This association was later renamed *Türk Tıp Cemiyeti* in 1925 and eventually *Türk Tıp Derneği* in the Republican Era. For details about the *Cemiyet-i Tıbbiye-i Şahane*. see Ada, "Osmanlı"; Günergün and Yıldırım, "Cemiyet-i Tıbbiye-i Şahane'nin" Hüsnü Ada published detailed studies on the Ottoman Red Crescent and his dissertation, is an exhaustive study on the subject. However, the author of this dissertation disagrees with Ada's labelling the Society as a civil society. The Red Crescent was formed and directed under the guidance of the Ottoman governments and high-ranking bureaucrats. This was

association were instrumental in the first attempts in establishing the Ottoman Red Crescent.⁹⁵⁵

The educational reforms throughout the 1860s envisioned the establishment of professional and technical schools.⁹⁵⁶ In 1867 a civil medical school, *Mekteb-i Tıbbiyye-i Mülkiyye-i Şâhâne* was inaugurated with Turkish as the language of instruction.⁹⁵⁷ This brief overview of the reforms⁹⁵⁸ which aimed to enhance medical services both for the public and the army indicate that the Ottoman state was aware of the problems pertaining to the medical system but the Balkan Crisis, particularly the Serbian War quickly revealed that the reforms did not produce the desired results in such short time, particularly in the military medical field.

4.2.1.1 Administration of military medicine: The regulation of 1870 (*İdâre-i Tıbbiyye-i Askeriyye Nizamnâmesi*)

In 1870 a regulation (*İdâre-i Tıbbiyye-i Askeriyye Nizamnâmesi*) regarding the organization of military medical services was proclaimed, which was in effect when

not unique to the Ottoman Empire, various branches of the Red Cross and Red Crescent all functioned in close cooperation with state officials and the major justification for these associations was and still is the Geneva Convention, signed by the states. Although it relied on subscriptions, this society was supported by the Ottoman government. It received a generous sum from the Sultan and acted as a loose extension of state including state officials and volunteers therefore it would not be accurate to label it as truly a civil initiative, but a quasi-civilian institution would be a more accurate categorization. Please see chapter 3.2 for the civil initiatives of aid during this period.

⁹⁵⁵ See below for the formation of the Ottoman Red Crescent and this Association's role in it.

⁹⁵⁶ Karpas proposes that the earlier educational reforms were aimed at providing the Ottoman bureaucracy with trained personnel. The new schools from the 1860s on the other hand were professional and technical. The number of professional schools before 1860s was only six, while the period between 1860-1895 witnessed twenty-five professional schools. Karpas, "Transformation of the Ottoman State," 275.

⁹⁵⁷ Kırımlı Aziz Bey was an important figure in transforming the medical education in the Ottoman Empire, contributing to medicine and chemistry both as a teacher and a writer. Having graduated from the military medical school in 1865, he was appointed as director to the civil military school. Saygılı, *Türk Kızılayı'nın Kurucularından*. He declared his willingness to serve in the Serbian War as a volunteer doctor, with other instructors of the medical school during the Balkan Crisis. See *Basiret*, no.1862. He was also actively engaged in forming the Ottoman Red Crescent Society during its initial phase and he contributed in *Vakit*'s special issue (*fevkalade îâne nüshası*) with an article on the military medical services. See *Vakit*, *Fevkalade Nüsha*, July 31, 1876, no.287.

⁹⁵⁸ For the reforms in general see Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 244-250. For the detail of the institutions see Özbay, *Türk Asker Hekimliği*.

the Balkan Crisis erupted.⁹⁵⁹ Organizing the medico-military issues this regulation aimed to manage the workings of both Ottoman doctors and foreign doctors who were willing to provide medical service to the Ottoman army. The regulation was published in *Takvîm-i Vekayi*⁹⁶⁰ and it instigated the establishment of a specific medico-military council, Council of Military Medicine (*Umûr-ı Sıhhiyye-i Askeriyye Meclisi*), which was vested with the duty to manage the appointment of medical staff. This council was made up of doctor inspectors (*ettıba müfettişi*), and dispenser inspectors (*eczacı müfettişi*).

The first six articles defined the categories of military medical service, which were doctors, doctor inspectors (*ettıba müfettişi*), dispensers (*eczacı*) and dispenser inspectors (*eczacı müfettişi*).⁹⁶¹ Interestingly, when describing the required qualifications of the dispensers, the regulation spelled out the necessary steps in case of a lack of qualified dispensers (Article 6). This article shows that the Ottoman military authorities were aware of a lack of qualified personnel. The graduates who failed to pass the qualifying examination, were required to serve in the Ottoman military as *sıhhiye zabiti*, without any promotion in military rank or any benefit upon retirement, receiving only a salary and a ration (*tayınat*). If the *sıhhiye zabiti* wished to leave this service, he was required to compensate for the total amount that the state

⁹⁵⁹ Institutionalization and legalization were key to Tanzimat reforms, and the Ottoman medical system was an important component of this transformation. The first code on physicians was established in 1860 and 1861, and the regulation on pharmacists was enacted in 1871. 1861 *nizamname* regulated the work of civilian doctors in the provinces and it was a turning point in the standardization of medical services. This regulation made the acquisition of an official permit from the Medical School a prerequisite for performing medical duties. The same regulation required the foreign doctors to submit their diplomas to the Ottoman authorities and pass a qualifying examination in order to practice medicine in the Empire. İlikan Rasimoğlu, “Foundation of a Professional Group,” 68.

⁹⁶⁰ The regulation was published in *Takvîm-i Vekayi* in 3 consecutive issues: 1210, 1211, 1212. For the transcription of the regulations see Appendix 11 in Yurdakul, “1877-1878 Osmanlı Rus.”

⁹⁶¹ Until 1841 there was no differentiation between doctors and pharmacists. Following the establishment of a separate course in 1841 in *Mekteb-i Tıbbiyye*, pharmacists received a specialized education, the graduates were granted military ranks and started serving in the army and the military hospitals. İlikan Rasimoğlu, “Foundation of a Professional Group,” 72.

had spent during his education, making it practically impossible to resign from their 10 years of service (Article 8).

One important contribution of this regulation was the imposition of a two-year internship in Haydarpaşa Military Hospital, as a compulsory service for both the doctors and dispensers. After their internship, the doctors were required to pass an examination and were dispatched to provincial military hospitals (*vilayet askeri hastaneleri*) by drawing lots.⁹⁶² This is a particularly important aspect of medical training because the lack of hands-on experience prior to participating in conflict is a recurrent theme in the doctors' narratives. The steps taken towards providing the medical personnel with prior medical experience testify to the fact that the evolution of medico-military services was built upon bitter experiences.

Moreover, the regulation aimed to clarify the ways in which foreign medical staff would be accepted into Ottoman service. If the number of Ottoman doctors and dispensers would not suffice, then foreign medical personnel could be employed under the following conditions, with the title *mülhak ettıba*.⁹⁶³ People wishing to serve in the Ottoman medical service were required to submit their diplomas to *Mekteb-i Tıbbiyye* upon their arrival⁹⁶⁴ and article 17 of the regulation clearly expressed that after submitting their diplomas to the Ottoman authorities, applicants needed to pass a qualifying exam prior to beginning their services.⁹⁶⁵ This procedure

⁹⁶² Yurdakul, "1877-1878 Osmanlı Rus," 74.

⁹⁶³ "mektebden yetiştirilen ettıba ve eczacılar kifayet etmedikleri takdirde hidemat-ı askeriyye için haricden dahi ettıba ve eczacı tedariki haiz olacak" Article 15, *Takvîm-i Vekayi*, no.1211, April 13, 1870. See the articles 15, 16, 17 for the regulations about enlisting foreign doctors in the Ottoman military.

⁹⁶⁴ During an armed conflict, the foreign doctors were required to submit their diplomas and other required documents to the Military Medical Council under the Ministry of War.

⁹⁶⁵ "Hizmet-i askeriyyeye girmek isteyen mülhak ettıba ve eczacıların evvel emirde yedlerinde olan diplomalarını mekteb-i tıbbiyye kayd ettirip orada imtihan verdikten sonra hangi sınıf tabib ve eczacılıklarında istihdama şayan iseler beyan ile mekteb-i mezbureden yedlerine birer şehadetname verilmesi meşrut olacak", *Takvîm-i Vekayi*, no.1211. April 13, 1870.

was soon going to be put on trial during the Balkan Crisis.⁹⁶⁶ The regulation was an important attempt to maintain order and ensure the continuity of medical services during conflicts. It not only regulated the appointment of graduates of the medical school, but at the same time it envisioned providing the graduates with hands-on training before being dispatched to the field.

The military medical system continued to undergo certain changes in the 1870's. In 1873 in Haydarpaşa Hospital, a special major program on surgery (*Cerrah Dershanesi*) was established and initially 25 students were admitted.⁹⁶⁷ In the same year a specific regulation was put into effect, administering the military hospitals and their ways of conduct. In 1875, with a new regulation, the graduates of the medical school were dismissed from resigning their positions and those who had been expelled were called back.⁹⁶⁸ Despite all the efforts, medical reforms did not manage to improve the quality of medical services or to educate more medical personnel. Not satisfied with the fact that they had not been able to raise competent surgeons, the Ottoman authorities selected three recent graduates⁹⁶⁹ and sent them to Europe to attain further education as surgeons. They returned in 1877 and were quickly dispatched to the Ottoman army. In 1876, again in Haydarpaşa Hospital, a special program for dispensers, called *Eczacı Sınıfı*, was initiated.⁹⁷⁰

4.2.1.2 Military medical measures at the onset of crisis

All the above-mentioned attempts to reform the military medical services were much-needed efforts however, shortly after the beginning of the Serbian War, they

⁹⁶⁶ Please see below for the discussion on the qualifications of the foreign doctors.

⁹⁶⁷ Sarı, "Mekteb-i Tıbbiye," 21.

⁹⁶⁸ Ünal, "Sultan Abdülaziz Dönemi," 151-155.

⁹⁶⁹ Naim, Hayreddin and Osman Beyler. Özbay, *Türk Asker Hekimliği*, 16.

⁹⁷⁰ See Ünal for state measures aiming to increase the number of pharmacists. Ünal, "Sultan Abdülaziz Dönemi."

proved exiguous. It quickly became clear that none of these efforts were enough, they were rather late and needed more time to be effective.⁹⁷¹ Despite the fact that the 1870 regulation aimed to organize and regulate medical support for the Ottoman army and required that doctors and dispensers be employed in the military hospitals and the military units, most of these positions were not effectively filled. Thus, the Serbian War revealed the urgent need to organize additional support mechanisms for the wounded Ottoman soldiers.⁹⁷² In addition to the reports about the medico-sanitary situation on the battlefield, hospitals in the region wrote petitions and asked for more doctors and dispensers.

Reports from the field emphasize the lack of and the inadequacy of the treatment methods resulting in the suffering of the soldiers.⁹⁷³ In another correspondence, hospitals in the region request more doctors and dispensers to be sent to the front urgently.⁹⁷⁴ The hospital in Sofia and certain battalions only had one dispenser, which was not enough and lacked medical materials which needed immediate back up due to the worsening of the situation.⁹⁷⁵ The same report also asked for reinforcements for the temporary hospitals (*seyyar hastane*).⁹⁷⁶ In his

⁹⁷¹ The number of graduates from the military medical school in the 1870s ranged from 20 to 39. In 1876 there were only 24 graduates. The Serbian War in 1876 affected the number of graduates in 1877, which reached 72. This peak in 1877 was followed by 29 graduates in 1878 and 55 in 1879. On average, according to Kemal Özbay's calculation, the military school had 40 graduates every year. Özbay, *Türk Asker Hekimliği*. Özbay's calculation rests on the number of graduates from 1831 to 1960. Except for 1877, the number of military medical school graduates is far from being sufficient. The sudden increase in 1877 was the result of the early graduation of students as a war time measure. According to Ünal's research twenty-five doctors graduated from the Military Medical School during the reign of Abdülaziz. Ünal, "Sultan Abdülaziz Dönemi," 208.

⁹⁷² Reporting the state and distribution of the Ottoman forces in July 1876, Henry Elliot expressed that ambulance services, or any other sanitary provisions were non existing. From Henry Elliot to the Earl of Derby, Therapia, July 4, 1876. FO. 424/42, no.154.

⁹⁷³ BOA. ATASE. OSKH. 110/9/1/2/16/0/21. 28.07.1876.

⁹⁷⁴ BOA. ATASE. OSKH. 110/9/1/2/15/0/33. 06, 10.1876.

⁹⁷⁵ This telegram from Sofia, predates the involvement of NAS in the region. The Sofia hospital and the Scutari Hospital were to remain under Ottoman authority and were managed by either English surgeons in the Ottoman service or by Ottoman surgeons. For the details about the NAS hospital see the report: *Report of the Operations of the British National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War During the Servian War Against Turkey, 1876: Together with a Statement of Receipts and Expenditure, and a Map, Reports and Correspondence* (from now on *Report of the*). *Report of the*, 1877, 9.

⁹⁷⁶ BOA. ATASE. OSKH. 110/9/1/2/15/0/25. 12.08.1876.

memoir about the Russian War, Ahmed Muhtar Paşa narrates the insufficient medical measures on the Eastern front. Guard (*mustahfiz*) and reserve (*redif*) battalions either did not have the required number of medical personnel, or none. When the number of wounded soldiers reached 10,000 in Erzurum and Kars, the medical personnel who were assigned to the battalions had to stay in the rear services and attend the wounded. As a result, the units were left without any medical personnel.⁹⁷⁷

As an expression of their patriotism, the instructors at the Ottoman medical schools volunteered to go to the front and this was advertised in the Ottoman press. *Mekteb-i Tıbbiyye-i Mülkiyye* instructors had declared their willingness to conduct medical work in Serbia as volunteers.⁹⁷⁸ Concurrently, one of these volunteers, Aziz Bey, who was the director of the Imperial Medical School (*Mekteb-i Tıbbiyye-i Mülkiyye-i Şâhâne Müdürü*) must have been working on an article about the medical requirements of war, which was going to be published in *Vakit*'s Special Aid Issue (*Fevkalade İâne Nüshası*) in two weeks.

Aziz Bey's article, titled "The Medical Requirements of War" (*Harbin Lüzûm-ı Sıhhiyyesi*) aimed to inform the readers about the requirements of medical service during a conflict. Aziz Bey proposed that with the transformation of firearms, armies needed qualified personnel to treat the wounded soldiers. Providing examples from the French and German armies, Aziz Bey then explained the ways in which the wounded soldiers needed to be transported from the battlefield to the hospitals, the required medical instruments and the necessary skills and techniques to conduct operations. The inclusion of such an article in the special issue highlights that the Ottoman intellectuals were very much aware of the crucial role of medical services

⁹⁷⁷ Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa, *Anılar* 2.

⁹⁷⁸ Eighteen instructors from the medical school, including Aziz Bey, Saib Bey, Hasan Bey, Hüseyin Efendi, Nafiz Bey, Agop Bey and Aristidi Bey, volunteered to serve for Ottoman army in July 1876. *Basiret*, no.1862.

during conflicts. Aiming to bolster patriotism by underlining the requirements of the battlefield, Aziz Bey's article should also be interpreted as a method to enlighten Ottoman society. Informative articles were a key component of publications in the Ottoman press. Providing its readers with scientific information, the special issue deemed it necessary to educate as well as mobilize. However, the extent to which such awareness turned into effective measures is indeed debatable. While Henry Elliot's observations about the lack of medical services reveal the imperial attitude of the bureaucrats of a colonial power, they also shed light on the relative lack of state initiative pertaining to military medical system.

The Ottoman press continued to publish articles about doctors and/or other medical staff who volunteered to participate in the war effort. French doctors in İstanbul volunteered to go to the front.⁹⁷⁹ Reporting from the *Selanik* newspaper, *Basiret* informed its readers that civil doctors, both Ottoman and foreign, decided to form a committee and contribute to the war effort by working in the military hospitals, without expecting any payment.⁹⁸⁰

As an emergency measure the educational programs in the Military Medical School were intensified as of January 1876, aiming to complete the curriculum for the seniors earlier than expected.⁹⁸¹ Another state measure was to provide the newly enrolled students with a quick course in surgery. Stambolski was appointed as the surgical instructor to this class of newly registered students.⁹⁸² Medical school students, 120 in total, were divided into three companies (*bölük*). These three companies were sent to Nish, Vidin and Taşlıca (in Bosnia) with three instructors in each one. They served in their designated regions until mid-October and both the

⁹⁷⁹ *Basiret*, no.1863, p.1. July 12, 1876.

⁹⁸⁰ *Basiret*, no. 1905. September 12, 1876.

⁹⁸¹ Stambolski, *Bir Osmanlı Hekiminin Anıları*, 289.

⁹⁸² Stambolski, *Bir Osmanlı Hekiminin Anıları*, 311.

students, and the instructors were called back to the capital to continue their education on October 10, 1876.⁹⁸³ Stambolski does not elaborate on the reasons for their return. One reason might have been the temporary ceasefire between the Ottoman Empire and the Principalities. Another reason which might have contributed to this decision, could be that the British surgeons were on their way to the Ottoman Empire.

By the autumn of 1876, despite all the efforts of the Ottoman government, medical services were still lacking, and the Ottoman government was not able to come up with an immediate solution for this major setback. They had neither enough trained personnel nor a working budget to cover the expenses of such medical services. Thus, by October 1876, thirty foreign medical personnel were already assigned to work for the Ottoman army⁹⁸⁴ and it continued throughout the Serbian and Russian wars. Individuals as well as aid initiatives were involved in this process. Two prominent British institutions of medical aid to Ottoman soldiers were the National Aid Society and the Stafford House Committee.

4.2.2 British aid during the Balkan Crisis

During the summer and autumn of 1876, the Balkans and the Ottoman capital became the sites of a plethora of aid initiatives.⁹⁸⁵ As for the British, between 1876 and 1878, approximately 250,000 pounds were raised for the Balkans. Meanwhile,

⁹⁸³ Stambolski, *Bir Osmanlı Hekiminin Anıları*, 337.

⁹⁸⁴ BOA. ATASE. OSKH. 110/9/1/2/15/0/35. 31.10.1876.

⁹⁸⁵ A comprehensive but an incomplete list is as follows: Bulgarian Peasant Relief fund, Bulgarian Relief Fund, Bulgarian Relief Fund of the English, Bulgarian Relief Fund of the Turkish Missions Aid Society, Bosnian and Herzegovinian Fugitives and Orphans Relief Fund, Shilling Bulgarian Relief Fund, Society of Friends, War Victims' Fund for non-combatant sufferers, Metropolitan committee for the Relief of the Distressed Bulgarians and other Refugees, League of Aid of the Christians in Turkey, Mansion House Eastern War Sufferers' Relief Fund, Turkish Sufferers' Fund, National Aid Society, Charity sisters, Ladies Fund, Compassionate Fund, St. John Ambulance Association, last but not least, other individual efforts. Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers*; Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire*.

double that amount was raised for the sufferers of the famine in Madras.⁹⁸⁶ In her pioneering work on British relief work, Gill emphasizes that the aid to the colonies was viewed as a white man's burden and, particularly an 'English man's burden' but on the issue of aid to Balkans, the "moral and material purpose of such aid" there was little consensus.⁹⁸⁷ Situating the wounded Ottoman soldiers within such discourse was trickier during a global political and philanthropic campaign which rested on saving the suffering Christian populations. When the National Aid Society declared its willingness to provide relief to the belligerents during the Ottoman-Serbian War, the issue of neutrality quickly became a point of discussion. The Stafford House Committee, on the other hand, devised a totally different strategy in aiding the Ottoman soldiers. Their campaign rested on the inability of the Ottoman state in taking care of its own soldiers and that the "poor fellows" had become the victims of Russian aggression, in defending their homeland. Such diversity in aid discourse reveals the contested, and yet to be defined course of action in the newly emerging international humanitarianism.

The Ottoman state, on the other hand, had been building up a new state discourse during the Balkan Crisis. The bureaucratic cadre spends all its efforts in transforming the anti-Ottoman rhetoric, and in establishing a positive image vis-à-vis the European powers. Moreover, the establishment of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society during this period meant that the Ottoman state lacked the necessary methods and know-how in sustaining military rear-services. Concurrently, it allowed the Ottoman bureaucrats and the elites to acquire key positions in a newly emerging international elite network.

⁹⁸⁶ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 75.

⁹⁸⁷ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 75.

4.2.2.1 Question of neutrality

Gill opposes the assumption that the foundational characteristic of relief work was a shared humanitarian ideal in the second half of the nineteenth century. Instead, various actors were involved in relief work with diverse motivations and the premise of a universal ideal is a phenomenon belonging to the later periods.⁹⁸⁸ The author proposes that the underlying reasons for British involvement in humanitarian efforts was not merely a response to the narrative of the suffering of the people in the expanding war journalism nor only a consideration for the transforming international law. Equally important was the existing British concerns over military restructuring and the growing criticism of Quakers.⁹⁸⁹ Thus the medico-military context and the British experience in the Crimean War were important factors in the signing of the Geneva Convention by the British state and the participation of the British society in relief work, particularly during times of armed conflict. Another important characteristic of the relief work of this period was that its participants regarded claims of humanity as indicators of an imperial identity, thus relief work was formulated within a patriotic context. Finally, the idea that international law was an “irresistible force of civilization” which offered a rational codification drawn primarily from the lived experiences of the civilized West, needed to be applied to the rest of the world.⁹⁹⁰

The Committee International, which was presided by Moynier, was driven by the belief in the evolutionary idea of civilization and European supremacy. This framework was supported by the belief that international lawmakers were neutral and above politics according to a “scientific impartiality.”⁹⁹¹ This neutrality according to

⁹⁸⁸ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*.

⁹⁸⁹ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 27-28.

⁹⁹⁰ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 29.

⁹⁹¹ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 31.

Gill, was different from the technical level of neutrality. Technical neutrality implied a protection while scientific neutrality provided the institutions with the leverage as the “rational conduit of the European conscience.”⁹⁹²

The National Aid Society was hesitant to intervene in the Balkans initially. Their hesitation resulted from the difficulty in “defining” the Ottoman-Serbian War. According to their view, they would either participate in a war in which England was directly involved, or in which two sovereign countries were involved.⁹⁹³ Thus, the National Aid Society did not directly interfere in the Balkan conflicts during the early phase.⁹⁹⁴ While the initial hesitation relied on the fact that Serbia and Montenegro were not independent countries and there was no security for the use of Red Cross emblem, the council of NAS changed their position and argued that the existence of a British Consul in Belgrade would count as a justification for regarding Serbia as a legitimate power.⁹⁹⁵ The explanation for NAS’s involvement was that the belligerent parties were all signatories of the Geneva Convention.⁹⁹⁶ These arguments implied a diplomatic recognition by the British of the autonomy of Serbia. Although not articulated explicitly in the NAS reports or official correspondence, Anderson argues that public opinion was the major factor behind this change in NAS’s policy.⁹⁹⁷

⁹⁹² Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 31.

⁹⁹³ Inquiring into the possible involvement of NAS in the Balkan affairs, Colonel Loyd Lindsay exemplified two earlier conflicts. NAS had participated in aiding the wounded during the Franco-German War, which was a conflict between two independent states. During the Carlist Wars, on the other hand, which Lindsay identified as a “civil war” the society refrained from providing any aid. The official justification was that England could not identify any official diplomatic representative with the Carlists to send aid. Thus, Lindsay asked Early of Derby, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether there was any means of having official diplomatic communication with both parties and whether the safety of the Red Cross would be assured, if the society were to participate in the conflict. From Lord Lindsay to the Early of Derby, August 4, 1876, FO. 424/43, no.46.

⁹⁹⁴ Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers*, 11; Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire*, 136.

⁹⁹⁵ Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers*, 12. Gill underlines that, unlike the British neutrality during the Franco-Prussian War, Britain’s political involvement in the Balkans complicated the relief efforts during the Balkan Crisis and led to conflicts and discord among the various actors involved in aid work. Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 98.

⁹⁹⁶ From Robert Loyd Lindsay to Lord Tenterden, August 10, 1876. FO 424/43. No.155.

⁹⁹⁷ Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers*, 12.

The NAS representatives inquired into the attitude of the Ottoman government about possible aid to the two parties and whether they were “prepared to respect the engagements of the Geneva Convention.”⁹⁹⁸ The late Ottoman response⁹⁹⁹ created a certain discomfort among the British diplomatic circles. While the official response hinted at a possible lack of security for the Red Cross personnel, its interpretation by the British bureaucrats highlighted the Ottoman state’s lack of control over its irregular units.¹⁰⁰⁰ The Ottoman government eventually accepted the proposal and asked the English representatives to communicate the names of the doctors and surgeons, who were expected to be sent by the NAS.¹⁰⁰¹

The issue of neutrality, particularly the neutrality of NAS during the two conflicts became a topic of heated discussion in the British public. NAS was critiqued for being neutral and impartial and aiding only the Ottomans throughout the period.¹⁰⁰² Such discussions reveal that the notion of impartiality was in the making and that the concept of neutrality was not yet clearly charted out. The discussions revolved around questions about the nature of relief and were also heavily affected by the shifts in British foreign policy.

⁹⁹⁸ From the Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot. August 14, 1876. FO 424/43, no.181. A similar telegram was sent to Mr. White, the British Consul-General at Belgrade. Apparently, the Serbian government responded positively to British aid, but the Ottoman government had not responded to this inquiry by August 22, 1876, even though Lord Lindsay was on his way to the seat of war. The Ottoman state had allowed for the passing of stores through the Ottoman lands without officially accepting the British aid.

⁹⁹⁹ The official Ottoman response reached British Foreign Ministry ten days later, on August 24, 1876. From Sir Elliot to the Earl of Derby, FO 424/43, no.261.

¹⁰⁰⁰ H. Elliot wrote that the Red Cross was a dangerous sign and was “liable to be misunderstood by the wild hordes of Mussulmans who are with the enemy.” From H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby, August 23, 1876, FO 424/43, no. 262. His formulation was repeated in other correspondence regarding the matter. Apparently, it was Safvet Paşa who was hesitant whether the military commanders would be able to control the irregular troops from harming the Red Cross personnel. From H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby, August 23, 1876. No519. FO 424/43.

¹⁰⁰¹ From Mr. Lister to Mr. Douglas Dalton, August 24, 1876, FO 424/43, no. 264.

¹⁰⁰² One strand of critique argued that support to the belligerents would result in the prolonging of war. This camp was also against the concept of impartiality. Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers*, 12-13.

Neutrality was not only a matter of dispute among the British public, but it also played a key role in how the British doctors perceived their engagements. Even though they were contractually bound to serving the Ottoman Army, they regarded their work as part of a neutral service. This line of argumentation also served as a justification for some of their “adventures.” Believing in a guarantee of protection due to their neutral position, some of the doctors ventured on adventurous journeys to the enemy lines during conflicts. Anderson describes a scene in which the British doctor in Belgrade, Dr. Micheal Laseron, wished to cross over to the enemy lines and observe the situation in the Turkish army. Anderson comments that this was not welcomed by the Serbian authorities.¹⁰⁰³ Charles Ryan narrates a similar anecdote in which he secretly passes to the enemy lines. These examples provide clues to the self-perception of the foreign medical personnel and reveal their desire to experience their adventures to their fullest.¹⁰⁰⁴ Despite their belief in impartiality, their immunity was soon to be challenged when the Russian forces captured British surgeons and treated them as captives.¹⁰⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰³ Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers*.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Doctors were not the only people seeking for adventures in the Orient. Charles Ryan narrates his observations about the various people seeking adventures in the Ottoman capital at the onset of the Russian War. “Adventurers of all nations seem to emerge from their hiding-places, and flock to the scene of action for the profit, the pleasure, or the excitement that they can pick up.” For Ryan’s comments and his observation see Ryan and Sanders, *Under the Red Crescent*, 305-307. Ryan himself does not refrain from drawing similarities between his journey from Trabzon to Erzurum to that of the Xenophon’s *March of the Ten Thousand*, which was a recurrent theme in the nineteenth century European guidebooks for adventurers. Being one of the influential travel guides to the Middle East, *Handbook for Travelers in Turkey in Asia*, narrates Xenophon’s account and offers it as an attractive adventure, in a section where he describes the Trabzon-Bagdad route. See *Handbook for*, 432-343. Describing Bayburt as “a place of antiquity ... dreaming of the past” his narrative equates Bayburt’s ruins with that of Chios and recalls Byron’s poems about the Greek struggle for independence. Ryan and Sanders, *Under the Red Crescent*, 320-321. Such depictions may have been devised as a strategy in placing the narrative within a specific genre and referring to common themes. Depicting the Orient, in this case Bayburt, with references to ruins and the loss of antiquity, exemplifies the basic characteristics of Said’s orientalism, describing the East with the “feelings of emptiness, loss and disaster” and contributing to the notion of the “unchanging Orient.” Said, *Orientalism*, 56, 98.

¹⁰⁰⁵ See the following section on the captivity of British doctors.

Despite the initial Ottoman hesitation about the security of the foreign medical personnel, the Ottoman government took necessary steps in ensuring the safety of these people and no evidence as to misconduct to foreign medical personnel has been identified in the primary sources. Such was the beginning of medical aid to wounded Ottoman soldiers, which would last until the end of the conflict.

4.2.3 British National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War

4.2.3.1 The Serbian War

British National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War or often referred to as National Aid Society (NAS)¹⁰⁰⁶ was the precursor of the British Red Cross and was an important institution in aiding the wounded Ottoman soldiers. Following the public meeting on the Serbian War on August 15, 1876,¹⁰⁰⁷ Loyd Lindsay¹⁰⁰⁸ was on his way to Belgrade on August 21, 1876.¹⁰⁰⁹ NAS was actively engaged in relief operations until November 30th in Serbia and December 31st in the Ottoman Empire. NAS's budget for the Serbian War was composed of the sum remaining from the Franco-Prussian War, the funds raised during the conflict and the contribution of the Eastern War Committee.¹⁰¹⁰ The Turco-Serbian Relief Committee received 20,000

¹⁰⁰⁶ NAS was established on August 4, 1870, after the declaration of the Franco-Prussian War and adhered to the Geneva Convention. Composed mostly of Crimean veterans, the initial motivation for the establishment of NAS did not stem solely from humanitarian concerns but rather emerged at a particular historical moment. The transformation of the international law, the emergence of humanitarian concerns and the medico-military context of the Crimean War contributed to the enhancement of aid work in the British Empire. Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 10-15.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Report of the*, 1877, 5.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Loyd-Lindsay was a veteran of the Crimean War, and he witnessed the weaknesses of the British army, particularly in the medico-military field. During his service in the House of Commons, he advocated for the formation of a volunteer group of medical personnel serving the regular military corps. Gill, "Rational Administration." "He was the leading figure in the formation of the NAS during the Franco-Prussian War. He was known for his pro-Ottoman opinions and was actively engaged with the NAS during the Balkan Crisis. His pro-Ottoman views were not without limitations. He viewed the insurrection of Serbia and Montenegro as a conflict "between people half barbarous, half civilized." Quoted in Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 110.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 100.

¹⁰¹⁰ The Eastern War Sick and Wounded Relief Fund was inaugurated by the Chairman of the Order of St John, Sir Edmund Lechmere after the publications on the "Bulgarian Atrocities" in the British

pounds from the NAS budget, with additional 1,800 pounds from the other committee and subscriptions. The final report, however, indicates that an amount about 11,000 was handed back by the committee to the NAS, making the total expenditure of the Turco-Serbian Committee as 10,777 pounds in six months (from August 16, 1876, to February 16, 1877).¹⁰¹¹

Critical of both governments' lack of medical preparation, particularly of the Serbian government, NAS equated relief with the image of the savior European, working for the "cause of humanity" notwithstanding the hardships, casting light "upon acts which, if kept in the dark, might equal those of barbarous ages."¹⁰¹² The humanitarians, in this respect prove more beneficial in promoting humanity in war than the conventions, according to the NAS Executive Committee. Relying heavily on the discourse of the savior in its justification for their involvement, NAS is careful to report that their operations turned out to be easier when compared with the Franco-Prussian War, due to the fact that both combatants were already familiar with the Geneva Convention.¹⁰¹³ This point reveals that the initial hesitation about providing safety for its members did not turn out to be an obstacle. However, the committee does not refrain from underlining that the war was "between races not highly civilized according to the notions of Western Europe."¹⁰¹⁴ The decision of

Press. Paulina Irby, who along with Priscilla Johnston, aided the Christian refugees from Bosnia, had insisted on Edmund Lechmere to establish a fund to support the suffering Christians of the region. Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 97. After the unification of funds with NAS, the Society published a letter to the subscribers, detailing the recent change in position. In this letter, the Eastern Fund claims to have initiated their relief work due to NAS's initial refusal to participate in aid work. When NAS declared their willingness to participate in aid work, the Eastern Fund accepted their offer for united action primarily because NAS was a "tried and old-established body" and that they were recognized by both the British and foreign governments. BRCA., WAN/2/2/2, August 21, 1876. Edmund Lechmere served as the Deputy Chairman of the Turco-Serbian Relief Committee under the National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War, after the two initiatives were merged.

¹⁰¹¹ *Report of the*, 1877, 12-13.

¹⁰¹² *Report of the*, 1877, 6.

¹⁰¹³ *Report of the*, 1877, 8.

¹⁰¹⁴ *Report of the*, 1877, 9.

sending surgeons resulted from the “inadequacy of Serbian and Turkish medical service”¹⁰¹⁵ and the need for European medical instruments.¹⁰¹⁶

NAS published two reports on the Serbian War. The first one, which is dated October 31, 1876, is a brief report. Published in 1877, the second report is more detailed and includes maps, expenditure charts and letters from surgeons during their services in the field. NAS is careful to define and differentiate their position from the other aid initiatives through their reports. Not providing any relief to victims of disasters, NAS identifies its modus operandi as essentially different from the other societies which aid their own armies. Introducing concepts such as neutrality, impartiality and the desire of the public, NAS’s entry into the relief efforts in the Balkans in the summer of 1876, initiated discussions on the nature of neutral aid. As opposed to groups which claimed to help the Serbians in their crusade against the tyranny of the Ottomans, NAS emphasized the importance of neutrality in relief efforts and declared 10,000 pounds of help to both Serbians and Ottomans.

NAS operations in Serbia, included establishing tent hospitals and reserve hospitals, providing wagon transport service, which were all under the management of British subjects.¹⁰¹⁷ Operations in Ottoman lands, on the other hand, were conducted in a similar manner but with one major difference. The temporary hospitals at Sofia and Scutari were under Ottoman authority and were managed either by English surgeons in the Ottoman service or by Ottoman surgeons. In the latter case, the British diplomatic representatives, such as Kirby Green acted as

¹⁰¹⁵ *Report of the*, 1877, 9.

¹⁰¹⁶ Some of the medical appliances could only be obtained from England, other heavier items and ambulance wagons were obtained from Vienna.

¹⁰¹⁷ This will be a challenge during the Russian War of 1877 and the NAS representatives would eventually have to work through the Russian Red Cross representatives.

inspectors.¹⁰¹⁸ The Society also provided floating ambulance¹⁰¹⁹ as supplement to the wagon ambulances and benefited from the ladies of the Deaconesses Institution.¹⁰²⁰

V. Kennett-Barrington was responsible for providing transport service with the Serbian forces. Writing to Colonel Loyd-Lindsay, on October 11, 1876, Kennett-Barrington explains the difficulties regarding the transport of the wounded and comments on the benefits of the new wagons that had arrived at Parachin. These more efficient wagons allowed the wounded to be transported less painfully and a higher number of passengers to be carried simultaneously.¹⁰²¹ He comments that this new convoy was the first attempt “to organize a proper transport” and describes in detail the difficulties about transporting the wounded on the traditional uncovered country carts.¹⁰²² Commenting on the Turkish transport system, V. Kennett-Barrington claims that the issue was worse in the Turkish army, lacking “any proper system of transport.”¹⁰²³ Kennett-Barrington’s effort in transporting the wounded from the battlefield to the hospital in Belgrade was championed by many observers, which contributed positively to his fame and continued involvement in aid efforts in the Balkans.

The NAS hospital in Belgrade, which was built by Loyd-Lindsay’s efforts, received much criticism due to its distance from the front and the difficulty of

¹⁰¹⁸ *Report of the*, 1877, 9.

¹⁰¹⁹ During this period, the word ambulance did not mean a vehicle but a whole temporary medical setup including transfer vehicles, medical personnel and temporary hospitals. Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*, 109. The crucial role of ambulance services which meant the transport of wounded and sick from the front to the rear facilities was a major preoccupation of the belligerents. The European humanitarians were also experimenting with different ambulance techniques and vehicles for the past couple of years. As the reports of the humanitarian agents reveal, transport of the wounded and sick was one of the serious problems that all parties tried to resolve. The British medical volunteers regarded their work during the Balkan Crisis as an opportunity to experiment with new ambulance techniques and the geographical factors forced them to revise the solutions and vehicles that they had developed until then. Macar, “Transportation of the Wounded.”

¹⁰²⁰ This institution provided women of Victorian England with a socially acceptable occupation outside the domestic sphere, and the title was given to a woman for the first time in 1862.

¹⁰²¹ *Report of the*, 1877, 32.

¹⁰²² *Report of the*, 1877, 33.

¹⁰²³ *Report of the*, 1877, 40.

transporting the wounded soldiers there.¹⁰²⁴ Reports arriving from Belgrade to W. MacCormac, the Surgeon-in-Chief of the Turco-Serbian Relief Committee, on the other hand, glorified the hospital in Belgrade. “No hospital in London is more rigorously clean, better ventilated, better fitted, or better officered for its purpose.”¹⁰²⁵ Thus the controversies surrounding NAS’s involvement were not only limited to the issue of neutrality and its position but also revolved around the quality of work undertaken.

4.2.3.2 The Russo-Ottoman War

With the outbreak of the Russo-Ottoman War, NAS started to aid the armies once again. Their initial involvement was only limited to the Ottoman Empire, because Russia had declined NAS’s aid, and the Society announced that only the Ottomans had applied for it.¹⁰²⁶ The initial NAS involvement, which was mainly sending a ship, *Belle of Dunkerque*, to Istanbul with doctors and medical materials, resulted in accusations towards Loyd-Lindsay and the Society. In August 1877, a group in protest of NAS’s involvement in the Russo-Ottoman War arrived at the NAS headquarters, criticizing the institution for aiding only the Ottomans. Comprised of liberal MPs, and surgeons, they demanded that NAS be involved in aiding all parties including the Russians and the Montenegrins.¹⁰²⁷ NAS immediately send a representative, Mr. Furley, to Montenegro with the aim of reporting the condition of wounded and sick soldiers and inquire into the necessities of providing aid. Mr. Furley’s report reveals the reasons for NAS’s hesitation. Furley claims that the Montenegrin Red Cross Society existed only on paper, and it was the Russian Red

¹⁰²⁴ Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers*, 32-33; Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 112.

¹⁰²⁵ From T. Cranstoun Charles to W. MacCormac. BRCA. WAN. 2/2/1. p.12.

¹⁰²⁶ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 114; Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers*, 81.

¹⁰²⁷ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 115.

Cross Society managing the medical arrangements of the Montenegrin army.¹⁰²⁸

Since the whole medical operation was under Russian control, any foreign medical personnel would serve as volunteers under Russian authority.¹⁰²⁹ Furley's comment reveals the setbacks of political engagements in matters of aid. The cooperation between humanitarian societies was not without limits and subjugating British doctors under Russian authority could not have been welcomed.

Furley's conversations with the Montenegrin Prince adds to the complexity of the situation and the ways in which different groups perceived relief. Having spent a dinner with the Montenegrin Prince, the NAS representative was critiqued by the Prince of Montenegro for having "only actuated by feelings of charity towards the Montenegrins" and hoped he would feel "a real sympathy with their cause."¹⁰³⁰ Furley's narrative therefore serves as evidence for the intermingling of political considerations and humanitarian action.

Furley concludes that personal aid to Montenegrins was not necessary because any means to improve the transport of the wounded would require a huge budget. NAS, advised Furley, should leave it to the local populations to carry their wounded because all recent innovations, such as Baron Mundy ambulance or the French *cacolet* would be useless in Montenegrin roads. He suggested transforming certain buildings on the roads into temporary resting places, with food and water and

¹⁰²⁸ From John Furley to Colonel Loyd Lindsay, August 30, 1877. "Report by Mr. Furley relating to Sick and Wounded at Montenegro." BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.33.

¹⁰²⁹ The Niegush (*Njegusi*) hospital, for example was managed by a Russian doctor and three sisters and "nothing of absolute importance was wanting, but it would add to the comfort of the patients if some tobacco was sent to them." From John Furley to Colonel Loyd Lindsay, August 30, 1877. "Report by Mr. Furley relating to Sick and Wounded at Montenegro." BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.28. Towards the end of his report, Furley lists the possible difficulties that the Society could face, if it were to aid the Montenegrins. After underlining that the Russian "have ... complete possession of this field of charity" Lindsay states that any society who would send medical personnel would have to enroll them under Russian authority. From John Furley to Colonel Loyd Lindsay, August 30, 1877. "Report by Mr. Furley relating to Sick and Wounded at Montenegro." BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.33

¹⁰³⁰ From John Furley to Colonel Loyd Lindsay, August 30, 1877. "Report by Mr. Furley relating to Sick and Wounded at Montenegro." BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.31.

the only way NAS could help was to provide clothing for the wounded. His suggestions would not require any subjugation to Russian authority and would not imply political support for the Montenegrins.

Resting on anti-Russian sentiments and revealing the possible political implications of NAS's support for Montenegro, Furley's report reveals the British attitude towards Russian involvement, and it provided the central committee with evidence to uphold their initial position. As a final remark to the issue of offering aid to all parties, Loyd-Lindsay responded by defining impartiality as a spiritual virtue. "The Council would here remark that impartiality in the distribution of assistance does not necessarily involve equality in the amount of aid rendered to each party. It consists in the spirit in which the aid is rendered, and the readiness and anxiety to render it available to all parties whenever the opportunity presents itself."¹⁰³¹

Despite the apparent tension within the British public, NAS started relief operations in Bucharest in mid-September and by the beginning of October a NAS agent arrived in Bucharest with 400 cases of medical supplies for the use of Rumanians and Russians.¹⁰³² According to M.A.K Loyd's report respecting aid to Russians and Rumanians, it was Colonel Mansfield, the British consul-General who had asked for British aid to Romanians. After inspecting the hospitals in Bucharest, Loyd concluded that only one of the hospitals needed aid and he telegraphed asking for three surgeons, speaking German or French. One week later, A. K. Loyd, noted the need for dispensers and hospital attendants. The event that opened Russian army for British aid was the battle of Plevna.¹⁰³³ While the British NAS continued to contribute to Russian and Rumanian forces, their relation was never free of tension.

¹⁰³¹ Quoted in Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers*.

¹⁰³² From C. R. Mansfield to the Earl of Derby, October 8, 1877. BRCA. WAN 3/1/3.

¹⁰³³ The third Battle in September resulted in the death of more than 8,000 Rumanian and Russian soldiers, leaving almost 11,000 soldiers wounded. Greene, *Sketches of Army Life*, 359.

Loyd reported that despite the existence of British surgeons with the Rumanian army, representatives of the Russian Red Cross did not endorse the idea of having British surgeons in their operations but preferred aid in other forms.¹⁰³⁴ Building up on these tensions, main focus of NAS operation in Bucharest was the central hospital in which the wounded Ottoman prisoners were treated.¹⁰³⁵ The tension between the Russian authorities and the NAS agents is reflected in the correspondence from the field. Armand Leslie, NAS representative with the Ottoman army reported from Eski-Zaragh (*Eski Zağra/Stara Zagora*) in August 1877 that the Russian forces attacked the NAS personnel and fired at both the Red Crescent and Red Cross ambulances despite the very large Red Cross flag and commented cynically that the Russians “shelled both the Crescent and the Cross ambulances with great *impartiality*.”¹⁰³⁶ Thus Leslie served as an impartial eyewitness to Russian disrespect to NAS neutrality, exemplifying the complicated situation on the battlefield with respect to the position of the humanitarian agents.

When NAS started their work during the Russian War, Stafford House Committee and the Ottoman Red Crescent were already in the field, aiding the Ottoman army. NAS’ chief commissioner, J. S. Young arrived in İstanbul on July 19th, 1877. Young, after having visited Mr. Layard, Hobart Paşa, and Said Paşa, met

¹⁰³⁴ From A. K. Loyd to Colonel Loyd-Lindsay, October 22, 1877. BRCA. WAN 3/1/3.

¹⁰³⁵ Letter from Annie Mansfield to Colonel Lord-Lindsay, March 21, 1878. WAN/3/2/3. The number of Ottoman prisoners after the fall of Plevna was around 44,000 making the Plevna POW’s 40% of the total number of Ottoman POW’s. Only a little more than 9000 of these POW’s (20%) were handed over to Rumanian government, the rest were sent to the Russian Empire. Poznahirev, *Отоманские военнопленные в России в период Русско-турецкой войны 1877–1878 гг. (Ottoman Prisoners of war in Russia during the Russian-Turkish War of 1877–1878)*, 347. Plevna POWs had to wait for five days under heavy snow, before they could receive food and shelter, which resulted in the death of thousands of soldiers. Ürkmez, “Savaşın Öteki Yüzü,” 792. The treatment of the wounded and sick Ottoman prisoners by the British was not unique to Bucharest. The Ottoman prisoners who were sent to the inner regions in the Russian Empire were treated either in Russian Military Hospitals or aid institutions other than the Russian Red Cross. Poznahirev, *Отоманские военнопленные в России в период Русско-турецкой войны 1877–1878 гг. (Ottoman Prisoners of war in Russia during the Russian-Turkish War of 1877–1878)*, 85.

¹⁰³⁶ Emphasis Leslie’s. From Armand Leslie to Colonel Loyd-Lindsay, August 1, 1877. BRCA. WAN/3/1/1, p.14

with the representatives of the Red Crescent Society taking Armand Leslie with him.¹⁰³⁷ The correspondence between the NAS members in the Ottoman Empire and Loyd-Lindsay frequently refers to the fact that the Red Crescent helped the NAS to conduct bureaucratic work rapidly and easily.¹⁰³⁸ Young's letter underlines the cooperation between the three societies and the mutual understanding of dividing fields of operation for effectiveness and productivity.¹⁰³⁹ Thus, NAS decided to work on the evacuation of the wounded from the front to the Red Crescent and SHC hospitals in the Balkans.

Young also participated in the Red Crescent meeting at Dolmabahçe. Dr. Bartolani, member of the Ottoman Red Crescent, took the NAS representatives to the hospital in preparation in Yeni Mahalle and NAS representatives commented very positively about ORCS's work, their cooperation with other institutions and the mutual appreciation between them.

NAS published three reports on the Russo-Ottoman War. The first report, which was dated October 25, 1877, had a Red Cross emblem on its cover. It focuses on the activities of 1877 and is comprised only of letters from the doctors. The second report was published on November 1, 1877, with the subtitle "second edition". This is the longest report of the Society including its activities in 1878 and has the Red Cross emblem on its cover. It has additional letters from the two fronts,

¹⁰³⁷ Armand Leslie was the Chief Agent of the NAS in the Ottoman Empire during the Serbian War.

¹⁰³⁸ Both Young and R. Harold Schofield underline the function of the Red Crescent in speeding up paperwork. See the letters from Harold Schofield to Colonel Loyd-Lindsay, July 27, 1877, and from J. S. Young to Colonel Loyd-Lindsay, July 19, 1877, in BRCA. WAN/3/1/1.

¹⁰³⁹ Cooperation was not limited to the relief institutions. Sometimes, humanitarian agents cooperated with the correspondents. Harry Crookshank, a doctor with the NAS, had to use the special courier of the *Herald* correspondent to telegraph the central committee and urgently request more ambulance wagons. See, Letter from H. Crookshank to Loyd-Lindsay, July 28, 1877, in BRCA. WAN/3/1/1. Another example of cooperation between doctors and correspondents was when in Eski Cuma (*Targovište*) number of wounded soldiers arrived, there was no place to lay them down, so the British surgeons and three correspondents cooperated in preparing the place for the wounded. See Letter from Dr. Schofield to Loyd Lindsay, September 1, 1877, BRCA. WAN/3/1/1.

the Eastern front communications being slightly more. The third report dated “January 1878, second edition” has a Red Crescent emblem on its cover and focuses only on 1877. No evidence for this ambiguity regarding the publication dates and the changes of the cover has been identified yet one cannot refrain from questioning whether the third report was targeted to an Ottoman audience.

4.2.4 The Stafford House Committee

The Stafford House Committee, officially called The Stafford House Committee for the Relief of Sick and Wounded Turkish Soldiers, was established following a meeting on December 12, 1876. The founding members of SHC were composed of two dukes, six marquises and the remaining thirty-one people were earls, knights and barons.¹⁰⁴⁰ Majority of the people involved were Conservatives, and many of the committee members were related to the Duke of Sutherland. More than seventy members had military background and nineteen of these had participated in the Crimean War. Many members participated in philanthropic efforts previously.¹⁰⁴¹

The committee, instead of sending an agent of their own, wished to work with people from İstanbul. Local representatives were Messrs. Hanson¹⁰⁴² and Ahmet Vefik Paşa, who were willing to receive and distribute money and goods. SHC report explains that many of the Central Committee members of SHC had known Ahmet

¹⁰⁴⁰ Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire*, 139. For the full list of founding figures, see SHC report “Report and Record of the Operations of the Stafford House Committee for the Relief of Sick and Wounded Turkish Soldiers, Russo-Turkish War, 1877-1878.” (From now on *Report and Record of*.)

¹⁰⁴¹ For details about the members’ previous philanthropic, diplomatic and economic activities see Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire*, 139-141.

¹⁰⁴² Hansons were capital holders residing in İstanbul. They were among the initial group of bankers and merchants who were influential in the establishment of the Imperial Ottoman Bank. Exertzoglou, “Greek Banking,” 131.

Vefik personally.¹⁰⁴³ Lord Blantyre,¹⁰⁴⁴ who was also a member of the SHC worked in close cooperation with the Committee however, the activities conducted under his patronage were listed separately and were always identified under the title “Blantyre” in the committee report. Throughout the Russian war, SHC supported twenty-seven surgeons, eight assistant surgeons and five dispenser and Lord Blantyre provided nine surgeons, some of which are depicted below in Figure 11, and one assistant surgeon throughout the conflicts. The first list of subscribers was publicized in December 1876 and consisted of subscriptions from England and India, particularly from the inhabitants of Hyderabad. SHC organized charity events during the campaign. One of these events was a concert, which took place in St. James’s Hall on December 5, 1887. See figure 12 for the flyer of this event.

¹⁰⁴³ The report underlines that several members of the Committee knew him personally and that these Englishmen who knew him, praised him and trusted him. This comment reveals that parts of the Ottoman elite were closely related to the philanthropic circles. Another prominent figure of the period, Midhat Paşa, visited the SHC Committee and attended their meeting when he was in London during his exile. He ensured the Committee that the funds were used accordingly. “Report of the Stafford House Committee for the Relief of the Sick and Wounded Turkish Soldiers,” July 1877. SRO. SHC. Coll. D593/P/26/2/7.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Charles Stuart, 12th Lord of Blantyre was Duke of Sutherland’s brother-in-law and brother of the British diplomat William Stuart who served in İstanbul between 1864-1862. Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire*, 140, 159. Blantyre owned large estates, and he served in the British army and later was a member of the House of Lords.



Figure 11. An illustration of a Red Crescent ambulance with Lord Blantyre's surgeons.¹⁰⁴⁵

According to the committee report, the increasing sum of donations and the amount of work required a person who could spend more time and effort, and Kennett-Barrington accepted the offer to work as the Chief Commissioner.¹⁰⁴⁶ Another earlier report, expressed that because Ahmet Vefik was elected as the President of the Ottoman parliament, this duty would not allow him to spend time on SHC work.¹⁰⁴⁷ While the committee might have regarded the increasing burden of their work unfit for the existing representatives in İstanbul, Ahmet Vefik Paşa may have had another reason for ending his work with the Committee. Having been appointed as the committee leader of *Hediye-i Askeriyye Cemiyeti* Ahmet Vefik Paşa embarked on relief work to Ottoman soldiers with a rather controversial

¹⁰⁴⁵ Image retrieved From ICRC AV Archives, V/P/HIST/00299/10. Russo-Turkish War 1877-1878.

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Report and Record of*, 2.

¹⁰⁴⁷ "Report of the Stafford House Committee for the Relief of the Sick and Wounded Turkish Soldiers," July 1877. SRO. SHC. Coll. D593/P/26/2/7.

appointment.¹⁰⁴⁸ Kennett-Barrington arrived in İstanbul on June 20, 1877¹⁰⁴⁹ and he was received well by Ahmet Vefik Paşa, as opposed to Mr. Layard.¹⁰⁵⁰

SHC and its well-documented and detailed report, was to create “a legacy in terms of scientific medical endeavor”¹⁰⁵¹ and the report provides details about the operations, the budget and analyses of medical cases. When compared with the NAS reports, the SHC report does stand out in its detailed analysis. The ORCS report is also very detailed when compared with the NAS report. Both ORCS and SHC reports include detailed lists, charts and various reports. The committee’s main field of activity was second line of relief operations, making medical support a practical way to support the Ottoman army without participating in fighting.

¹⁰⁴⁸ He was appointed as the head of the *Hediye-i Askeriyye Cemiyeti* in February 1877, at a time when the oppositional members of the committee were distanced from the society. He was also appointed as the Chamber President (*Meclis-i Mebusan reisi*) on February 5, 1877, the day when Midhat Paşa had to leave the Ottoman lands and sail off for his exile. Akün, “Ahmet Vefik Paşa”; Devereux, *First Ottoman Constitutional Period*, 101. See the chapter on *iâne* for details regarding this committee.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Correspondence regarding his journey to İstanbul had started at the end of May. BOA. HR. SFR. 3. 245/62.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Report from Barrington-Kennett, July 4, 1877. See *Report and Record of*, 15.

¹⁰⁵¹ Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire*, 139.

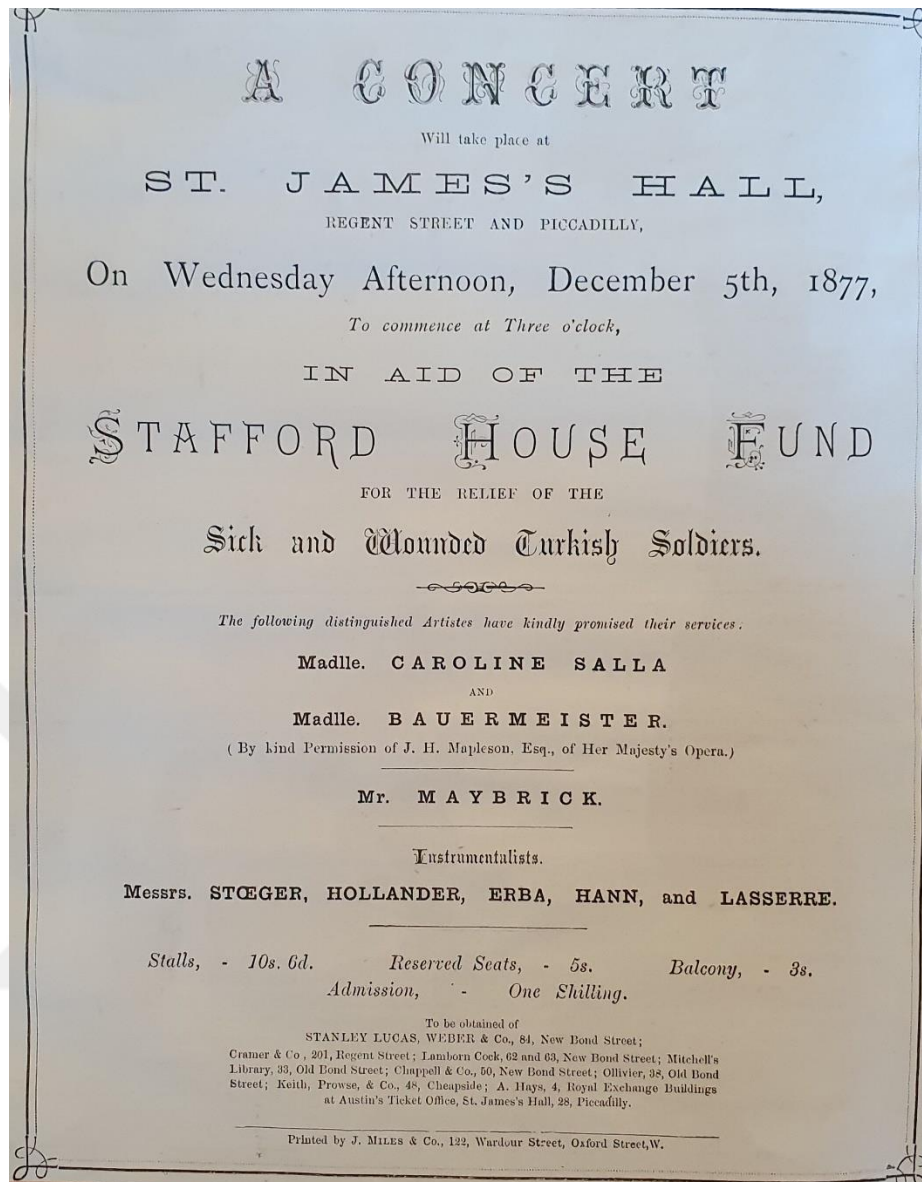


Figure 12. Stafford House Fund concert flyer¹⁰⁵²

The total sum of SHC operations was 39,293 pounds, out of which 38,384 pounds were expended, and 908 pounds were left at the end of operations. The Blantyre fund had a total of 3,300 pounds. SHC operations were active between June 1877 and September 1878.¹⁰⁵³ September 1877 had the highest number of treatments of wounded soldiers and the highest number of treatments of sick was in June 1878,

¹⁰⁵² SHC. Coll.

¹⁰⁵³ June 1877 was reserved for organization and the dispatch of personnel, and the treatment of wounded soldiers began in August 1877.

followed by October 1877. The highest number of total treatments combined was in September 1877, with a total number of 11,534.¹⁰⁵⁴

One of the main activities of SHC was to establish hospitals, the first ones were in Rustchuk (*Rusçuk*) and Varna.¹⁰⁵⁵ Other works included the establishment of railway transport service and soup kitchens along the Rustchuk-Varna railway, ambulance services functioning between Varna train station and the facilities nearby, and the establishment of other ambulances attached to Ottoman military.¹⁰⁵⁶ SHC also established hospitals in Edirne and Philippopolis. The latter was set up when the region was filled with wounded soldiers and refugees. The Mundy Barrack hospital in İstanbul was handed over to SHC, and it was managed by them for six months, starting in December 1877.

The committee's operations changed following the defeat in Plevna and the Ottoman retreat. As the Russian army advanced, the hospitals in Philippopolis and Edirne had to be evacuated, and the wounded were eventually transported to İstanbul. Committee members travelled in a private medical van, accompanying the trains carrying wounded soldiers all the way to İstanbul, helping the wounded during the journey.¹⁰⁵⁷ In the meantime, Kennett-Barrington transferred the SHC materials from the Galata depot to a ship, turning it into a floating depot, during the panic in the capital caused by the possibility of Russian invasion.¹⁰⁵⁸

Operations on the Eastern front included the distribution of materials in Batum, establishment of a hospital in Erzurum and an ambulance service in Kars by the Blantyre fund. Throughout the conflict, SHC took over another hospital in

¹⁰⁵⁴ *Report and Record of*, 6.

¹⁰⁵⁵ In the Varna hospital, SHC and the Ottoman Red Crescent Society collaborated and worked together for a couple of months.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire*, 143; *Report and Record of*, 8.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Unsigned letter from Constantinople, September 4, 1877. SRO. SHC. Coll. D593/P/26/2/7.

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Report and Record of*, 9-10.

Erzurum from the Ottoman authorities. After the ceasefire SHC personnel continued their relief work for a brief period and they provided aid to the refugees.

SHC's activities in the Ottoman capital included the publication of a booklet, bearing the SHC emblem, including the text of the Geneva Convention printed in the *Levant Herald* press in 1877.¹⁰⁵⁹ This booklet must have circulated among the French speaking circles in the capital.

During the SHC operations, the Committee worked in close cooperation with the Ottoman Red Crescent Society and Kennett-Barrington was under the protection of the ORCS. He attended two of their meetings on June 17th and June 30th and he attained an honorary membership of the committee.¹⁰⁶⁰ The fact that he was an honorary member was due to his travelling frequently and he continued to participate in ORCS meetings when he was in İstanbul. When the NAS staff arrived in İstanbul, Kennett-Barrington was there to help them get their papers, get in touch with ORCS and he even claims to have made the designs for their ambulance carriages.¹⁰⁶¹

4.2.4.1 Defining the victim

SHC publications depicted Ottoman soldiers, as people fighting for their country against the Russians, and who were suffering under severe conditions and desperately in need of aid. The Ottoman government was incapable of providing its soldiers with adequate support. According to their publications, for months, sufferings of Bulgarians and Serbians have been covered in the press however

... there is reason to believe that the Turks have suffered not less severely than their opponents. It is not their habit to make a loud outcry respecting their grievances; they endure in silence as the decree of fate what the more

¹⁰⁵⁹ SRO. SHC. Coll. D593/P/26/2/7.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Report from Barrington-Kennett, July 4, 1877. Published in SHC report. See *Report and Record of*, 15.

¹⁰⁶¹ Report from Barrington-Kennett, July 4, 1877. Published in SHC report. See *Report and Record of*, 15.

demonstrative Christian races resent with fierce and bitter denunciations and wild appeals for sympathy. All Europe has helped to some extent the enemies of the Port, but the Turkish soldier has been left to bear his griefs in the best way open to him, and, if fatally wounded to die without pity. His own government, torn by internal dissensions, with hundreds of claims constantly urged upon it and no funds with which to meet them, has been unable to devote to its troops the most ordinary attention; and virtuous Englishmen have been too much occupied in storming at the atrocities to give a thought to any other aspect of the question.¹⁰⁶²

The suffering of the Ottoman soldiers was thus drawn into the European public imagination. Another article in the *Daily Telegraph* titled “the Victims of War” depicted the treatment to both the wounded soldiers and the Ottoman populations effected by the war, presenting Ottoman wounded soldiers as victims similar to the displaced populations.¹⁰⁶³ The institutions which aimed to alleviate the sufferings of the wounded Ottoman soldiers had to create a counter rhetoric to the overarching anti-Ottoman discourse.

Additionally, SHC appealed to the humanity of the British public by underlining climatic conditions which served as the primary cause of distress. This was once more articulated with reference to the Ottoman inability to provide its soldiers with adequate clothing and medical supply. Depicting the Ottoman soldiers under harsh winter conditions the *Daily Telegraph* narrated that the soldiers were “only imperfectly clad and quite unprotected from the weather” having to rely on insufficient rations. “Thus in the Turkish lines in the Balkans a vast amount of suffering and distress is being felt, and men are falling victim to disease for want of the very necessities in life.”¹⁰⁶⁴ Another article informed its readers that “the men are not only neglected as regards foods and medicine, but their wounds are alive with worms.”¹⁰⁶⁵ The reasons for such a campaign were enmeshed in the British political

¹⁰⁶² *The Morning Post*, December 13, 1876. SRO. SHC. Coll. D593/P/26/2/7.

¹⁰⁶³ *The Daily Telegraph*, December 27, 1877. SRO. SHC. Coll. D593/P/26/2/7.

¹⁰⁶⁴ *The Daily Telegraph*, December 15, 1877. SRO. SHC. Coll. D593/P/26/2/7.

¹⁰⁶⁵ SRO. SHC. Coll. D593/P/26/2/7.

atmosphere and the ways in which Bulgarian atrocities had been propagated. What affected the increasing interest in aiding the Ottoman soldiers was not only these articles, but the changing nature of the conflict also played a key role. British public opinion was to sway in the wake of an imminent Ottoman-Russian War. In the words of Gill, support to relief funds “had gone from a trickle in the late summer of 1876 to a torrent, in 1878” with the increasing war jingoism.¹⁰⁶⁶

While pro-Ottoman newspapers such as *Daily Telegraph*¹⁰⁶⁷ and *Morning Post* praised SHC’s relief efforts, other anti-Ottoman newspapers, particularly *The Northern Echo*, were skeptical and critical of SHC activities. *The Northern Echo* identified the SHC as “the little knot of Turkish sympathizers in London Society” and claimed that it functioned as if organically tied to the Ottoman government.¹⁰⁶⁸

Amidst a divided and politically charged campaign, the Ottoman government was acutely aware of its need for international medical help and the Ottoman diplomats worked their way around to participating in international philanthropic circles with reference to the newly established Ottoman Red Crescent Society. They aimed to convert the “helpless” Ottoman government image into one which emphasized the Geneva Convention and the Ottoman Sultan’s interests in humanitarian efforts. One of their instruments was defining aid as a requirement of international codifications, not as something culminating from the incapacities of the government.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 80.

¹⁰⁶⁷ See chapter two for the relations between the representatives of the *Daily Telegraph* and the Ottoman diplomatic personnel.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Quoted in Fisher, *Outskirts of Empire*, 146.

4.2.5 The Ottoman Red Crescent Society

In its first circular, the Ottoman Red Crescent Society defined its aim as bringing the resources of science and charity to the relief of the wounded (*d'apporter au soulagement des blessés toutes les ressources de la science et de la charité*), resembling the emphasis on the scientific rational of humanitarianism,¹⁰⁶⁹ claimed by the International Committee.¹⁰⁷⁰ The first circular then describes that thousands of soldiers on both sides have been suffering and the Committee, like all the other ones, aimed to ameliorate the conditions of the soldiers. Appealing to other Red Cross societies, charitable associations and individuals, the circular ended with declaring that they would publish all donations. Finally, the foreign representatives of the Committee in major European countries, such as the United States of America and India were listed.¹⁰⁷¹

This official announcement instrumentalized a very different language than that of the NAS and SHC. The victims are not just Russians or Ottomans but all the soldiers on the battlefield. These arguments lend support to the assertion that the Ottoman Empire was equally qualified as all the other parties in receiving aid, due to being a signatory of the Geneva Convention. The emphasis on science and charity on the other hand, proposed that the Ottoman government was a legitimate actor in the

¹⁰⁶⁹ The emphasis on science was neither unique to this instance nor it was an undifferentiated adaptation or a mere mimicking. Science had been a crucial component of the rhetoric of reform and progress, particularly among the medical/educational circles. By 1877, many prominent figures of the Ottoman medical sphere were either educated in Europe or they were accustomed to modern medicinal developments. As Exertzoglou underlines, the appropriation of western discourses involved processes of negotiation and “they configured their local construction into a universalizing pattern set by the cultural and economic power of the West.” Exertzoglou, “Medicine, Philanthropy.” For an analysis on the notion of appropriation instead of transfer in discussing the concept of science in the non-Western societies see Gavroglu, “Some Methodological Issues.” The establishment of the Red Crescent Society and the intermingling of the existing practices with international/western methods and discourses resulted in the reconfiguration of the local/domestic into a “universal” framework.

¹⁰⁷⁰ The term International Committee refers to the initial organization founded in Geneva, known as the International Committee for the Assistance to Sick and Wounded Soldiers, also referred to as Comité International or the Geneva Committee. Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity*, 6. See the previous section for the naming of various national branches.

¹⁰⁷¹ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 53-55.

concerted humanitarian action. Thus, the establishment of the ORCS at this specific historical juncture was not a coincidence. There were previous attempts by the Ottoman elites, however the specific requirements of the historical context; the Ottoman efforts in image management and the realities of armed conflict underpinned the current impetus. As Gill underlines, “having one’s ‘own’ Red Cross society announced one’s modernity, civilization and autonomy, and was thus of symbolic, not just practical, importance.”¹⁰⁷²

4.2.5.1 Earlier attempts

The earliest attempt to establish a branch of an international humanitarian organization in the Ottoman domain was articulated by Abdullah Bey¹⁰⁷³ in 1867. Abdullah Bey met with Count Serurier and Henry Durant during his visit to the International Exposition of 1867 in Paris. Their acquaintance continued through correspondences and Abdullah Bey’s idea of initiating such relief work in the Ottoman Empire was encouraged by the European humanitarian agents.¹⁰⁷⁴ After presentations and discussions in the meetings of *Cem’iyyet-i Tıbbiyye*, a provisional committee (*Asâkir-i Berriyye ve Bahriyye Mecrûhînine Muâvenet Cem’iyyeti*) was formed in 1869.¹⁰⁷⁵ The committee had a couple of meetings and had drafted a

¹⁰⁷² Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 110.

¹⁰⁷³ Colonel Abdullah Bey, (Karl Eduard Hammerschmidt) was an important figure for the establishment of the Ottoman Red Crescent Society. Born into a Hungarian family in Vienna, Hammerschmidt studied law and medicine. He participated in the 1848 revolution and in its aftermath fled to the Ottoman Empire. He published books on various subjects and worked in the hospitals. He was appointed as a representative to participate in the Paris Exhibition in 1867. During his stay in Paris, Abdullah Bey visited medical committees, and he was convinced that relief for the wounded soldiers during times of armed conflict needed to be initiated in the Ottoman Empire. See, Ahmed Midhat, *Hilâl-i Ahmer Cemiyeti*. 47.

¹⁰⁷⁴ See Ahmet Midhat’s book for the two letters in Ottoman Turkish. Ahmed Midhat, *Hilâl-i Ahmer Cemiyeti*. They are also published in French in *Societe*. For a narrative of the initial attempts to establish a branch of the International Committee see Ada, “Osmanlı,” 11-21.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Abdullah Bey was working as a doctor at the Haydarpaşa Hospital when his call for a meeting regarding this matter was accepted. The initial impetus came from the prominent figures such as the Commander in Chief Ömer Paşa, Edhem Paşa, Veli Paşa, British consulate priest Curtis, and the

regulation, after which they applied to the Ottoman authorities for the official approval. This was never realized.¹⁰⁷⁶

4.2.5.2 Balkan Crisis and the Ottoman Red Crescent Society

The initial attempts to establish an Ottoman branch had failed and the issue would be picked up again during the Balkan Crisis. Moynier, this time send a letter to Dr. Dikran Peştemalcıyan Efendi, requesting the inquiry into the status of the previous initiative and the possibility of activating it given the political situation.¹⁰⁷⁷

By this time, national Red Cross organizations were already effective in the Balkans.¹⁰⁷⁸ The Ottoman government had protested the declaration of Montenegro and Serbia as signatories to the Convention, arguing that the two entities were the vassal states of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰⁷⁹ The International Red Cross Committee, on

Austrian ambassador Baron de Prokesch-Osten. The rest of the committee were medical personnel or military personnel.

¹⁰⁷⁶ There are differences of opinion in the literature on this point. Ahmed Midhat claims that the Ottoman elites were not interested in establishing such a committee because they believed that such initiatives were not even accepted in Europe. Ahmed Midhat adds that the government did not consider the possibility of a major war which would require medical support to the army. Ahmed Midhat, *Hilâl-i Ahmer Cemiyeti*. 50-55. The official Red Crescent publication in French, which Ahmed Midhat used as the basis for his book, uses the statement “the officials regarded Abdullah Bey’s proposal as utopic, and they indeed did not understand the scope and the aim of the work.” *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol I. According to Hüsnü Ada, the main reason was the hesitation about the Red Cross emblem. Ada, “Osmanlı,” 21. Institutional historiography published in 1927 claims that the main reason for the reservation was about allowing civilians in intervening in military affairs. Topçu and İzgöer, “Hilal-i Ahmer’in Tarihçesi,” 3828. The Russian Red Cross had faced a similar resistance from the generals and the bureaucrats in Russia during the initial phase of its establishment. Such reactions were curbed down by the increasing awareness about the insufficiency of the medico-military organization. Ringlee, “Romanovs,” 77-78, 93. One point that is not discussed in any of the literature on the initial phase of the ORCS, is that these initial efforts coincided with the Cretan Crisis, a period which witnessed discussions on intervention in the Ottoman Empire based on humanitarian sentiments and a civil donation campaign which was led by the oppositional intellectuals. The donation campaign was targeted to aid civilians (see chapter 3.2) however, this period also witnessed an increasing censorship on press through various measures such as cancellation of newspaper permits and increasing censorship due to the fragility of the political situation. Such an atmosphere might have contributed to the state’s hesitation about allowing such an initiative.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Ahmed Midhat, *Hilâl-i Ahmer Cemiyeti*, 56. The fact that other belligerent parties were made signatories of the Geneva Convention to receive international aid was a constitutive element.

¹⁰⁷⁸ The Bulgarian Red Cross was established in 1878 however Russians played a key role in the earlier phase of the Bulgarian Red Cross. A Red Cross society was established in Herzegovina in December 1875 to aid the refugees. The Serbian and Rumanian Red Cross branches were established in 1876.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Ada, “Osmanlı,” 24.

the other hand, required that the entity receiving aid had to be a signatory of the said Convention and with the aim of establishing relief committees to the refugees in Montenegro, the Committee send a delegation to the Prince of Montenegro in November 1875. After the establishment of the Montenegrin Red Cross branch, aid from other branches poured into the region, the Russian Red Cross taking the lead.¹⁰⁸⁰ The Russian Red Cross¹⁰⁸¹ missions to the Balkans, to Montenegro in 1875 and Serbia in 1876 were already in effect when the Ottoman Red Crescent was in the making.

Dr. Dikran Peřtemalcıyan Efendi brought the letter to the attention of the members of the *Cem'ıyyet-i Tıbbiyye-i řâhâne*.¹⁰⁸² The issue was then taken to the Grand Vizier Mehmed Rüřdü Pařa¹⁰⁸³ who in turn asked Marko Pařa, the director of the Military Medical School (*Mekteb-i Tıbbiyye-i Askeriyye Nazırı*), to organize a provisional committee with the participation of members from all the medical organizations.¹⁰⁸⁴ Thus a group of prominent people of medicine, gathered for a

¹⁰⁸⁰ Ada, "Osmanlı," 26.

¹⁰⁸¹ Founded in 1867 The Russian Red Cross, which was initially called Aid Society for Wounded and Sick Soldiers, was later named as Russian Society for the Red Cross in 1879. Ringlee, "Romanovs," 18. Ringlee, in his detailed study analyzes the ways in which the Romanov family and the Russian elites contributed to the formation of this society and how their relationship with charity transformed the relations between the monarchy and the elites. The formation of a national relief organization provided the Romanov dynasty with a legitimacy by making philanthropy the centerpiece of autocratic power. For the elites and the Russian society at large, it provided ways to bond with the aristocracy and allowed the subjects "to participate in the moral imperative to improve Russia." Ringlee, "Romanovs," 2. Ringlee's study provides important insights into understanding the workings of civil initiatives in autocratic regimes and proves that civil society does not necessarily have to act counter to state power but at certain moments could strengthen the relations between state and society. Ringlee, "Romanovs," 3. This line of argumentation is valuable when looking at the Ottoman Red Crescent Society and the *iâne* practices of the period.

¹⁰⁸² For the letter, see Ahmed Midhat, *Hilâl-i Ahmer Cemiyeti*. 56-58.

¹⁰⁸³ Interestingly, Ahmed Midhat's book on the Ottoman Red Crescent, published in 1879 does not mention Mütercim Mehmed Rüřdü Pařa's support in the initial meetings and describes the prominent figures in the establishment of the Society as the medical cadres and Abdülhamid II. A recent publication by Kızılay articulates the role of the Grand Vizier in the initial phase and underlines that the reasons for his support were not only the wish to be regarded as an equal power in the European diplomatic sphere but equally important was his awareness of the acute needs of the Ottoman military during the conflicts. Karal Akgün and Uluętekin, *Yeni Belgeler Işıęında*.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Ada, "Osmanlı"; Ahmed Midhat, *Hilâl-i Ahmer Cemiyeti*.

meeting¹⁰⁸⁵ on August 12, 1876.¹⁰⁸⁶ The provisional committee started their work immediately, by inquiring into the possibility of using a Red Crescent emblem instead of Red Cross, and official instructions were circulated within the Ottoman army for respecting the Red Cross flag, and its immunity during the conflicts. The committee also charted out the principles for collecting donations and worked on draft regulations. The Ministry of War responded to the requests of the provisional committee by allowing the establishment of donation committees and demanded the use of a Red Crescent emblem instead of the Cross.¹⁰⁸⁷

The ORCS had to wait until the spring of 1877 for its formation and the beginning of its activities. There is not much information about the reasons for this delay. Ahmet Midhat claims that the delay from 1876 to April 1877, which is the first official meeting of the ORCS, resulted from the insufficient number of members for the General Assembly. Hüsnü Ada interprets this delay due to the diplomatic correspondence regarding the use of crescent instead of cross.¹⁰⁸⁸ An additional factor in the delay could be the efforts of Abdülhamid in establishing centralized and submissive donation institutions. *Hediye-i Askeriyye Cemiyeti*, which was an important committee in collecting donations, was abolished in March 1877, and the establishment of ORCS meant the centralization of both national and international donations. Additionally, the Ottoman government might have chosen to deliberately

¹⁰⁸⁵ For the details of the meeting see The Red Crescent Yearbook (*Hilâl-i Ahmer Sâlnâmesi*). For an overview of the yearbook see Özeydin, "Osmanlı Hilâl-i Ahmer Cemiyeti," 43.

¹⁰⁸⁶ There is a slight error in Özeydin's transliteration of the date of the first meeting. She wrote in her dissertation that the date was 13 July 1292 while the date in the yearbook is 31 July 1292. Özeydin, "Osmanlı Hilâl-i Ahmer Cemiyeti," 42. Ahmed Midhat also identifies the date of the meeting as August 12, 1877. Ahmed Midhat, *Hilâl-i Ahmer Cemiyeti*, 61.

¹⁰⁸⁷ With respect to correspondence regarding the use of crescent instead of cross by the Ottoman branch, Loyd-Lindsay supported the Ottoman proposal and disagreed with T. V. Lister from the Foreign Office that such a change would not be sufficiently distinctive for the purpose. Loyd-Lindsay supports his argument by claiming that the distinctive character was the color of the banner, and as long as the colors were the same, crescent instead of the cross would not make any difference. From Loyd-Lindsay to T. V. Lister, January 7, 1877. *Report of the*, 1877, 45.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Ada, "Osmanlı," 30.

deter activities of the Society anticipating that diplomatic attempts could procure positive results in halting a war with Russia.

Surprisingly, there is confusion about the official date of establishment of ORCS in the literature. Hüsnü Ada, who published extensively on the ORCS claims that the Society was established on April 14, 1877, after their first official meeting while the official declaration on *Takvîm-i Vekayi* ' stated April 16, 1877¹⁰⁸⁹ as the first date. Other sources, including the *Societe* point to April 19.¹⁰⁹⁰ Despite the confusion of the exact date, the Society was established in April with the name "*Mecrûhîn-i Askeriyye Îâne Cem'iyet-i Osmâniyyesi*" which coincided with the Russian declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire.

It's announcement in *Takvîm-i Vekayi* ' underlined that the Committee was established by the regulations of the Geneva Convention and listed its members. (See Figure 13 for the Central Committee) The Committee was going to be responsible for setting up temporary hospitals to treat the wounded during times of conflict and the current war with Russia was the main impetus behind this committee and other similar humanitarian committees (*insanperver cemiyetler*) which all worked towards ameliorating the wounded in the battlefield.¹⁰⁹¹ *La Turquie*'s announcement focused on other aspects of the Society, particularly providing the necessary details required for the contribution of both Ottoman and foreign subjects. The newspaper regarded Society as the Ottoman equivalent of the European Red Cross and promoted this with reference to the Geneva Convention and the Imperial *Îrâde*. Appealing for the public

¹⁰⁸⁹ *Takvîm-i Vekayi* ' no.1914.

¹⁰⁹⁰ The scholars who prefer this date rely on Ahmet Midhat Efendi's book on the Red Crescent. In the *Societe*, the source which Ahmed Midhat incorporated into his book, the same date is articulated.

Hüsnü Ada claims the date as April 16, which was written in an article in *Cerîde-i Havâdis*. However, the same date April 16 was also published in *Takvîm-i Vekayi* '. This might indicate that both official and semi-official newspapers relied on the same source. For the details of the confusion about the date of the Society see Ada, "Osmanlı," 30.

¹⁰⁹¹ *Takvîm-i Vekayi* ' no.1914.

to support the ambulance services, the article differentiated between donations in money and in kind.¹⁰⁹² The Ottoman Imperial Bank is defined as the main institution in collecting monetary donations and its employees served as the international and regional representatives of the Society.¹⁰⁹³ Revealing the central role of the Ottoman Bank, this advertisement highlights that in matters of monetary donation, it was not the Ottoman treasury or any other committee but it was the Ottoman Bank which was eligible to make transactions. The fact that it already had branches in different regions and that it could easily transfer money made the representatives of the Bank candidates for such international transactions and networks. In fact, the transactions regarding donations were obliged to be conducted via the Imperial Ottoman Bank.¹⁰⁹⁴ The Society received official approval in May 1877 and the imperial *irade* declaring the Sultan's patronage was received in mid-June, with the allocation of a meeting room in the Beşiktaş Imperial Palace.¹⁰⁹⁵

¹⁰⁹² *La Turquie*, July 4, 1877. P.2. The same announcement was repeated in the subsequent issues in June and July. For examples of this advertisement see the following issues: July 5, 6, 8-9, 10, 1877.

¹⁰⁹³ Donations in kind were to be presented to the Ottoman sanitary administration, while monetary donations would be deposited to the Ottoman Bank.

¹⁰⁹⁴ The correspondence between Safvet Paşa and Musurus Paşa regarding the donation from the Muslims of Hyderabad, which was £5,300 in total, reveals that the international donations could not be made directly to the Ottoman committees in İstanbul and that they had to be addressed to the Ottoman Bank. If the donations were directed to the Stafford House Committee representatives, the donor would require it to be send back, claiming that the committee was not a bank. From Safvet Paşa to Musurus Paşa, May 23, 1877, document number 187 and From Musurus Paşa to Safvet Paşa, May 23, 1877, document number 189. Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Ada, "Osmanlı," 32-33.



Figure 13. Ottoman Red Crescent Society Central Committee¹⁰⁹⁶

The reasons that triggered the establishment of an Ottoman branch of the Red Cross were multi-fold. The need for an Ottoman branch had become a prerequisite for receiving international aid from other Red Cross communities. As mentioned above, such a Society also had a symbolic value, elevating the Ottoman state to the level of “civilization.” It provided means to counter allegations of atrocities by declaring compliance with international codifications. A practical reason, of course, was the lack of qualified military personnel in the front, which became crystal clear during the Serbian War. Finally, war with Russia meant a full-scale mobilization and the earlier relief efforts needed to be centralized and increased.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Ottoman Red Crescent Album. Retrieved from the Gigord (Pierre de) Collection of Photographs of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey, made accessible by Online Archives of California. Retrieved from <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt038nd8h9/dsc/>

The ORCS allowed the Ottoman bureaucrats to maneuver in international relief circles more easily and efficiently. Karatodori Efendi publicized the establishment of the ORCS in the philanthropic circles and collected donations on behalf of Society. In short time, he became an honorary member of the central committee of the Red Cross Alliance.¹⁰⁹⁷ Photiades Bey reported from Athens that the Greek Red Cross society had barely started working after its establishment. The advertisements that he had printed therefore could only be distributed among the charitable people of Athens.¹⁰⁹⁸ The measures of the Ottoman diplomatic personnel in collecting donations varied depending on the local philanthropic networks. However, it is safe to claim that international recognition eased their efforts. The Ottoman diplomats were also aware of the recent developments in military medicine. They followed recent developments and reported them to the Ottoman government.¹⁰⁹⁹

A new state rhetoric which presented the Ottoman soldiers as victims, not as the “Terrible Turk” or the “barbaric” could be put into use. By equating the wounded soldiers with their Russian and Serbian counterparts, this new discourse had a neutralizing effect with respect to the state rhetoric. ORCS also allowed for the creation of new elite networks. These philanthropic elite networks were already active during the earlier phase of the Balkan Crisis. However, the imperial patronage proved more advantageous by linking the local notables with the central government and the throne directly. While the earlier efforts had a more impromptu and

¹⁰⁹⁷ From Karatodori Efendi to Server Paşa, August 25, 1877, no. 707 in Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Photiades Bey to Server Paşa, September 11, 1877. No. 769. Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Karatodori Efendi from Brussels informed Server Paşa about the splint model of Doctor Post from Hague, who was a first-class military surgeon of the Netherlands army. Recent developments about military medicine were observed by the Ottoman bureaucrats and reported to the Ottoman government. BOA. HR. SYS. 1215/1/149, January 17, 1878.

individual characteristic, the new internationality allowed the elites to establish stronger ties with foreign subjects through philanthropic dealings.

4.2.5.3 Activities of the ORCS

Donations made to the Society, both by international committees and Ottoman subjects were announced in newspapers, to publicize and promote the Society and increase contributions.¹¹⁰⁰ Meetings of the Society were also regularly published in newspapers.¹¹⁰¹ In addition to the occasional donations, the main method of financing the Society was through yearly membership. Two types of membership status existed; the first category included the members who paid one Ottoman pound and in the second category were the members who paid half *mecidiye* (silver coin of 20 piastres).¹¹⁰² Occasionally letters from districts, which narrated the Red Crescent activities were published in the press. In a letter from Edirne, for example, after providing the number of wounded in hospitals and the Red Crescent activities, certain individuals are praised for their good work. One of them is M. Black, who was the president of the Red Crescent committee and the aid committee for the refugees (*muhacirin*) in Edirne, and he was also the director of the Ottoman bank's local branch. Participation of the Ottoman bank representatives in the Red Crescent branches was not uncommon.

¹¹⁰⁰ For an example of one of the donation lists see *La Turquie*, December 1, 1877, p.3. This list includes donation from Red Cross branches, international donations collected by the Ottoman diplomatic personnel in different European cities, individual donations and the donations collected by the Cairo Women's Committee. Another donation lists provides details of the donations collected by local sub-committees such as Varna and Dardanelles. *La Turquie*, August 15-16, 1877, p.3.

¹¹⁰¹ For an example of the minutes of Society's meeting see *La Turquie*, December 2-3, 1877.

¹¹⁰² The Society made wealthy and influential Europeans honorary members to advertise its establishment and increase funding. These figures included French royalty and British aristocracy. Interestingly, a certain Arif Bey preferred to use the title Hayriye Merchant (*Hayriye Tüccarı*) in the list of subscribers, even though this category had ceased to exist. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol I, 17. This shows that people could still use this title in claiming a social position and refer to earlier social and charitable identifications. See chapter 3.2 for the involvement of Hayriye Merchants in the Cretan aid campaign.

Treasury and Secretary of the Aydın branch were representative of the Ottoman Bank. In Beirut, director and the deputy director of the Ottoman bank acted as the vice-president and the treasurer. Bursa, Damas, Larnaca (Cyprus), Smyrna, Varna, Alexandria branches all had Ottoman Bank employees, in prominent positions in the Red Crescent local committees.¹¹⁰³ Other members of the local sub-committees included local notables, both Muslim and non-Muslim, sanitary council representatives, doctors,¹¹⁰⁴ governors, religious leaders, state officials, foreign diplomats or personnel working in consuls, and occasionally people from the military. The diversity of the local committees uncover the multi-confessional and multi-ethnic character of the local Red Crescent initiatives.¹¹⁰⁵ A common denominator of these local representatives is that they all belong to some kind of an elite network, which could be stately, commercial, international or religious and this allowed some of these people to continue to hold economic and political power and prestige even during conflicts and changes in sovereignty in the contested regions.

Stafford House Committee and its activities served as examples for the ORCS and the Ottoman efforts aimed at compensating SHC activities especially in the

¹¹⁰³ Not all the employees of the Ottoman Bank participated in aid to Ottomans, and some of them changed their position in time. James Lewis Farley, who had previously been employed in the Imperial Ottoman Bank had changed his side after the Serbian revolt and played a key role in aiding the Balkan Christians through the League in Aid of the Christian Rayahs in Turkey and allegedly used the aid money to provide the rebels with guns. Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 111.

¹¹⁰⁴ Doctor Alexandre Mott, Professor of Surgery at the Belle Vue Hospital in New York accepted to be the representative of the Ottoman Red Crescent branch in the USA. From Arif Bey to Safvet Paşa, May 3, 1877, no.37., Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

¹¹⁰⁵ The participation of the local notables is particularly evident in two regions: Salonica and Erzurum. Members of the Erzurum sub-committee of Ottoman Red Crescent included influential Armenians such as Chabanian Efendi and Ballaryan Hamazasp Efendi, British Consul in Erzurum Mr. Zohrab and his son, an American missionary, while Nafiz Paşa and Ali Efendi participated as the president and vice-president. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol I, 28. In Salonica, participation of members of the Allatini and Lombardo families indicate the participation of local elites in these circles. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol I, 29. However, the participation of the local wealthy commercial elites in these branches does not represent the whole picture. While Red Crescent Society made it possible for these people to enhance their philanthropic activities, in other regions such dynamics are absent. Further research into the composition and the activities of the local branches could potentially reveal more insights into the local/regional dynamics.

conflict regions. The initial efforts of the ORCS included the establishment of Varna hospital with the cooperation of SHC and Kavak Hospital. By July 1877 ORCS started working on organizing ambulances – see figure 14 for an image of the Ottoman Red Crescent ambulance - and temporary hospitals¹¹⁰⁶ but these efforts did not always prove useful. The Ottoman field ambulance in Yeni-Zaragh (*Yeni Zağra/Nova Zagora*), according to reports from British surgeons, was dissolved on July 31, 1877. Composed of one doctor and five dressers, the group was not in effect until the end of the war because some of its members were shot and other fled.¹¹⁰⁷ Ambulances and temporary hospitals in Shipka (*Şipka*), Varna, and mobile units working with the army, proved useful until the Russian advance. Other hospitals in Salonica, Philippopolis (*Filibe/Plovdiv*) and Beylerbeyi served until the end of the war. By December 1877, the Committee's main field of operation was the evacuation of the wounded from the Balkan districts into Istanbul.¹¹⁰⁸ ORCS's main field of activity was the Rumelian front. The only group to serve on the Eastern front arrived in Erzurum in March 1878 and they stayed there until May.¹¹⁰⁹ After the Russian occupation in the Rumelian fronts, Red Crescent doctors continued their duty of healing the wounded, particularly the wounded Ottoman prisoners, in collaboration with the Russian Red Cross. Some of the foreign doctors started to return to their

¹¹⁰⁶ Ada, "Osmanlı," 95.

¹¹⁰⁷ From Armand Leslie to Colonel Lindsay, August 8, 1877. NAS. WAN 3/1/1, p.15.

¹¹⁰⁸ Ada, "Osmanlı," 98.

¹¹⁰⁹ It is possible to argue that the Eastern front lacked any serious and comprehensive medical support during the Russian War. Most of the funds and the personnel were dispatched to the Balkan regions. Ahmed Muhtar Paşa's comments on the medical arrangements of the Eastern front lends support to this interpretation. Underlining the crucial role of transferring the wounded from the lines to the rear facilities, Ahmed Muhtar narrates that ambulance services were non-existing in the Eastern front. There were no single educated medical personnel nor any stretcher to carry the wounded to the hospitals. This was one of the main obstacles in the Eastern front. Wounded soldiers were either carried on foot by other soldiers or on carts. The arrival of the British doctors towards the end of the war was, according to Ahmed Muhtar indeed late. Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa, *Anılar* 2, 272.

homelands as of May 1878 and the remaining doctors continued to work in the Ottoman capital with the refugees and the wounded soldiers.



Figure 14. Ottoman Red Crescent Society ambulance¹¹¹⁰

By drafting various regulations pertaining to the ambulance services and permanent hospitals ORCS attempted to regulate and systematize military medical operations. These regulations were drafted in their meetings throughout November 1877 and included detailed rules for different services. One of these regulations, the regulation for ambulance services (*Reglement Des Ambulances de Campagne*) even determined the salaries of its personnel and the same rules were to apply to the

¹¹¹⁰ Ottoman Red Crescent Album. Retrieved from the Gigord (Pierre de) Collection of Photographs of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey, made accessible via Online Archives of California. Retrieved from <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt038nd8h9/dsc/>

permanent hospitals, with minor changes. The proposed salaries, according to the regulations, could be subject to change due to the conditions on the battlefield and evidence suggests that there was no fixed salary for the medical corps aiding the Ottoman army. Yet, as shown in Table 1, the salary that the ORCS predicted for a chief surgeon was more than three-fold of the salary of a regular surgeon enrolled in the Ottoman army in 1873. ORCS's proposed salary was in fact equal to what a British surgeon would receive from the SHC. It is not clear whether these prepositions were realized or not but the amount that Society envisioned would have been economically beneficial to the Ottoman surgeons.

Additionally, the doctors who were enrolled with the ORCS signed their contracts with the Society's central committee therefore, it is possible that the Society could offer higher salaries as opposed to government contracts. When taking over the hospital from the Ottoman authorities, the SHC continued to work with the same staff and when the SHC took charge, the Ottoman government stopped the payments for the medical staff.¹¹¹¹

Charles Ryan reports that when he took over the Ottoman military hospital in Erzurum, he kept all the personnel, and he offered them a 50% increase in their salaries. Ryan's strategy to offer more money was "an additional incentive to faithful service" which allowed him to "secure a direct control over them by holding the power of the purse."¹¹¹² He also reported to the SHC central committee that he could stop their payments in the case of disobedience.¹¹¹³ Interestingly Ryan's list reveals

¹¹¹¹ Ottoman correspondence reveals that because the doctors, dispensers, surgeons and servants working under British doctors were paid by the British, they were not eligible for any salaries by the Ottoman government. BOA. ATASE. ORH. 110/9/1/3/130/0/1480. September 26, 1877.

¹¹¹² Ryan and Sanders, *Under the Red Crescent*, 327.

¹¹¹³ Charles Ryan's report to the Central Committee, December 1, 1877. SRO. SCH. Coll. D593/P/26/2/2/1-4.

that irregular soldiers were employed in the hospitals. Four irregular soldiers, *başbozuk* according to his letter, worked in the hospital.¹¹¹⁴

4.2.5.4 Salonica Hospital and SHC-ORCS cooperation

The first ORCS hospital outside the capital was established in Salonica in April 1878. Salonica was the first and the most active regional branch of ORCS.¹¹¹⁵ An important center of Ottoman aid (*iâne*), residents of Salonica had participated in the earlier donation campaigns effectively. Details of the donation campaign revealed the multi-ethnic dimension of aid, and the subsequent high participation in ORCS proves that the humanitarian spirit of this city was not limited to the initial donation campaign.¹¹¹⁶

Initially the Salonica branch collected donations, which were sent to the Central Committee, and the local committee provided aid to the Military Hospital. During the War, Salonica witnessed an influx of wounded soldiers and refugees, particularly after Süleyman Paşa's retreat. When the situation in Salonica started to worsen, the local committee requested monetary assistance from the Central Committee for aiding the wounded.¹¹¹⁷ By March 1878, having been informed about the terrible situation of the city, the SHC send a section to Salonica and established a hospital in the Orphan Asylum, as shown in Figure 15, which was erected by Midhat Paşa. According to Dr. Eccles's report, "over 2,000 patients were found lying in the military hospital, barracks, mosques, and other building in the town."¹¹¹⁸

¹¹¹⁴ Charles Ryan's report to the Central Committee, December 1, 1877. SRO. SCH. Coll. D593/P/26/2/2/1-4

¹¹¹⁵ Ada, "Osmanlı," 63.

¹¹¹⁶ See chapter 3.2 for the donations from Salonica.

¹¹¹⁷ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 332.

¹¹¹⁸ Report and Record of, 90.

Table 1. Surgeons' Salaries

	Salary (in piastres)	Ration (in piastres)	Total Amount (in piastres)
Ottoman surgeon in the military units ¹¹¹⁹	416	432	848
Ottoman surgeon (without any rank) ¹¹²⁰	600	NA	600
Ottoman surgeon (Surgeon Assistant) ¹¹²¹	400	NA	400
Ottoman surgeon before SHC in Erzurum ¹¹²²	800	NA	800
Ottoman surgeon under SHC in Erzurum ¹¹²³	1200 ¹¹²⁴	NA	1200
British surgeon with contract ¹¹²⁵	1720 ¹¹²⁶	432 ¹¹²⁷	2152
ORCS's anticipated salary for a head surgeon ¹¹²⁸	NA	NA	3500
ORCS's anticipated salary for surgeon assistant	NA	NA	2000
SHC surgeon ¹¹²⁹	3488	NA	3488

The SHC served in this hospital from March to April 15, 1878. The members of Salonica branch demanded from the ORCS, the establishment of a separate Red Crescent Hospital in the city, back in December 1877 but it was the SHC that responded to this demand. When the ORCS took over the hospital from SHC at the end of their operation, the number of wounded in the town had reduced to 200.¹¹³⁰

¹¹¹⁹ A surgeon enrolled in the seventh army in Yemen in 1873. Ünal, "Sultan Abdülaziz Dönemi", 162.

¹¹²⁰ Surgeon without military rank (*rütbesiz cerrah*) in the Military Hospital attached to the Seventh Army. Ünal, "Sultan Abdülaziz Dönemi," 161.

¹¹²¹ Surgeon Assistant (2. sınıf cerrah) in the Military Hospital attached to the 7th Army. Ünal, "Sultan Abdülaziz Dönemi," 161.

¹¹²² Charles Ryan narrates that he started to pay the Ottoman surgeons half the amount they received from the government as extra. Thus, the salary of an Ottoman surgeon was 800 piastres monthly before the SHC took over the hospital in Erzurum.

¹¹²³ The monthly payment of an Ottoman surgeon in Erzurum under the SHC makes 1,200 including the Ottoman salary and the additional amount paid by Charles Ryan. December 1, 1877. SRO. SHC. Coll. D593/P/26/2/1-4.

¹¹²⁴ Ryan wrote in his letter that he paid the salaries in *kaime* and this affected the real value of the salaries. During this period one *kaime* was equal to 205 piastres on December 1, 1877. For information about the *kaime*'s value, see Eldem, "Genel Kargaşa."

¹¹²⁵ British surgeons received 300 to 500 francs a month depending on their rank and experience. An average of 400 francs is listed in this table.

¹¹²⁶ For the conversion the following rate is used: 1 franc is equal to 4.3 Ottoman pounds. For the rate see *La Turquie*, December 1, 1877.

¹¹²⁷ The contracts defined the ration of the doctors as the ration of an adjutant-major (*kolağası*). The ration of an adjutant-major in the Seventh Army in Yemen in 1873 was 432 piastres. Ünal, "Sultan Abdülaziz Dönemi," 160-161.

¹¹²⁸ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 19.

¹¹²⁹ Monthly salary of a British surgeon receiving a salary from SHC. It was 32 British pounds according to the expenditure table in SHC report published in July 1877. SRO. SHC. Coll. D593/P/26/2/7. For the conversion the following rate is used. 1 pound equal to 109 piastres. *La Turquie*, December 1, 1877.

¹¹³⁰ Report and Record of, 91.

This incident exemplifies the importance of the British aid work in Ottoman domains and how the societies acted in coordination. When the hostilities were over, other medical institutions established by the British were also transferred to Ottoman authorities and continued to fill an important gap in the Ottoman medical system.



Figure 15. Ottoman Red Crescent Society Hospital in Salonica¹¹³¹

4.2.5.5 Women's branches

While the initial regulation of 1876 made possible the participation of women as members and allowed the formation of women's branches, this had to wait until

¹¹³¹ Ottoman Red Crescent Album. Retrieved from the Gigord (Pierre de) Collection of Photographs of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey, made available online by Online Archives of California. Retrieved from <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt038nd8h9/dsc/>

November 1877. The event that opened the way for women to be officially involved in ORCS activities was the support from Perestu Sultan.¹¹³² In the Central Committee meeting, she¹¹³³ is cherished for her patronage over the Ladies' Committee.¹¹³⁴ Perestu Sultan bought aid tickets (*iâne bileti*), an example of which is shown in the figure below and distributed these tickets. Thus, women's participation was initiated with a royal impetus. In her letter, Perestu Sultan identifies the two different conditions of the Ottoman wounded soldiers and the reasons for aiding them. The wounded soldiers, according to her, would either be martyrs or be left with disabilities, and in both cases, their pain needed to be alleviated as a requirement of humanity and honor (*mukteza-ı hamiyyet ve insaniyet*). As an expression of female patriotism, which is the material sacrifice as opposed to participation in the army (*hıfz-ı vatan vazifesinden mahrum olmak*), Perestu Sultan had bought aid tickets (*iâne bileti*) and distributed these tickets to bolster donations.¹¹³⁵ Such royal contribution resulted in increasing and making visible the female participation in the donation campaign. This was followed by the collection of 20,400 piastres and 48,860 piastres *kaime* by the women of Istanbul.¹¹³⁶

¹¹³² Rahime Perestu Sultan (1829-1904) was the wife of Abdülmecid. Osmanoğlu et al., *Genealogy*, 30. After the death of his mother, Perestu Sultan adopted Abdülhamid II and upon his enthronement she acquired the title Queen Mother (*Valide Sultan*), the highest status for a female member of the dynasty. Osmanoğlu et al., *Genealogy of the Imperial Ottoman Family*.

¹¹³³ She is referred to as *Kadın Efendi* (*Cadine effendi*) in the Central Committee minutes. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 106.

¹¹³⁴ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 106.

¹¹³⁵ BOA. TS. MA. E. 1295/2, July 30, 1877. In this document, Perestu Sultan writes that she bought thirty *iâne* tickets, each of which valued one Ottoman pound. The numbers thirty and one (written as "*birer*") to indicate a ticket worth of one lira (*birer liralık*) are handwritten additions to a printed document. The recipient of the letter is unknown. Her letter was later included in a publication by the Women's Branch of ORCS in 1330. *Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti Hanımlar Heyet-i*, 4-5.

¹¹³⁶ Ada, "Osmanlı," 73.

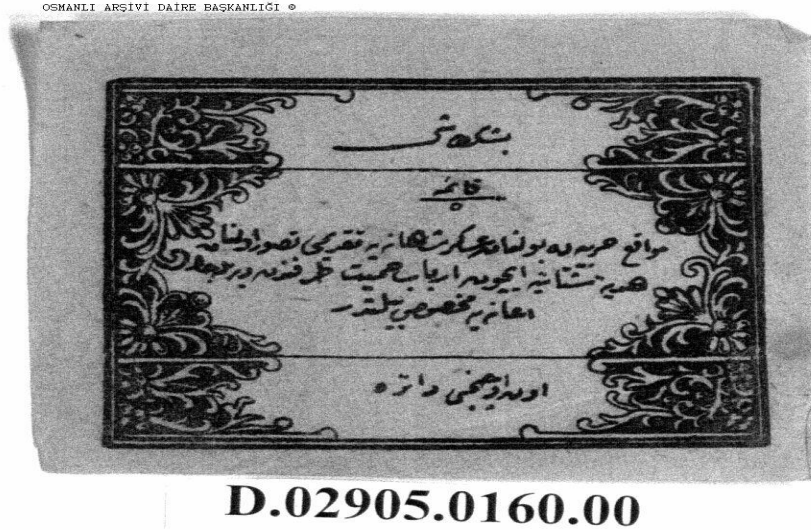


Figure 16. Donation ticket (*iâne bileti*)¹¹³⁷

Outside the Ottoman capital, several cities hosted women's branches, such as Bursa, Beirut and Smyrna. In Beirut, two women were active in forming the women's branch: the wife of the Ottoman bank representative and the wife of Beirut medical chief (*sıhhiye müdürü*).¹¹³⁸ In İzmir, Catholic women (*Les Dames Catholique*) were active in collecting money and materials to be sent to the Central Committee and Sister Mina was the head of this committee.¹¹³⁹ These initiatives did not only collect donations, but they also contributed to the war effort by sewing soldiers' clothing. Students at the women's school (*Terakki-i Dünya Kadınlar Mektebi*) in Smyrna, and women in Istanbul for examples sewed soldiers' cloths.¹¹⁴⁰ Women of foreign citizenry, such as British and German women residing in the capital worked as nurses or participated in collecting clothing and sheets to both the Ottoman soldiers and the refugees. In Egypt, women's committee was active in

¹¹³⁷ BOA. TS. MA. D. 2905.

¹¹³⁸ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 142.

¹¹³⁹ Ada, "Osmanlı," 66.

¹¹⁴⁰ Ada, "Osmanlı," 73-74.

organizing charity events, which were called Compassion Bazaar (*Şefkat Pazarı*).¹¹⁴¹

In the cities without official women's branches, wives of the prominent figures also took part in collecting donations. In Erzurum for example, the wife of Allahverdian and Psikhari were approached by the committee members and were invited to support the ORCS through subscriptions.¹¹⁴²

Wives of prominent figures in İstanbul organized a bazaar for the wounded soldiers as well. Wassa Efendi's wife, Catherine Wassa, with the contribution of wives of prominent figures, had the idea of establishing a bazaar for the wounded Ottoman soldiers and published an advertisement, calling for the people of İstanbul to contribute by sending their offerings to the house of Wassa Efendi.¹¹⁴³ She was also an honorary member of the Red Crescent Society.¹¹⁴⁴ Wife of Hilmi Paşa, Zehra Hanım, used her elite network to increase support for the Society. Her friendship with Louise-Helene Autard de Bragard, the wife of Ferdinand de Lesseps, who was a member of the Paris Red Cross Committee, proved useful in aiding the wounded Ottoman soldiers.¹¹⁴⁵ Nuriyan Efendi's comments on her efforts are worth underlining. After expressing her zeal and devotion, Nuriyan Efendi commented on her modesty by underlining that she tried to hide her efforts. On Nuriyan Efendi's suggestion, the committee decided to send letters of thanks to these two women. The modesty that Nuriyan Efendi expressed reveals the reasons for the lack of evidence of Ottoman women's contribution to war efforts. Pieces of evidence gathered through newspapers suggests that the aid campaign was well attended by women, including

¹¹⁴¹ Organization of temporary bazaars for charity purposes was later repeated in the early 1910's as part of women's activities relating to the Red Crescent. The Red Crescent later sold Compassion Stamps (*Şefkat Pulu*) in the 20th century. Thus, it is safe to argue that the aid work of this period set an example for the future practices.

¹¹⁴² *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 271.

¹¹⁴³ *La Turquie*, December 2-3, 1877, p.1.

¹¹⁴⁴ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, p.4

¹¹⁴⁵ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 282.

the Muslim Ottomans. Nuriyan Efendi indeed remarked on her identity by calling her “*une dame turque*” to underline the contribution of Ottoman Muslim women of status in the campaign.¹¹⁴⁶

4.2.5.6 ORCS and the discourse of victimhood

As indicated above, the Ottoman rhetoric rested on the Geneva Convention, and it emphasized the Ottoman soldiers as victims of war, as legitimate subjects deserving aid. In an annex to circular 4, ORCS sent a list of items which were urgent needs to the other Red Crescent branches. In this Circular by the ORCS committee, there is no explicit use of the words Ottoman or soldier and instead a more ambiguous term is preferred “victims of the Russo-Ottoman war” (*les victimes de la guerre Russo-Turque*).¹¹⁴⁷ When sending the circular to the Ottoman representatives, Server Paşa preferred to use the term “the brave defenders of our country” (*pour servir au secours des braves défenseurs de la patrie*).¹¹⁴⁸ Such use of general terms by the Committee, helped the Ottoman authorities to shift the international language from “barbarous Turk” and the helpless Ottoman soldier to victims of war. Such a rhetoric also allowed for placing the wounded Ottoman soldiers in the same category as the wounded Russian soldiers or the civilians, having a neutralizing effect. In another circular, the Society again used a neutral language in its call for aid. Underlining the deteriorating conditions, the Society asked the other branches to increase their zeal and sacrifice and come to the aid of the Ottomans.¹¹⁴⁹ Thus the Ottoman rhetoric rested on neutralizing aid.

¹¹⁴⁶ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 282.

¹¹⁴⁷ BOA. HR. SFR. 3. 250/31.

¹¹⁴⁸ Server Paşa send this circular to the Ottoman diplomatic representatives on August 16, 1877. From Server Paşa to the Ottoman Representatives, August 16, 1877, no. 676. Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

¹¹⁴⁹ BOA. HR. SFR. 3. 250/30.

ORCS not only helped utilize a “neutral” rhetoric, but it allowed for the Ottoman state to engage with international relief organizations directly and more systematically. With its establishment, the Red Crescent was now the main institution in collecting international donations. The Indian donations were now sent to ORCS via the Imperial Ottoman Bank, instead of Stafford House Committee. By way of being part of this international committee, the Ottoman state could also inform the international committee, about the Russian noncompliance with the Geneva Convention. When Mr. Moynier informed the Central Committee of ORCS about the Russian influence over the Central Committee of the International Red Cross which could result in the publication of a manifesto, treating the Ottoman Empire negatively about accordance with the rules of war, Central Committee contacted Server Paşa asking for documentation of Russian violations of the Convention and the Ottoman measures taken against it.¹¹⁵⁰ Thus their membership in the humanitarian club granted the opportunity for publicizing the Ottoman perspective.

4.2.5.7 Palaces, villas and factories in the service of the wounded and other charity events

ORCS instigated new ways of expressing loyalty and participating in the mobilization campaign. One of these is the establishment of temporary hospitals in palaces and villas during the Russian War. Advertising his benevolence, Abdülhamid II had opened the imperial palace to the wounded and this was propagated in the newspapers.¹¹⁵¹ Beylerbeyi Palace was initially opened for both the wounded and the

¹¹⁵⁰ From the Central Committee of the ORCS to Server Paşa, October 15, 1877, no. 964, Kuneralp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

¹¹⁵¹ Abdülhamid II had also allowed his summer palace at Kağıthane to be turned into a hospital by the Society, but upon investigation the Committee found it unfit for a hospital. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 125.

refugees. Due to the increasing number of wounded in the city, the Palace was later turned into a hospital, directed by the ORCS.¹¹⁵² (See figure 17 for the Beylerbeyi Hospital.) Another ORCS hospital was the Kavak Hospital, and Abdülhamid II allowed the use of one steamship for transferring wounded soldiers. A camping site used by the ORCS was located outside the Sepetçi Kasrı, close to the Topkapı Palace.¹¹⁵³



Figure 17. Ottoman Red Crescent Society Hospital, Beylerbeyi Palace¹¹⁵⁴

¹¹⁵² The increasing number of wounded and the lack of beds in the Beylerbeyi Hospital forced the Ottoman government to evacuate the refugees from the Palace and increase the capacity of the ORCS Hospital. *Paşa, Mızıka and Ağalar* sections of the Palace were reserved for the wounded soldiers. BOA. İ. DH. 755/61649, 9.09.1877.

¹¹⁵³ For a list of palaces and villas, which were turned into hospitals for the refugees see Ada, "Osmanlı," 115.

¹¹⁵⁴ Ottoman Red Crescent Album. Retrieved from the Gigord (Pierre de) Collection of Photographs of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey, made available online by Online Archives of California. Retrieved from <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt038nd8h9/dsc/>

This was a symbolic gesture, yet the upper echelons of Ottoman society mimicked such acts of compassion. Tunuslu Mahmud Paşa, who had initially allowed his mansion in Sultanahmet to be used for the wounded and the refugees, decided to open the doors of his summer mansion in Beylerbeyi for the establishment of a temporary hospital. Such acts of benevolence needed to be published in the newspapers, so the imperial press bureau was encouraged for advertising Mahmud Paşa's efforts.¹¹⁵⁵ The Allatini's in Salonica were also involved in a similar philanthropic display by opening the doors of their factory in Kapucılar to the wounded.¹¹⁵⁶

Charity events continued to be held across the Empire for collecting donations to the Red Crescent fund. Ladies in İstanbul organized a concert in Galatasaray and collected donations to establish a hospital for the wounded.¹¹⁵⁷ Osman Hamdi Bey, the Municipal of the sixth district, organized a charity ball in cooperation with Mr. Zarifi in the Municipal Garden in Taksim in support of the ORCS.¹¹⁵⁸ Hamdi Bey collaborated with three other people, Cemal Bey, Zühdi Efendi, and Pascal Zanni, in the organization of the committee. Additional ferries which were scheduled specifically for the event, which transported the audience from

¹¹⁵⁵ BOA. DH. MKT. 1320/83. 4.09.1877.

¹¹⁵⁶ Anastassiadou, *Tanzimat Çağında*, 347. While these acts were philanthropic gestures which expressed individual commitment to the patriotic cause, with the increasing number of refugees in the capital, providing temporary residence to refugees turned into a serious conundrum both for the state and the residences of the city. The public buildings, mosques, *hans*, educational facilities were all opened to accommodate refugees however these efforts were not enough as increasing numbers of refugees poured into the city. Thus, the state started to accommodate refugees in the empty residences without consulting the property owners. For the accommodation of refugees see İpek, *Rumeliden Anadolu'ya Göçler*: 63-66.

¹¹⁵⁷ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 116.

¹¹⁵⁸ Ada, "Osmanlı," 87. For an overview of the philanthropic efforts see, Ada, "Osmanlı," 86-90. For an advertisement of the event see *Ceride-i Havâdis*, 3477. August 20, 1877. For the article informing the readers that two thousand tickets were already sold prior to the event see *Ceride-i Havâdis*, 3479, p.3.

different parts of the city.¹¹⁵⁹ These organizations contributed to the enhancement of the patriotic campaign. By mobilizing modern transportation methods in charity events, they represented a particular urban experience and helped create a sense of belonging among the upper-class residents of the city. Abdülhamid II did not turn a blind eye to the event and declared that the imperial band (*Muzıka-yi Hümayun*) was going to take the stage. A total of 130,000 piastres were collected in this event.

Other philanthropic events were held throughout the city and trams, in addition to ferries were utilized.¹¹⁶⁰ A concert for the wounded soldiers was held in Olimpi garden, in Büyük Ada, with a ticket price of twenty *kaime*. Another ball took place at the Lorando Mansion in Moda, on August 30, 1877.¹¹⁶¹ High society joined this event with their families.¹¹⁶² Concerts, opera performances, and theater performances stand out as important examples of integrating artistic forms into expressions of patriotism. The donations were transferred to ORCS and some of the people who organized such events were invited to Central Committee meetings. Hamdi Bey for example, was invited to the ORCS Central Committee meeting, during which he expressed his thoughts about the concert and received messages of

¹¹⁵⁹ One ferry was organized to travel from the Islands to Kadıköy and Kabataş. Another one started its journey from Büyükdere, travelling along the shores of the Bosphorus, stopping at Üsküdar and arriving in Kabataş. (*Ceride-i Havâdis*, 3482, p.4)

¹¹⁶⁰ One such event took place in Kadıköy and the underground company (*Galata Tünel Kumpanyası*) made sure residents of Pera could have easy access to the event. The company also declared to donate the revenue from these specific trips to the relief fund. *Ceride-i Havâdis*, 3486, p.4.

¹¹⁶¹ Organized by the Kadıköy Municipal Council and under the guidance of Galip Paşa, the event was postponed to August 30 and preparations were announced in *La Turquie*. *La Turquie*, August 22, 1877, p.1.

¹¹⁶² The announcement underlined that certain measures were implemented to make sure that the family members would not be disturbed. Single women were not allowed, to ensure the propriety of the event. *La Turquie*, August 22, 1877, p.1.

gratitude from the committee.¹¹⁶³ In a similar manner, the organizers of the concert in Kadıköy were invited to the Central Committee.¹¹⁶⁴

Another interesting event of the period, organized in support of ORCS (expressed as “*Croissant*” in *La Turquie*) was the performance of a war song titled Plevna, which was well received by the audience. The newspaper announced another performance of this song by a female artist from the Eldorado in Pera and commented that the song could soon become a national anthem.¹¹⁶⁵ The patriotic manifestations continued to exist in different artistic productions in support of the ORCS.

4.2.6 Competence, documentation and finances

Macpherson, one of the British surgeons, narrates an instance in which there is evidently a moment of tension between the British doctors, Ottoman government and Baron Mundy.¹¹⁶⁶ Initially participating in the organization of a special field ambulance, under the coordination of Baron Mundy, Macpherson was in the end frustrated when this project was halted and that they had to wait in İstanbul for a

¹¹⁶³ According to the Committee report, he expressed his happiness in contributing to the philanthropic and patriotic activities and articulated his wish to continue contributing to the relief campaign. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 223-224.

¹¹⁶⁴ Head of the organizing committee, İskender Efendi attended the Central Committee meeting, handed over to the committee 1,030 *kaimes* and 100 piastres. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 190.

¹¹⁶⁵ *La Turquie*, October 8, 1877.

¹¹⁶⁶ Baron Mundy was a professor of military medicine at the University of Vienna, and he was known for his innovations in ambulance services. Mundy joined the aid efforts to the Ottoman army through the Blantyre fund. Ada, “Osmanlı,” 36. He was appointed as an honorary member to the ORCS in September 1877. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 165. He participated in the Central Committee of ORCS, and he built a stretcher in İstanbul, based on the Percy stretcher model and presented it in one of the central committee meetings. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 168. Baron Mundy was initially vested with the duty to form an ambulance service, however the Seraskeriat did not provide him with soldiers to work as stretch bearers. Therefore, Mundy took charge of organizing the corps of stretch bearers himself. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 180. Soon, the Sultan informed the Central Committee that Baron Mundy’s services would be changed and that he needed to serve in a higher position. This was due to his distinguished merit and the recommendation of the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador. Eventually Baron Mundy was appointed as the head surgeon of the Sirkeci Hospital. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 183.

week for the necessary paperwork before their dispatch to the field. He complains about his time in the city and narrates that he had his “first experience of Turkish procrastination.”¹¹⁶⁷ What made Macpherson furious however, was a rumor that the British surgeons were going to be examined by the Ottoman medical council. The Red Crescent committee, according to him was composed of “Turks, Levantines, Armenians, and Greeks [which] contained the very best elements for the development of fraud and intrigue” and the Ottoman medical profession was “in its infancy.”¹¹⁶⁸ The proposal therefore resulted in a crisis, and he claims that Baron Mundy threatened the Ottoman representatives by claiming that if such an examination was to happen, the British surgeons would also examine their examiners. Mundy’s response ended the crisis, and the British surgeons were not examined.

The Red Crescent official publication is silent on this issue and Macpherson’s narrative is the only one to express such a tension. Despite the lack of evidence in support of this event, the Ottoman military medical regulation was clear on the issue of competence; foreign medical personnel were required to pass a qualifying examination.¹¹⁶⁹ Wartime measures, however, necessitated temporary revisions to the regulations and the need to fasten the pace of bureaucratic procedure resulted in frictions between Ottoman institutions. There were different mechanisms for foreign doctors to engage with the Ottoman army during the Balkan Crisis. Institutions deployed their own mechanisms for selecting and sending medical personnel. The

¹¹⁶⁷ Macpherson, *Under the Red Crescent*, 27. The emphasis on delaying certain actions or not responding quickly is a common theme in the British narratives and is generally utilized as an essential element of the Orient. It contributes to the perception of the Orient as stagnant, and unchanging and radically peculiar implying that the European agents were action oriented and scientifically informed. Said, *Orientalism*, 98.

¹¹⁶⁸ Macpherson, *Under the Red Crescent*, 27-28.

¹¹⁶⁹ See above for details.

Ottoman government also initiated their own mechanism for enrolling foreign doctors.

The NAS mechanism for choosing surgeons was to assign a committee member with this duty. A certain Mr. Mac Cormac, who was a member of the Medical Sub-Committee along with another doctor from St. Thomas's Hospital, was responsible for determining the surgeons and he decided to select all of them from St. Thomas's Hospital, claiming that discipline would be easily maintained between men who came from the same medical school. The main criteria for selecting surgeons, was to identify those "who would recognize the necessity of acting under discipline."¹¹⁷⁰ Prior medical experience seems not to be on the criteria list and some of the personal narratives underline the young European doctors' lack of experience. These missions helped them to enhance their careers and gain hands-on experience. At the same time, there were more experienced surgeons, who had proved their skills under wartime pressure and were now taking on more responsibility in leading groups and directing hospitals. Selected doctors would then proceed to the Ottoman Embassy in London to receive their travel expenses and sign their contracts.

Another way of serving the Ottoman army was signing contracts directly with the government without any intermediary humanitarian institution. The Ottoman government published official calls in the Western newspapers, inviting doctors and surgeons. Charles Ryan was one of these doctors who applied the Ottoman government after seeing such an advertisement in the British Press.¹¹⁷¹ The Ottoman embassies in the major cities such as London and Washington,¹¹⁷² received

¹¹⁷⁰ *Report of the*, 1877, 9.

¹¹⁷¹ Ryan and Sanders, *Under the Red Crescent*.

¹¹⁷² Between March and early April 1877, The Ottoman Ambassador in Washington received applications from American doctors and surgeons, who volunteered to serve with the Ottoman army if the Empire were to be engaged in a war with Russia. Their applications involved letters of recommendations from American doctors in prominent positions. Some of the doctors underlined

applications from foreign doctors who were willing to serve with the Ottoman army in the conflicts. These doctors applied to the Ottoman representatives with letters of recommendation and letters indicating their motivations in aiding the Ottoman army.¹¹⁷³

Of the twenty doctors who signed their contracts in July 1877, Robert Forman, was the nephew of British admiral Sir W. King Hall.¹¹⁷⁴ Correspondence between the Ottoman embassy and the Admiral indicates that he was personally involved in the enlisting his nephew.¹¹⁷⁵ Personal connections were deployed in engaging with the Ottoman army.

The surgeons signed their contracts with Musurus Paşa and their minimum time of service was one year.¹¹⁷⁶ The doctors were under the service of the Superior Council of Military Health and the commanders in chief of the army corps to which they were assigned. Their salaries ranged between 300 to 500 francs a month,¹¹⁷⁷ with an addition of rations which would be the same amount of an adjutant-major (*kolağası*) and a forage for one horse. The doctors were paid 25 pounds for their travel expenses.¹¹⁷⁸

having seen advertisements in the American press, which called for the support of American surgeons. Some of the letters are dated to April 1877, and July 1877 indicating that surgeons continued to apply after the declaration of war. One letter indicates that an Ottoman representative from Paris had arrived in the United States to enroll American surgeons in the Ottoman service. BAO. HR. SFR. 100/27. American support during the period was not limited to the doctors' applications. The American Red Cross Society also supported the wounded Ottoman soldiers. See 4.3 for the American donations.

¹¹⁷³ Charles Ryan writes that he went to the embassy with a letter of recommendation from his Professor in Edinburg.

¹¹⁷⁴ William King Hall was an admiral in the British Navy, commanding various war ships throughout his life. He participated in the Crimean War and the Second Opium War.

¹¹⁷⁵ BOA. HR. SFR. 3. 255/12.

¹¹⁷⁶ Please see Appendix for an example of a contract.

¹¹⁷⁷ 13.9 and 23.3 Ottoman lira per month. For the conversion, the following rate is used: 0.0466 Ottoman lira for one franc. This rate is acquired from an archival document, in which the salary paid to an English doctor is documented. In this document 1165 piastres were paid to the doctor in advance as the equivalent of 250 francs, which is half of his monthly salary. BOA. HR. SFR. 3. 238/45.

¹¹⁷⁸ Musurus Paşa received 20 cheques with 25 pounds from the Imperial Ottoman Bank in London, on July 14, 1877. BOA. HR. SFR. 3. 255/12-01.

If they were to be disabled during the conflict, they would be entitled to a pension according to the Ottoman Code of Military Pensions. The doctors were to present themselves to the Superior Council of Military Health to receive their salaries. If the doctors wished to terminate their service at the end of the war, they would receive twenty-five pounds to go back to England, however if they ended their service at the end of one year, they would not be able to claim the twenty-five pounds. Lastly, these doctors were expected to follow the “rules of discipline” and “of military honor and dignity” and not to perform any “act hostile to the Imperial Ottoman Government.”¹¹⁷⁹

The Ottoman embassy in London was responsible for making the initial inquiries into the candidate doctors. Doctor John Gregory Forbes, of the British embassy was responsible to identify the doctors’ merit and fitness for the duty (*ehliyet ve istihkakları*).¹¹⁸⁰ Gregory Forbes was even considered to be decorated with a Mecîdî Order for his services for the Ottoman army in examining the foreign doctors.¹¹⁸¹

The first group of NAS volunteers of the Serbian War - composed of seventeen people, including administrative staff, surgeons, dressers, nurses and a transport agent - were on their way to the conflict region by the end of August, carrying with them their passports, certificates and a Red Cross brassard.¹¹⁸² As was the case with NAS doctors, SHC surgeons travelled to Ottoman lands with

¹¹⁷⁹ BOA. HR. SFR.3. 255/12-4.

¹¹⁸⁰ BOA. ATASE OSKH 110/9/1/2/15/0/0/35. 31.10.1876.

¹¹⁸¹ BOA. ATASE ORH 110/9/1/3/95/0/19. 14.11.1876.

¹¹⁸² These people had with them the following documents: Foreign office passport with two stamps, by the Ottoman Embassy in London and the Society; a certificate signed by the Society representatives; a brassard with a Red Cross and a stamp of the Society; and a pay certificate. The Society asked for the Ottoman and Serbian governments to include their stamps on the brassard. From Douglas Galton to Mr. Lister, August 26, 1876. FO 424/43. Document number 354.

documentation from their institutions. Upon their arrival in the Ottoman capital, they were required to submit their documents to the Ottoman authorities.

In some cases, diploma copies were sent by the English foreign office to the Ottoman authorities.¹¹⁸³ One of the doctors who signed his contract in July 1877, Doctor John Hoffner Malcolm Gallwey faced some difficulties in proving his credentials in the Seraskeriat. This is evident from his correspondence with Musurus Paşa, asking him to provide the War Ministry with information regarding his contract.¹¹⁸⁴ Upon their arrival, the doctors would present themselves to the Ottoman authorities and would eventually receive necessary Ottoman documentations for their journeys such as *tezkire* and *buyuruldu*.¹¹⁸⁵

By the time of the Russian War and after the establishment of the ORCS, all paperwork relating to the enrollment of foreign doctors were done through ORCS and then transferred to the Ministry of War for approval. The ORCS had a specific sub-committee for choosing personnel for the ambulances.¹¹⁸⁶ The stretcher bearers were required to receive military and medical instructions, after being examined by a commission, which was set up by the health administration.¹¹⁸⁷ After the initial inquiry by the ORCS, the documentation was then sent to the Ministry of War, for an inspection of their diplomas. In December, the ORCS central committee, for example, wished to appoint four doctors, and the ORCS document, written by Arif

¹¹⁸³ BOA. ATASE ORH 110/9/1/3/81/0/57. 10.10.1876.

¹¹⁸⁴ Musurus Paşa informed Mustafa Paşa, the Minister of War on the following day that John Hoffner Malcolm Gallwey was going to serve with the Ottoman Army. BOA. HR. SFR.3. 255/12-28. 31.10.1877.

¹¹⁸⁵ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 226.

¹¹⁸⁶ This sub-committee, the First Section, was responsible for the organization of ambulances, choosing their personnel, organizing their movements and establishing control mechanisms. The committees were designated in a general meeting on October 13, 1877. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 209. Dr. Bartoletti, Dr. Baron Mundy, Dr. Serviçen, Dr. Sivastopoulo and later in 1878 Mr. Leval participated in this commission. Ada, "Osmanlı," 52.

¹¹⁸⁷ Military instructions were provided by Count Szechenyi and medical instructions were given by Dr. Sevastopoulo. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 112.

Bey, indicates that they had decided where these doctors would serve.¹¹⁸⁸ The procedure sometimes took a long time, so the Society submitted a letter asking the authorities to speed up the bureaucratic process. Two doctors were allowed to proceed with their services, Mr. Hendrik and Mr. Kirkor Şakir, because the first was a known Doctor of Military Medicine and the latter had an Ottoman diploma. It seems that the two other doctors still had to wait. The third Doctor Mr. Karoly was eventually going to work in the ORCS ambulance in Erzurum.¹¹⁸⁹

These delays turned out to be a problem due to the urgent need for medical personnel with the influx of wounded soldiers and refugees. ORCS central committee discussed this issue in one of their meetings, and the bureaucratic requirements of appointing British doctors was simplified. Now the British doctors would only require a simple certificate issued by the British Embassy and the central committee requested that this procedure would also apply to doctors from other countries.¹¹⁹⁰

The economic setbacks prevented the Ottoman government from paying the doctors' salaries regularly. Some doctors had to request the intermediation of people in influential positions to get the Ottoman government to pay the amount they owed.¹¹⁹¹ Others used financial issues as a pretext for their hesitations about the services they were required to conduct.¹¹⁹² Issues regarding the irregularity of

¹¹⁸⁸ BOA. ATASE. ORH. 110/9/1/3/113/0/12. 29.11.1877

¹¹⁸⁹ BOA. ATASE ORH 110/9/1/3/113/0/12.

¹¹⁹⁰ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II, 247.

¹¹⁹¹ Charles Ryan describes how he asked a certain Mr. Wrench, who had been living in İstanbul for a long time and knew high ranking Ottoman bureaucrats, to help him get his money from the government. Ryan and Sanders, *Under the Red Crescent*, 311.

¹¹⁹² Claiming that he was not paid the promised amount of money in the promised currency, Doctor Louis March decided to end his contract unilaterally and set about for England. Upon the inquiry into the situation, the Ottoman government did not verify his claims and instead demanded that he should pay back whatever amount he received. His main discomfort was that instead of going to Scutari (İşkodra province) as requested, he preferred to stay in İstanbul. When this did not realize, he broke his contract and went back. BOA. HR. SFR. 03. 238/45.

payments could easily turn into a diplomatic issue.¹¹⁹³ Captivity of Ottoman soldiers complicated the matter further. When the Ottoman troops were taken as war prisoners, the doctors who were serving with these units were supposed to continue to receive their salaries however, not all were lucky to receive the designated amount. The remaining part of their salaries were intended to be paid in installments by the Ottoman state.¹¹⁹⁴

4.2.7 How the doctors perceived the Ottomans and their duty

Individual commitment to helping strangers was a defining characteristic of the medical profession, however volunteering for the war was not just a response to the suffering of the people. Other factors such as the need to gain hands-on experience and participating in an adventure also motivated the medical volunteers.¹¹⁹⁵ The ways in which their experiences were narrated in the press, in their correspondence and their memoirs helped build up a specific European identity resting on scientific and moral superiority, which devised their view of the Ottoman medical professionals.

Championing the British medical superiority, Dr. Leslie, reported from Nish that the Ottoman army lacked any efficient medical staff, and that the situation could only be remedied with the arrival of British surgeons.¹¹⁹⁶ Leslie described the Ottoman ambulance staff as “very polite, but nothing more” and claimed that they try

¹¹⁹³ Another moment of tension aroused when the Ottoman state failed to make the necessary payments to the Austrian doctors. Austro-Hungarian government regarded this as the maltreatment of the foreign medical personnel and the tension continued throughout 1877. Safvet Paşa aimed to assure the Austro-Hungarian authorities that Ottoman government was taking all the necessary steps regarding the payment of these doctors. BOA. HR. SYS. 1398, 22. January 1877. Austro-Hungarian government was not satisfied with the Ottoman state initiatives and circulated a note to warn doctors who were planning to participate with the Ottoman army, regarding the maltreatment. BOA. HR. TH. 25/64. December 1877.

¹¹⁹⁴ Four Austro-Hungarian doctors who were contractually bonded to the Ottoman army, had not received their salaries entirely. During the time of the correspondence their battalions were taken as POW's. BOA. DH.MKT. 1324/26.

¹¹⁹⁵ Gill identifies similar motivations of the humanitarians during the Franco-Prussian War. See Gill, “Rational Administration.”

¹¹⁹⁶ *Report of the*, 1877, 25.

to delay their duties, which the British prevent. Challenging the total lack of Ottoman sanitary system, Dr Bernard Pitts reported that the Ottoman army at Nish had about fifty ambulance tents when the British doctors arrived, however Pitts also underlined that they were “totally insufficient.”¹¹⁹⁷

The Ottoman doctors are portrayed as incompetent and ignorant in most of the narratives. Sometimes, they are differentiated according to their ethnic or confessional identities, comparing one ethno-religious groups to another. Armand Leslie claims that the Ottoman ambulance, which was composed predominantly of Christians, was useless. In a rather derogatory tone, he equates the Ottoman irregular soldiers and Ottoman medical personnel in their ignorance and disorder.¹¹⁹⁸ However, not all British doctors were totally negative in their narratives. Some doctors praised the Greek local doctors for their good work and described the “Turkish” – i.e. Muslim - medical personnel as “incompetent and negligent.” Macpherson praises the good work of Greek and Armenian surgeons who received their education in Europe but finds the Ottoman medical system and personnel insufficient.¹¹⁹⁹

Ignorance, incompetence and disorder seems to be the common denominator of the narratives which served to create a specific English identity, justify the English presence at the seat of war and to hinder any glorification of the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman soldiers suffering against the Russian Empire provided the necessary justification for the English involvement in relief efforts. Such a narrative also

¹¹⁹⁷ *Report of the*, 1877, 27.

¹¹⁹⁸ “In sight of innumerable and awe struck ignorant Bashi-Bazouks and Christian surgeons in the Turkish service.” From Armand Leslie to Loyd-Lindsay, August 1, 1877. BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.14.

¹¹⁹⁹ Macpherson, *Under the Red Crescent*, 29.

worked against the claims that neutral aid during times of conflict could serve for the continuation of war.¹²⁰⁰

The disorderly nature of the Ottoman military medical practices was extended to the Ottoman army. Ryan narrates that his adventures could only be possible in the Eastern armies, as opposed to the “rigid discipline under which medical officers do their work in other European armies.”¹²⁰¹ Even the well-organized hospitals, such as the Ottoman Military Hospital in Rustchuk, which was directed by Ohannes Bey, lacked the necessary sanitary arrangements.¹²⁰²

Ottoman officers were criticized for not acting according to the needs of the situation. Other times, when they acted cautiously and for the benefit of the wounded soldiers, this time they were criticized for instigating emergency measure when it was not necessary.¹²⁰³ When viewed from the British perspective, it seems as if whatever Ottoman medical staff did, there was something wrong with it. Accentuating their superiority, one British surgeon claimed to have received the authority to punish Ottoman doctors and dressers if they neglected patients.¹²⁰⁴

Red Crescent doctors arriving in Philippopolis (*Filibe/Plovdiv*) were described as “utterly destitute (surgically speaking)” and the wounded who were

¹²⁰⁰ This argument was brought up against NAS by initiatives who helped the civilians. According to their view, helping the wounded soldiers meant the prolongation of the conflict. See 4.1 for details.

¹²⁰¹ Ryan and Sanders, *Under the Red Crescent*.

¹²⁰² Published in *The British Medical Journal*, an excerpt from Dr. Hayes’s letter reveals the British medical gaze towards the Ottoman medical personnel. According to him, the hospital is “well organized in all its details except sanitary matters, which are generally much neglected by the medical officers of the Turkish army.” *The British Medical Journal*, no.876, October 13, 1877, p.540

¹²⁰³ One example of such a narrative may be found in an extract from Dr. Hayes’s letter, published in *The British Medical Journal*. When 94 wounded arrive in Shumla, Ottoman military authorities wanted to respond quickly. Due to the lack of carts to carry the wounded, the authorities took the town carriages, emptying them of people and their luggage, and placed “vermin-covered soldiers” to these carriages. Dr. Hayes commented that this was not necessary and that the soldiers could have waited a few hours. “The Sick and Wounded in the Russo-Turkish War,” *The British Medical Journal*, vol.2, no.876, October 13, 1877, p.540.

¹²⁰⁴ Extract from Dr. Neylan’s Letter. “The Sick and Wounded in the Russo-Turkish War,” *The British Medical Journal*, vol.2, no.876, October 13, 1877, p.541.

“brought by the Turks [were] in a dreadful condition.”¹²⁰⁵ Another derogatory description of the Ottoman medical personnel, which was published in *The British Medical Journal*, claims that the Turkish head doctor was totally ignorant about managing hospitals or “directing surgeons or dressers, who are quite as stupid about their work and as careless.”¹²⁰⁶ *The British Medical Journal* seems to have a preference over reports which would contribute to the construction of a specific British identity by way of claiming medical and scientific authority and by objectifying the Ottoman medical practice.¹²⁰⁷ In addition to competence over medical issues, the British doctors claim to have superior organizational skills. Reports also underline the insufficiency or inadequacy of the medical items.¹²⁰⁸ These observations should be regarded with reservation and may instead be interpreted as a strategy of making the British doctors’ experiences serve to justify the colonial attitude through claiming superiority over medical knowledge.

The emphasis on the lack of organizational skills not only depicts the Ottoman doctors as incapable, inactive and ineffective but also constructs a specific kind of medical expertise and form of discipline. Medical expertise and discipline are bodies of knowledge which occupy a crucial position in the construction of the subject-object relationship from a Foucauldian perspective.¹²⁰⁹ In “The Subject and Power” Foucault traces the relation between power relations and the formation of

¹²⁰⁵ Extract of a letter from Dr. Neylan. “The Sick and Wounded in the Russo-Turkish War.” *The British Medical Journal*, vol.2, no.876, October 13, 1877, p.541.

¹²⁰⁶ Extract from a letter from Dr. Menassian. “The Sick and Wounded in the Russo-Turkish War” *The British Medical Journal*, vol.2, no.876, October 13, 1877, p.542.

¹²⁰⁷ It is important to underline that this journal also published reports about the Russian atrocities and the Ottoman diplomats utilized these reports to support their arguments about Russia’s violation of just warfare conduct. See below for this discussion.

¹²⁰⁸ Letter from Bernard Pitts to Col. Loyd-Lindsay, December 10, 1876. *Report of the*, 1877, p.27.

¹²⁰⁹ Tracing the relationship between the object and the subject within the discourse of modernity, Foucault posits that developing a body of knowledge out of objects is at the same time the creation of a specific type of subject. This subject is the Cartesian individual who is rational and active. Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 783.

subjects. According to Foucault, the making of the individual subject rests on a specific form of power relation. Here Foucault uses “subject” as “someone tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge, which is different than a “subject” who is controlled by someone else.”¹²¹⁰ The former is born out of a specific power relation which “applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize, and which others have to recognize in him.”¹²¹¹ The theorization of the subject in relation to power and knowledge thus illuminates the British doctors’ narratives about their experiences in the Ottoman lands during the Balkan Crisis.

These narratives reveal the underlying tenets of a colonial perspective, yet in the broader sense, they exemplify the ways in which Western scientific endeavors were constructed through objectifying others with “inferior” capabilities. The “lack” of knowledge and expertise seems like a definitive element of the “oriental medical profession” for the audiences of these texts. The technical knowledge of the Western observers thus created an aura of power and dominance, and it was particularly this aura of power that contributed to the creation of the subject.

Resistance to surgical anesthesia and the use of morphia is another topic elaborated by the doctors. The development of anesthesia in surgeries was a crucial component in the development of modern medicine and it signified a larger social transformation. It represented a shift from “a traditional view of pain as unavoidable to a modern sense of pain as loathsome and unacceptable.”¹²¹² The emerging middle-class sensitivity to pain coincided with and contributed to developments in medicine.

¹²¹⁰ Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 781.

¹²¹¹ Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 781.

¹²¹² Halttunen, “Humanitarianism and the Pornography,” 310.

The traditional view of regarding pain as inevitable, transformed into a new social understanding of pain.¹²¹³ Thus when Dr. Bernard Pitts reported about the Ottoman Greek surgeons' resistance to the use of morphia and described that their initial resistance to chloroform eventually diminished¹²¹⁴ it was not just a different medical approach, but was reflective of a very specific characteristic of not being "modern" enough.

It is important to underline that during the Russian War, due to the lack of skilled surgeons and doctors, students of the military school were dispatched to the front, only to return to their studies after the war.¹²¹⁵ Thus, the derogatory comments about the Ottoman medical personnel need to be interpreted in relation to such war time emergency measures in addition to the construction of a hegemonic narrative. This narrative was explicitly related to expressions of a civilized attitude and scientific superiority. J. S. Young claims their (the British) work would produce good results "not only for the cause of humanity, but for the cause of civilization and toleration in religion."¹²¹⁶ Oriental elements were utilized to depict the soldiers' resistance to medical operations and interpreted in relation to martyrdom. The sympathy towards the Ottoman soldiers was articulated within the framework of "military virtue"¹²¹⁷ or the suffering poor fellows.

Despite the negative depiction of the Ottoman personnel in the front, Red Crescent is generally held with high esteem. The Society is praised for their efforts in

¹²¹³ Tracing this transition in the English literature, Halttunen argues that this shift was visible both in literature and the sensationalism of the penny magazines. Halttunen, "Humanitarianism and the Pornography," 311-313. For the relation between the reconstruction of pain and the increasing preoccupation with humanitarian sentiments please see the previous section.

¹²¹⁴ Letter from Bernard Pitts to Col. Loyd-Lindsay, December 10, 1876. *Report of the*, 1877, p.27

¹²¹⁵ Özbay, *Türk Asker Hekimliği*, 65.

¹²¹⁶ Letter from J. S. Young to Loyd-Lindsay, August 8, 1877. BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.20.

¹²¹⁷ Ryan and Sanders, *Under the Red Crescent*, ix.

providing service and materials and help speed up bureaucratic matters.¹²¹⁸ The Ottoman doctors are praised in one specific instance, for their helpful attitude towards the English doctors, who were held captive. Yet even this narrative had its limits.

Imbued with articles on donations and volunteers, the Ottoman press does not provide much information regarding the Ottoman attitude toward the British doctors. While the ORCS minutes are published in the press, there is little information which could illuminate the ways in which Ottoman intellectuals perceived the workings of the foreign doctors. Only one article in *Vakit* emphasized a certain reservation about the doctors. After thanking the ORCS for their efforts in the region, a letter from Philippopolis (*Filibe/Plovdiv*) informs the readers that some of the doctors had been performing maltreatment due to their lack of knowledge. The letter calls for the Committee to enroll knowledgeable and competent doctors.¹²¹⁹

4.2.8 Captivity of the British doctors

On January 1, 1878, Mr. Joseph Bell, *Illustrated London News* special artist and three medical personnel were taken as prisoners by the Russian forces near Kamarlı. The three doctors were Armand Leslie and Dr. Neville of NAS and Dr. Kirkpatrick of ORCS. British consul in Edirne, Mr. Blunt received news of the event, upon their arrival in Edirne on February 4, 1878. He immediately contacted Russian authorities and received word from the Russian Grand Duke that they should not have been taken as prisoners, and that there must have been a misunderstanding. The Grand

¹²¹⁸ One example of such high esteem may be found in J. S. Young's letter to Loyd Lindsay, September 9, 1877. BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.26.

¹²¹⁹ "... cemiyet cerrahlığa intihab edeceği zevatı evvela Türklere sadık ve insaniyet muhibb olduğuna ve sanatında mahareti diploma ile sabit bulunduğuna mezid-i itina eylemek lazımdır." *Vakit*, no.703, October 9, 1877, p.4.

Duke gave the necessary orders to set them free. In addition to the above-mentioned British subjects, Consul Blunt also demanded the release of Dr. Smith, Mr. Denton and Mr. Goodridge,¹²²⁰ who were also treated as POW's.¹²²¹

British diplomatic response rested on the Geneva Convention, and the illegitimacy of the act. Consul Blunt, in a letter to Nelidov¹²²² underlined the bad treatment that the doctors received and emphasized that none of them were subject to any prior complaint and that their paperwork was valid, all of which were addressed to the Russian authorities. Claiming the inappropriateness of the situation he added that the conditions through which they had suffered, were not even justifiable even if they had been prisoners of war.¹²²³ Inquiry of the British Ambassador in St. Petersburg revealed that the doctors and the correspondent were treated as prisoners notwithstanding General Gourko's orders.¹²²⁴

The Ottoman sources confirm that the imprisonment of the doctors happened when General Gourko left the region. When the Ottoman forces surrendered, the Russian General, upon the request of the doctors, had provided the Red Crescent staff with thirty stretch-bearers to carry the Ottoman wounded soldiers however after his departure, the doctors could not complete their task and were taken as prisoners.¹²²⁵ Unaware of the situation on the battlefield, the ORCS central committee discussed thanking the Russian Grand Duke for allowing the doctors in

¹²²⁰ Dr. Kirkpatrick, Dr. Smith, Mr. Denton, Jesser Coope and Mr. Goodridge served in the ORCS Ambulance number five, under Dr. Sarell. Their operations revolved around Orhaniye, Kamarlı, Taşkesen and Sofia. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol III, 114.

¹²²¹ From J. E Blunt to Mr. Layard, February 4, 1878. BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.2-3.

¹²²² A. I. Nelidov was an assistant to Ignatiev at the Russian embassy in İstanbul. During the War of 1877 he was attached to the Russian headquarters. Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*, xx.

¹²²³ From Consul Blunt to M. Nelidov, February 5, 1878. BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.7-9.

¹²²⁴ From Augustus Loftus to the Earl of Derby, February 19, 1878. A certain Russian captain, Captain Barunovski is claimed to be the person responsible for the captivity. BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.9.

¹²²⁵ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol III, 219.

the service of Red Cross and Red Crescent, who were at Taşkesen under Russian control, to continue their duty and aid the Ottoman wounded soldiers.¹²²⁶

The captivity of the British subjects lasted one month, during which they travelled from Kamarlı to Edirne on foot. Dr. Kirkpatrick's journal¹²²⁷ reveals the details of their imprisonment and the conflicts between the Russian and British doctors. During the initial Russian occupation, their hospital underwent a Russian inspection. The Russian doctors did not take the word of the British doctors, forcing them to remove all the bandages and see the wounds for themselves. They also stopped giving food or medicine to the wounded Ottoman soldiers and treated them roughly.¹²²⁸ Kirkpatrick's narrative not only reveals the anti-Russian sentiments of the British subjects but also exhibits the competition over the medical profession.¹²²⁹

During their journey, they were forced to travel on foot under harsh winter conditions, sleeping in houses, in prisons or police courts. They were insulted, robbed, and even beaten. They were forced to walk around towns or stand in streets in the open for hours, being insulted by the Russian soldiers.¹²³⁰ In line with captivity regulations, the imprisoned doctors received payments, and with these they could buy food and horses.¹²³¹ Kirkpatrick narrates that the Russian commandant in

¹²²⁶ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol II., 330.

¹²²⁷ Dr. Kirkpatrick's journal was submitted to British authorities as a testimony of Russian brutality.

¹²²⁸ Journal of Kirkpatrick, published in *Correspondence Respecting the Treatment of Doctors Leslie, Neville, Kirkpatrick, and Mr. Bell*. BRCA. WAN 3/1/4, p.3-6.

¹²²⁹ The Russian suspicion over the wounded soldiers could also be the result of a preoccupation with security however, the way in which this act is interpreted by one of the parties involved, implies a rivalry over medical matters. Participation of Russian medical personnel in military conflicts was interpreted as an attempt to claim medical superiority by the Russian doctors. (For details see chapter 4.1) This narrative thus serves as an example for such a competition.

¹²³⁰ Public display of war prisoners was a common practice in the earlier conflicts. The Ottoman POWs were forced to walk around and wait in towns, and were treated as objects of showcase, revealing the Russian military superiority during the Crimean War. The British POWs also received much attention in the Russian towns by the residents. Köremezli, "Osmanlı-Rus Harpleri."

¹²³¹ By the middle of the nineteenth century, regular payments to POW's had become a standard regulation of captivity between the Ottoman and Russian Empires. Like the British doctors, Ottoman POW's received payments which they could use for their needs. Prior to the nineteenth century, campaigns in the enemy territory resulted in plundering and enslavement of both civilians and soldiers, which meant economic gains for the participant of the army through booty and enslavement.

Kızanlık was merciful than the previous commanders they had engaged with and “some Turkish surgeons there were very kind to” to them.¹²³² Kirkpatrick’s narrative focuses on their bitter experiences and there is not much detail about situations in which he found himself comfortable however, the need to underline the “good attitude” of the Ottoman surgeons is interesting and may be interpreted as an example of a moment in which Kirkpatrick reconstituted himself and the identity of the “British Doctor” in response to an external stimuli.

Such moments in self-narratives are regarded as moments of “shifting selves” which defy a cohesive and confined self.¹²³³ The overarching characteristics of the British doctors as active, able, knowledgeable and superior people working with and at the same time against the Ottoman doctors, who are incompetent, ignorant or at best lazy seems to shift at this specific moment and “gives credit” to the people who generally serve as the “other” in their narratives, particularly with respect to medical profession. Curiously though, this shift had its limits, it was not all the Ottoman doctors but some who helped them. These Ottoman subjects, who treated them good

While the captives were not categorically slaves, they could easily be sold into slavery. The captives who were not sold into slavery were usually sent to the imperial arsenal in the capital and were forced to work as rowers. Some captives ended up being state slaves or private slaves, most captives indeed were ransomed. Resting on this feature of captivity, Will Smiley, in his pioneering study on the phenomenon of captivity between the Ottoman and Russian Empires, defines this earlier period as the “law of ransom.” Demographic and economic changes in the Russian Empire resulted in the diminishing of ransom, and the two Empires came to define, what Smiley labels as “the law of release.” With the increasing dependence of both governments on professional soldiers, the laws regulating release and captivity were transformed throughout the various conflicts. Turning into state assets, soldiers of the regular armies were eventually defined as prisoners of war, with bilateral agreements regulating their stay in the enemy territories, their salaries, and their return to their homelands. While the increasing influence of the law of nations is underlined in Smiley’s study, his major contribution is to identify the ways in which these transformations were enmeshed in the Ottoman-Russian encounters, evolving in each conflict. By the Ottoman-Russian War of 1828, the category of war prisoner was already an established phenomenon between the Ottoman and Russian states. By the second half of the nineteenth century, what had been a phenomenon strictly confined to the Ottoman-Russian context, was now becoming part of a larger discourse, one that had European states as actors with new terms such as being civilized, being in accordance with the European rules and conducts. Smiley, *From Slaves to Prisoners*.

¹²³² BRCA. WAN 3/1/4, p.5.

¹²³³ Katherine P. Ewing, in “The Illusion of Wholeness” argues that the notion of a “bounded, cohesive self” is illusory and instead proposes that both the construction of the self and its narration are shifting, and they respond to external or internal stimuli. Ewing, “*The Illusion of Wholeness*.”

in captivity, have no name or any institutional affiliation. It is not clear whether they were members of the Red Crescent or whether they were doctors employed through the Ottoman military administration but the fact that they treated the British subjects who were held captive in a positive manner is illustrative of a shift in the construction of the British identity at a moment when they needed help.

William Jesser Coope¹²³⁴ was serving in Plevna as an ambulance staff, carrying the wounded from the front when he was taken as a war prisoner after the Russian capture of Tellich.¹²³⁵ Upon arriving in the conflict zone, he witnessed that other British subjects, Doctor Vachell and Mr. Douglas, a dresser of the Red Crescent were taken as prisoners by the Russians.¹²³⁶ When Jesser Coope inquired into his condition, General Gourko answered with assurance that he would be handed to the Ottoman authorities in Rahova. He was then taken to Bogot, to meet the Grand Duke Nicholas. He was interrogated by the Grand Duke and was acclaimed a prisoner of war with the accusation of serving in the Ottoman army as a colonel.¹²³⁷ Cooper rejected the accusations by underlining his position as a stretcher bearer (*chef de brancardiers*).¹²³⁸ Dr. Vachell's report submitted to the ORCS central committee,

¹²³⁴ Jesser Coope was a British soldier who had participated in the Crimean War and had come to the Ottoman Empire to serve as a Brigade Inspector in the newly formed Gendarmerie corps organized by Valentine Baker. However, when the gendarmerie corps did not realize he volunteered to organize an ambulance service for the ORCS. Coope, *Prisoner of war*.

¹²³⁵ The capture of Tellich (Teliş) was the last crucial maneuver for the Russian forces in the Siege of Plevna. Tellich was captured on October 28, 1877. After an intense fire by the Russian forces under the command of General Gourko, İsmail Hakkı Paşa surrounded with all the units under his command. Greene, *Sketches of Army Life*, 387.

¹²³⁶ Ottoman correspondence names four British medical personnel as captives; Douglas, Nichols, Vachell and Lorendo. BOA. ATASE. ORH. 110/9/1/3/108/0/105. This document regards the imprisonment of these doctors as a violation of the Geneva Convention. Earlier in November, correspondence between Russian Grand Duke and the British diplomats recorded the captivity of two British doctors and a British Colonel. BOA. ATASE. ORH. 110/9/1/3/28/0/151. The British Colonel in question could possibly be Jesser Coope, indicating that he was not regarded as a humanitarian but a British military member working with the Ottoman Army. Colonel Nichols was an English doctor, who was possibly engaged with the Ottoman forces by individual application. From Server Paşa to Musurus Paşa, November 13, 1877, no. 1151. Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

¹²³⁷ Interrogation was part of the regular procedure for captivity which was followed by registration and the dispatch to designated captivity camps.

¹²³⁸ Coope, *A prisoner of war in Russia*, 189-195.

indicates that Coope and Lorando could not convince the Grand Duke about their position in the ambulance service and thus were taken as prisoners. Dr. Vachell and Dr. Douglas, on the other hand, were treated with consideration except for a statement which they had to sign under pressure from the Russian authorities and the recommendation of the English men in the camp.¹²³⁹

Cooper's captivity rested on the fact that he had lost his documents and his previous enrollment with the Gendarmerie force complicated the matter.¹²⁴⁰ Thus, he was not able to convince the Grand Duke that he was Red Crescent personnel.¹²⁴¹ His demand for inquiry into his service through diplomatic representatives was rejected leaving him with no other alternative than imprisonment. He had to travel a long distance with the Ottoman prisoners, spending time in the prisoner camps. *The Times* defined Coope's occupation "anomalous" and announced that him having the Sultan's commission as an officer of the gendarmerie corps and working as medical personnel wearing the Red Crescent brassard was not acceptable by the Russian authorities.¹²⁴² Evidence suggests that he might have silenced the fact that he did not have accurate documentation for serving as a Red Crescent member in his memoir. This explains why he was the only doctor to be taken as an official prisoner by the Russians.

¹²³⁹ *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol III. See below for the controversial report by the imprisoned British doctors Vachell and Douglas.

¹²⁴⁰ The fact that Red Cross armbands were sold throughout the Serbian conflict may have forced the Russian military administration to be skeptical about people with Red Cross armbands. See 4.1 for the sales of armbands during the Serbian-Ottoman War.

¹²⁴¹ Dr. Vachell also narrates that Cooper had failed to convince the Grand Duke that he was a humanitarian. See Doctor Vachell's report submitted to the Central Committee of ORCS. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol III, 218-220.

¹²⁴² *The Times*, November 7, 1877, p.5. The same article, written by *The Times* correspondent with the Russian Army, explains that the two other English doctors, Dr. Douglas and Dr. Vachell, were treated with great courtesy. The author however refrains from commenting that these two doctors were working with the Ottoman Red Crescent Society. Instead, the article defined the two Englishmen with their home institutions in England (St. Thomas and St. Mary's hospitals and the London Hospital).

The Ottoman authorities took measures to assure the safety of the British doctors. After an official inquiry into the situation,¹²⁴³ lieutenant general (*ferik*) Şevket Paşa from Orhaniye informed the Ministry of War that he had submitted a petition to the Russian general. He defined the captivity as a violation of the Geneva regulations, and as an act against humanity (*insaniyet*) and equity (*hakkaniyet*).¹²⁴⁴

On the Eastern front, Doctor Casson and Doctor Buckle, who were serving in the Lord Blantyre's unit, were taken as prisoners during the Russian occupation of Kars. Dr. Buckley had fallen ill with typhoid during the retreat of the Ottoman forces from Kars, therefore they could not travel with the Ottoman army. The two Englishmen started their journey to Erzurum after a week of the Ottoman retreat. When they arrived at the Russian outpost, they were taken to the Russian General Mihail Loris-Melikov. Dr. Casson demanded a safe passage to the Ottoman camp in Erzurum resting on the Geneva Convention but, in the pretext of the impossibility of safe passage, the Russian general did not allow them to travel. Referring to the Treaty of Paris instead of the Geneva Convention, the General expressed his doubts about their duty and allowed them to travel to Alexandropol (*Gümri*) from where there they could travel to Tbilisi (*Tiflis*).¹²⁴⁵

Their journey, which was full of delays, insults and a general hatred towards the Englishmen, was narrated in the *Daily Telegraph* with the title "Russians and the Red Cross." Casson ended his narrative with disparaging remarks about Russia "such are Russian civilization and Christianity."¹²⁴⁶ Although not officially taken as prisoners, Casson's journey should not have happened according to the Geneva Convention and Casson's rhetoric rested on underestimating Russia's religious and

¹²⁴³ BOA. ATASE. ORH. 110/9/1/3/31/0/62.

¹²⁴⁴ BOA. ATASE. ORH. 110/9/1/3/105/0 /11.

¹²⁴⁵ *The Daily Telegraph*, December 1, 1877.p.5.

¹²⁴⁶ *The Daily Telegraph*, December 1, 1877.p.5.

humanitarian discourse. In another article titled “Russia’s Holy Mission” Casson summarized the varied insults he had witnessed as an Englishman during his journey, and he commented sarcastically about General Mihail Loris-Melikov’s moral values when he decided to send the Ottoman prisoners from Kars to Erzurum instead of taking them under the protection of the Russian military authorities.¹²⁴⁷

After the fall of Kars, Russian authorities considered sending some of the prisoners, the wounded and the sick soldiers to Erzurum, which was against the Geneva Convention. The diplomatic correspondence regarding this issue referred to the articles of the Convention. Lord Loftus informed M. de Giers that the Russian authorities were considering sending thousands of wounded and sick soldiers to Erzurum from Kars, under heavy winter conditions and that was against the sixth article of the Geneva Convention.¹²⁴⁸ The Ottoman correspondence emphasized similar concerns.

Out of the two thousand wounded and sick soldiers, who were sent from Kars to Erzurum, only half of them could make it.¹²⁴⁹ Labelling this act as an attack on the laws of humanity and a cruel violation of the Convention, Server Paşa asked Musurus Paşa to inform the British government and urge them to take necessary measures against Russia.¹²⁵⁰ Concurrently the Ottoman prisoners’ march turned into a visual symbol of the war. Both the illustrators of the newspapers and famous painters of the period depicted the miserable conditions of the captive Ottoman soldiers’ journey.¹²⁵¹

¹²⁴⁷ “Russia’s Holy War,” *The Daily Telegraph*, December 27, 1877, p.3

¹²⁴⁸ From Augustus Loftus to Early of Derby, December 19, 1877. FO 424/63.

¹²⁴⁹ This number was much lower in an eye-witness account. Ryan claims out of the two thousand, only 317 made it to Erzurum, according to information he retrieved from Ahmed Muhtar Paşa. Ryan and Sanders, *Under the Red Crescent*, 333.

¹²⁵⁰ From Server Paşa to Musurus Paşa, December 25, 1877. FO 424/63.

¹²⁵¹ Romanian artist Nicolae Grigorescu painted the march of the Ottoman soldiers, and their portraits. Famous Russian artist Vasily Vereshchagin, who also participated in the war with the Russian Army,

According to captivity regulations, it was the duty of the Russian military authorities to take care of the wounded Ottoman captives. Sending these soldiers back to Ottoman territories was an explicit violation of the established rules. Taking into consideration the harsh winter conditions, there was no doubt that these soldiers could not make it to Erzurum. When the possibility of such an action reached the Ottoman authorities, they responded to it with reference to the sixth article in the Geneva Convention and underlined that it was the Russian authority's responsibility to take care of the wounded and the sick.¹²⁵² Server Paşa quickly informed the Ottoman representatives abroad about the situation.¹²⁵³

4.2.9 Witnessing and reporting atrocities

The humanitarian agents were among the first people to arrive at scenes of atrocities and witness the effects of unlimited violence not only on the battlefield but also in places which were plundered, burned down and where the populations were violated and massacred. The British humanitarians serving with the armies, whose duty was to alleviate the suffering among soldiers, could not turn a blind eye to violence to civilians. While the fundraisers and the newspapers in England were preoccupied with charting precise details about the field of activity of humanitarian institutions, the agents in the field could not and did not refrain from aiding, reporting and sometimes even intervening in the atrocities. Thus, their narratives turned out to have as important a role as their relief work. Moreover, their reports were put into service of state rhetoric both in England and the Ottoman Empire.

Painted many scenes from the 1877 War including the march of the captives. Many illustrations in the Russian and European press depicted the journey of the wounded and the captives.

¹²⁵² BOA. HR. TH. 25/60.

¹²⁵³ BOA. HR. TH. 25/60.

As a result of witnessing the brutalities of war, these individuals reacted to what was happening around them in a complex manner, including psychological reactions, moral positioning and political inclinations. While some humanitarians were more explicit about their political ambitions and their sympathies to oppressed Christians in their fight for independence, others were more distant to both parties. However, as Gill argues it would not be accurate to claim that aid was divided along political lines because the matter was more complicated than such simplification.¹²⁵⁴ Some individuals worked with a missionary vision, others supported and propagated for national independence while others aimed at expanding Russian influence over the regions. Some people treated their journey in the Balkans as proof of their already existing premises while it is possible to trace a more genuine interest and empathy in some of the doctors' writings.

The locality in which the doctors conducted their medical services is another important factor that needs to be highlighted. Whether they were positioned in the frontline or in the temporary hospitals, shaped their engagement with violence. The composition of the military units where the doctors were positioned also mattered. Thus, it may be hard to offer an all-inclusive argument regarding the relationship of the humanitarian agents with scenes of atrocities. Yet, it is safe to propose that their varied experiences were all regarded as legitimate eyewitness accounts.

Despite their varied positioning, relief workers were important sources in the production of knowledge, particularly about the atrocities and their authority rested on their claims to being impartial witnesses.¹²⁵⁵ Underlining the entangled relation between the humanitarians and the creation of a compassion towards suffering, Gill writes that the relief agents had become “the ministrants of a ‘spontaneous’

¹²⁵⁴ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 96.

¹²⁵⁵ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 80.

outpouring of compassion” that they had themselves aroused through their eye-witness accounts in the first place.¹²⁵⁶

In a dispatch to Musurus Paşa, Karatodori Efendi requested that Musurus Paşa send him certain issues of *The British Medical Journal*, which was not for sale in Brussels. The issues contained British doctors’ reports on the Russian atrocities. Despite the journal’s negative tone towards the Ottoman medical cadres, certain reports which were valued as “official documents of unquestionable authenticity” were utilized by Ottoman diplomats in supporting the state rhetoric on Russian atrocities.¹²⁵⁷ This instance is illustrative of the difficult position of the empire’s agents vis-à-vis the international publications. International observer’s narratives, no matter how problematic they were regarding the Ottoman medical system, needed to be interpreted as authentic documents.

Having hands-on experience of attending to the wounds of people, these doctors could easily identify between the groups who inflicted pain on others and who the victims of violence were. Therefore, their accounts have the potential to reveal crucial information regarding violence. Even though they worked with translators, they could still make important observations about the ways in which people were wounded. Doctor Young for example, narrated his observations from Kavarna, where a massacre had taken place recently and he was careful to note that it was not only the Circassians, but the Bulgarians and Ottomans had all played a part in the massacring of civilians.¹²⁵⁸

Armand Leslie reported to have intervened in a massacre by the Circassians. Having entered a village near Yeni-Zaragh, to treat the wounded, the doctors

¹²⁵⁶ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 80. See 4.1 for the relation between Gladstone and Irby.

¹²⁵⁷ From Karatodori Efendi to Musurus Paşa, December 22, 1877, document no 1393. Kunalalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

¹²⁵⁸ From J. S. Young to Colonel Loyd-Lindsay, July 27, 1877. BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.7-9.

witnessed another violent incident, and they were quick to report it to Rauf Paşa, and Rauf Paşa took the necessary precautions immediately.¹²⁵⁹ In another letter, written on August 30, 1877, Armand Leslie again recounts massacres, which were committed by all parties, resulting in dead, suffering and the violation of women. His account is a testimony of the realities of uncontrolled violence committed by all parties.¹²⁶⁰

If one is to examine other humanitarians and their formulation of atrocities, such as Irby and Sandwith, or the Russian pan-Slav circles, one is faced with a very different picture. Their campaigning of wider political goals allowed them to correspond with journalists and scholars and provide them with “knowledge” and “expertise” from the field. This was particularly welcomed in both the penny-press and the national papers some of which regarded the intermingling of humanitarian sentiments with political goals and missionary impulses as unproblematic.

Sandwith, for example had the privilege of examining the scenes of violence as a foreign doctor and in his letters, he narrates the violence imposed on Serbians and argues that such acts of violence were systematic and perpetuated by Ottoman state’s orders.¹²⁶¹ Loyd-Lindsay, on the other hand was involved in gathering military intelligence for Britain. He frequently corresponded with Disraeli and articulated that the Serbian revolt was backed by Russians from the beginning. He used his status as an impartial and privileged eyewitness and was eventually promoted to the War Office.¹²⁶² Being one of the major agents of international humanitarianism, his cooperation with the political actors reveals that political calculations and service for their homeland was an important part of their relief work. His services for the

¹²⁵⁹ From Armand Leslie to Loyd-Lindsay, August 1, 1877. BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.13-14.

¹²⁶⁰ From Armand Leslie to Loyd-Lindsay, August 30, 1877. BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.22-23.

¹²⁶¹ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 93.

¹²⁶² Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 113-114.

Ottoman Army did not go unnoticed by the Ottoman authorities as well and he was awarded with the Mecîdî Order of second degree for his services.¹²⁶³

Another British doctor, Dr. Rutledge, submitted a report about his observation to Consul Blunt. Blunt suggested that his report should be held with high esteem during the increasing outcry in the British public opinion. Reporting from Mitrovitsa (*Mitroviça*), Rutledge's account has an exceptionally pro-Ottoman tone. Yet his observations are bounded by the local conditions. Mitrovitsa, was far away from the line of combat and there were no irregular troops in the region. Although he comments that the temporary hospital, which was originally a *han*, was defective, the wounded soldiers (only two) and the sick were treated with great attentiveness. He praises the Ottoman civil and military personnel and Consul Blunt forwards Rutledge's letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs as a testimony "to the humane conduct of the military authorities."¹²⁶⁴ Some doctors differentiated between the Ottoman irregulars and the regular forces, particularly on the issue of atrocities and underline that the Ottoman Commanders regreted the actions of the irregulars.¹²⁶⁵ Others reported having seen irregular forces carrying the materials that they had recently plundered.¹²⁶⁶ Stambolski, as an Ottoman doctor serving in the Serbian War, was careful to narrate in detail the violence and atrocities committed by the volunteer units of the softas in his memoirs. He, along with other doctors and Ottoman army officials, even prolonged their journey to Nish only to be able to witness and report the atrocities of the softas and the Circassians.¹²⁶⁷ Yet, some doctors, in a more

¹²⁶³ BOA. HR. SFR.3. 245/28. 10.05.1877.

¹²⁶⁴ From Rutledge to Consul Blunt, September 5, 1876, and from Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby, September 7, 1876. FO 424/43. Document number 671 and inclosure in No. 671.

¹²⁶⁵ Letter from Bernard Pitts to Col. Loyd-Lindsay, December 10, 1876. *Report of the*, 1877, p.27.

¹²⁶⁶ Letter from Haydon White to W. Maccormac, November 1, 1876. *Report of the*, 1877, 29.

¹²⁶⁷ Stambolski, *Bir Osmanlı Hekiminin Anılarıyla*, 316-317.

distant manner, regarded what was happening around them as a spectacle or an attraction.¹²⁶⁸

During his captivity, Kirkpatrick was careful to note down his observations about the violence inflicted on Ottoman soldiers. He narrated with disparaging remarks that, in addition to the mutilated bodies of the Ottoman soldiers, Ottoman prisoners were beaten to death, and they were deprived of food and medicine, .¹²⁶⁹ The varied experiences and their narration in reports and correspondence reveals that British aid workers' positioning was ambiguous and thus in line with Gill's comment that "they operated at their own discretion."¹²⁷⁰

An official articulation of the role of the doctors in relating to massacres can be traced in the memorial of Doctor Francis Gethley Meyrick. A NAS doctor working in the Balkans, Meyrick had died from an illness on duty.¹²⁷¹ A memorial tablet was erected in his grave with the cooperation of the Red Crescent and the NAS. The memorial is a testimony to the role of the doctors in remedying and witnessing war massacres.¹²⁷²

Lastly, the British doctors' reports could have been manipulated by the military authorities as the discussion regarding the controversial nature of the report

¹²⁶⁸ One of the doctors confessed that doctors bought pistols and military hoods from the irregulars, as souvenirs. Letter from Haydon White to W. Maccormac, November 1, 1876. *Report of the*, 1877, 29.

¹²⁶⁹ Journal of Kirkpatrick, published in *Correspondence Respecting the Treatment of Doctors Leslie, Neville, Kirkpatrick, and Mr. Bell*. BRCA. WAN 3/1/4, p.3-6.

¹²⁷⁰ Gill, *Calculating Compassion*, 95.

¹²⁷¹ Dr. Francis Gethley Meyrick died from illness on August 23, 1877. His funeral took place with the participation and organization of members of all the societies; Dr. Bartoletti and Sarel from the Red Crescent, Barrington Kenneth from the SHC. The flag which covered his coffin was planned to be sent to England along with his personal effects. BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.21. Death among the Ottoman medical personnel also prevailed. While there is not much information regarding the total number of medical personnel who died during the conflicts, Ahmed Muhtar Paşa expresses that a chief doctor named Yusuf Bey and other medical personnel passed away on duty. Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa, *Anılar* 2, 272.

¹²⁷² The inscription expressed Meyrick's devotedness to aiding the "Turkish wounded, men, women and children, from the battles and massacres of Yeni-Saghra, Eski-Saghra, and Karabounar." BRCA. WAN 3/1/1, p.21.

by Dr. Vachell and Dr. Douglas¹²⁷³ reveals. After the imprisonment of doctors in Tellich, *Daily News* published an official statement made before the Grand Duke and his staff, allegedly signed by Vachell and Douglas. The statement detailed that the two doctors saw fifty to sixty dead Russian soldiers, all of them naked and some of which were mutilated, including the cutting of ears and noses and their heads.¹²⁷⁴ Dr. Vachell claimed that they were forced to sign this statement, with the encouragement of the Englishmen who resided in the camp.¹²⁷⁵ While it may be difficult to determine the accuracy of this statement, it is clear that English doctors' reports and observations were surrounded with an aura of authenticity, resting on their witnessing the events at first hand.

Amidst the turbulence of an armed conflict, humanitarians found themselves in conditions which forced them to behave out of the confines of their professional and/or institutional affiliations. The constraints, be it moral or political, of the situations they were faced with were reflected in their reports and journals.

4.3 Imperial gestures, international donations

During times of international conflicts, loyalties could change in the international sphere, as much as it did in the domestic realm. Violence and political tensions could result in the narrowing down or amplification of loyalties.¹²⁷⁶ This idea may as well

¹²⁷³ Dr. Vachell (surgeon) and Dr. Douglas (assistant surgeon) worked in the ORCS Ambulance number five, and they were originally employed through the SHC.

¹²⁷⁴ From Musurus Paşa to Server Paşa, November 16, 1877. Kunalp and Tokay, *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents*, vol. X.

¹²⁷⁵ Dr. Vachell's report about their captivity, written in London January 17, 1878, was submitted to the ORCS Committee. *Société Ottomane de Secours*, Vol III, 218-220.

¹²⁷⁶ The proposition of the narrowing down of loyalties during times of conflict and organized violence belongs to Grandits et al, in which the authors use this framework to discuss the conflicting loyalties in the Balkans throughout the nineteenth century. Grandits et al., "Introduction," 5-6. Taking the inspiration from this formulation, this section will identify the ways in which international allegiances or relief efforts reflected political tensions, helped promote imperial gestures, be perceived as soft power tools and at times instrumentalized for personal benefits.

be applied to trans-imperial connections. In chapter two, we have seen that editors, correspondents and intellectuals were involved in pamphleteering, and the Ottoman state mechanism tried to shape these efforts to their own benefit. Some of these mechanisms incorporated the humanitarian spirit only loosely while others were articulated within a specific philanthropic and moral rhetoric. The examples which will be dealt with in this section are directly related to humanitarian rhetoric and are examples of how certain groups created and/or deepened their relations with Ottoman state representatives. Some of them showcased ideological or sentimental inclinations, while others reflected a combination of ideological positioning and personal benefit. Lastly, they will exemplify how the image-making mechanisms of the ruling dynasties were enmeshed in the humanitarian ethos of the period.

4.3.1 The benevolent Sultan

By the nineteenth century sultanic rule was demystified and the legitimization mechanism of rule was increasing characterized by the idea of “modern monarch.”¹²⁷⁷ Instead of the divine legitimacy of the earlier periods, the rulers of the nineteenth century came to define their power with reference to state and subjects and the expressions of this relation became more visible and accessible.¹²⁷⁸ The changes in the sultans’ dining practices, their presence in the opening ceremonies of institutions and their travels throughout the empire are interpreted as examples of the Ottoman sultans’ increasing preoccupation with being visible.¹²⁷⁹

¹²⁷⁷ Karateke, “From Divine Ruler.”

¹²⁷⁸ Karateke, “From Divine Ruler,” 291.

¹²⁷⁹ Karateke, “From Divine Ruler,” 292.

It was not only the physical presence of the Sultan, but the image¹²⁸⁰ and the accompanying political symbolisms were made visible and accessible to Ottoman subjects in various forms, a process which Deringil labels as “the public image of the state.”¹²⁸¹ This public image, among its other attributes, was shaped by the notion of benevolence, which was an important tenet of the modern image. The increasing humanitarian sentiments provided a new framework for benevolent acts, framing the ways in which rulers and subjects coalesced around a culture of relief.

When, during the Russo-Ottoman War, parts of Çırağan palace were turned into infirmaries for the wounded Ottoman soldiers, it was not a mere act of ameliorating the wounded soldiers so that they could join the war effort, it was an imperial gesture which needed to be publicly known. Abdülhamid’s personal visit¹²⁸² was published in *L’Illustration* with an engraving. According to Eğinli Said Paşa, Abdulhamid II visited these wounded soldiers twice. Sultan’s visit was the result of a concern with his public image. The patriotic campaign was an opportunity for the Sultan to present himself as a benevolent ruler. It also symbolized his appreciation of the soldiers’ sacrifices. Abdülhamid’s visit to the military hospital was used as a way to increase the morale of the soldiers in the front. The letters that the *Hediye-i Askeriyye Cemiyeti* sent to the soldiers, along with the donated items included an emphasis on the Sultan’s visit to the hospital.¹²⁸³

The publication of such an engraving was part of a larger concern with depicting himself as “the caring father” and the fact that it was published in the

¹²⁸⁰ Mahmud II’s portraits were displayed in governmental offices. Karateke “From Divine Ruler,” 295.

¹²⁸¹ Deringil, “The Invention of Tradition,” 4.

¹²⁸² After these visits Said Paşa continued to check on the wounded soldiers and the nuns to underline a continuity in the imperial aspirations. Erkan, *II. Abdülhamid'in İlk Mabeyn Feriki*, 162, 164, 170.

¹²⁸³ For the letter, see Süleyman Paşazade Sami, *Süleyman Paşa Muhakemesi*, 66-68.

French press, reveals his concern with his image vis-à-vis the European audience.¹²⁸⁴

Since care to wounded soldiers and civilians was a reflection of being civilized, such a publication aimed to increase sympathy and compassion towards the Ottoman ruler.¹²⁸⁵ Curiously, distribution of two other illustrated newspapers, *Le Monde Illustré* and *Leipziger Illustrirte Zeitung* were banned in the Empire due to their anti-Ottoman publications.¹²⁸⁶

Imperial gestures of humanitarian sentiments were not limited to the Ottoman rulers. The Russian dynasty and aristocracy were also preoccupied with sponsoring aid.¹²⁸⁷ Depictions of the Tsar with the wounded soldiers were published in the Russian press.¹²⁸⁸ Grand Duchess Alexandra Petrovna¹²⁸⁹ opened the doors of her palace for relief work.¹²⁹⁰ Preoccupation with presenting themselves as rulers with humanitarian sensibilities was an important marker of the state propaganda during the late 1870s and medical assistance and humanitarian efforts played a central role

¹²⁸⁴ For the visit and the accompanying publications, see Eldem, “93 Harbi'nin Gazileri”.

¹²⁸⁵ This visit and its symbolic attributes of power and prestige may also be interpreted in relation to earlier imperial gestures in medical institutions. One of the important aspects of Tanzimat reforms was the transformation in medicine and the royal interest in and support for modern medical facilities is interpreted with references to symbolic gestures of prestige. The presence of the Ottoman Ambassador during the examination of four students who were sent to Vienna is interpreted within this context. See İlikan Rasimoğlu, “Foundation of a Professional Group,” 59.

¹²⁸⁶ BOA. HR. İD. 1411/6.

¹²⁸⁷ Alexander II's preoccupation with ceremonial imagery was not restricted to the Balkan Crisis period. His travels around the Empire in the early days of his reign and their representation in newspapers and journals are interpreted in relation to a specific ceremonial purpose. The defeat in the Crimean War urged the emperor to travel to various locations in the Empire to show that he had a public support and that these trips were organized with the purpose to be seen rather than to see. These ceremonies helped to resituate the reforms, particularly the abolishment of serfdom, “out of the arena of political conflict” and situate them “in a sphere of personal affection congenial to the Tsar's persona” and present the Tsar as a “humane, progressive, Western monarch.” Wortman, “Rule by Sentiment,” 745, 770.

¹²⁸⁸ The Russian illustrated press, it should be noted, was full of illustrations depicting the war and relief efforts. War supplements, which were published during the War of 1877 helped create both the ceremonial visual imagery and bolster patriotic feelings by providing its readers with images from the front, charity events, maps and portraits of the Russian generals. *Başıbozuk* depictions and portrayal of Ottoman soldiers as prisoners of war was not uncommon.

¹²⁸⁹ She was the wife of the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian armies in the Danube, Grand Duke Nicholas Nikoleavich.

¹²⁹⁰ Some of the halls were turned into workshops, with five hundred people organizing materials, preparing them to be distributed to the wounded and sick. “Russian Aid to the Wounded” *The British Medical Journal*, Vol.1, No.858, June 9, 1877, p.717.

in this propaganda. What needs to be underlined however, the audience in Abdülhamid II's image was the European public, while the Russian nobility was also equally preoccupied with presenting their image to the Russian subjects.

As discussed above, granting the usage of palaces to the Red Crescent Society was another method for emphasizing the imperial humanitarian gesture. Yet, at the same time it also had a practical aim. The number of wounded soldiers and refugees had reached such a high number that the government was not able to provide them with accommodation and medical services. Therefore, this act may as well be interpreted as a soft-power technique in promoting other elites to open the doors of their residences. The participation of the Imperial Band in charity events allowed the Sultan's aura to be present in the social setting. It signified that the Sultan supported and appreciated such acts.

A traditional method of appreciation, giving of decorations and honors continued to be implemented during the Balkan Crisis. The first decoration that Abdülhamid II created during his reign was the Russian War Decoration. The first version of this decoration included a flower which was later replaced with the title "el-Ghazi."¹²⁹¹ Eldem, in his study of the Ottoman decorations underlines that the inclusion of a religious title in the visual representation of the Sultan's identity may be interpreted as an attempt to cover up one of the most humiliating military defeats. The emphasis on the use of the title Ghazi, in addition to its function in war mobilization, was instrumentalized as a visual symbol of Abdülhamid's rule and served to distance his name from the defeat.¹²⁹² It was also a means to continue asserting the caring image of the Sultan even after the war.

¹²⁹¹ Eldem, *İftihar ve İmtiyaz: Osmanlı Nişan ve Madalyaları Tarihi*, 255.

¹²⁹² Eldem, *İftihar ve İmtiyaz: Osmanlı Nişan ve Madalyaları Tarihi*, 255.

Many people received decorations for their efforts in aiding the Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Crisis. Journalists were decorated for their pro-Ottoman publications¹²⁹³ and humanitarian agents received orders for their efforts. An invention of the reign of Abdülhamid, the Order of Compassion (*Şefkat Nişanı*) was created to honor and promote the women who participated in the aid to wounded Ottoman soldiers.¹²⁹⁴ The inscription on the order showcased the humanitarian spirit by emphasizing patriotism, humanitarianism and aid¹²⁹⁵ and it served as a mechanism to promote the humanitarian spirit of the Ottoman Sultan. Quite a few women received this order due to their contribution in the aid campaign. In addition to Lady Layard,¹²⁹⁶ the wife and the mother of İsmail Paşa¹²⁹⁷ received the First Degree of the Order of Compassion for their contribution in the donation campaign.¹²⁹⁸ Adile Sultan also received the same order for her participation in the *iâne* campaign.¹²⁹⁹ Her donation of 100,000 piastres was a remarkable sum, which remained among the highest donations along with Halim Paşa's donation of the same amount.¹³⁰⁰ Other women who received the Order of Compassion for their contribution in the aid campaign were Madame Collas, the wife of B. C. Collas, who was the director of the lighthouses¹³⁰¹ and American women who contributed in the relief to Ottoman soldiers.¹³⁰² These decorations of compassion helped promote a

¹²⁹³ Daily Telegraph correspondent was awarded with Mecîdî Order, BOA. İ. HR. 272/16456. Correspondent of the *Illustrated London News* was awarded with a fourth degree of Mecîdî Order. BOA. İ. HR. 275/16767.

¹²⁹⁴ For a detailed analysis of the Order of Compassion, see Eldem, *İftihar ve İmtiyaz*, 258-267.

¹²⁹⁵ Eldem, *İftihar ve İmtiyaz*, 258.

¹²⁹⁶ For Lady Layard's pictures with the order and her narrative about how she received the order, see Eldem, *İftihar ve İmtiyaz*, 260-261.

¹²⁹⁷ The Khedive of Egypt.

¹²⁹⁸ For İsmail Paşa's letter of gratitude for the Order, see BOA. Y. PRK. MK. 1/7.

¹²⁹⁹ Eldem, *İftihar ve İmtiyaz*, 263.

¹³⁰⁰ For Adile Sultan's donation see *Basiret*, no. 1885. For Halim Paşa's donation, see *Basiret*, no. 1862.

¹³⁰¹ BOA. İ. DH. 790/64162.

¹³⁰² BOA. HR.SYS. 1235/72.

modern image and emphasized that the Ottoman Sultan was a supporter of female compassion and charity.

4.3.2 International aid

4.3.2.1 Hungarian relief

Among the groups who supported Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Crisis, two particularly stand out with their involvement: Hungarians and Indian Muslims.

Hungarian support to the Ottoman Empire throughout the crisis included visits, pro-Ottoman demonstrations, donations, and the organization of a pro-Ottoman conference. In October 22, 1876, correspondence between Sermed Efendi¹³⁰³ and Safvet Paşa reveal that Hungarian students performed a pro-Ottoman demonstration in Pest.¹³⁰⁴ A few thousand people gathered to march with torches, chanting in support of the Ottoman Chief of Staff, Abdülkerim Paşa.¹³⁰⁵ The event was a celebration of the Ottoman victory in the Serbian War and support to Abdülkerim Paşa continued in the upcoming months.

In January 1877, a group of Hungarian students came to the Ottoman capital for celebrating the Ottoman victory and to present a gift to Abdülkerim Paşa. The students encountered a protest by a group of Slavs during their journey.¹³⁰⁶ After their arrival in the Ottoman capital, the group first met with Midhat Paşa in his mansion. Among the Ottoman representatives were the Foreign Minister Safvet Paşa and Ottoman Ambassador to Berlin, Edhem Paşa. During their stay in İstanbul, the group visited the Dolmabahçe Palace, attended dinners, balls and a performance in Gedikpaşa Theater. After they presented the sword to Abdülkerim Paşa, they left

¹³⁰³ Consul General at Budapest.

¹³⁰⁴ BOA. HR. SYS. 176/3.

¹³⁰⁵ Çolak and Mızrak, "Macar Gençlik," 8.

¹³⁰⁶ BOA. HR. SYS. 176/9.

İstanbul.¹³⁰⁷ Their visit was narrated in the press.¹³⁰⁸ Ottoman newspapers also published news about the Hungarian donations, announcing the donation amounts and thanking the Hungarians.¹³⁰⁹

This visit was reciprocated by an Ottoman delegation, which involved the leader of the Özbekler lodge, scholars, students, deputies and Mehmed Tevfik.¹³¹⁰ This delegation travelled to Pest and they attended various events, and in one of them, Arminius Vambery delivered a speech.¹³¹¹ The group was welcomed enthusiastically by the people of Tımışvar and Pest.¹³¹² Mehmet Tevfik¹³¹³ send telegrams to *Basiret* during his visit and these were published in the newspaper.¹³¹⁴ Both visits and their depictions in the press must have contributed to the general patriotic feeling by emphasizing cross-border solidarity. The fact that a newspaper correspondent accompanied the visit could have increased the circulation of the paper and *Basiret* had also been publishing articles on the pan-Slavic aid to the insurgents throughout the conflicts therefore the reporting of such cross-border solidarity seems to be in line with the newspaper's editorial policy.

Known as one of the first supporters of pan-Turkism due to his theory about the origins of the Hungarian language, Vambery Arminius was a traveler and a scholar. He published pamphlets and organized conferences, supporting the Ottoman Empire. During the Balkan Crisis, he was involved in relief work to the Ottoman soldiers and publicly supported the Ottoman government. He declared that he would

¹³⁰⁷ For the details of their visit, see Çolak and Mızrak, "Macar Gençlik."

¹³⁰⁸ *Vakit* narrated the dinner in their honor, see *Vakit*, no. 445. *La Turquie* announced their arrival on January 15, 1877.

¹³⁰⁹ *Basiret* published a letter in which Hungarians were praised for their donations. *Basiret*, no. 1957.

¹³¹⁰ Nazır, "II. Abdülhamid Dönemi," 311.

¹³¹¹ Nazır, "II. Abdülhamid Dönemi," 314.

¹³¹² BOA. HR. SYS. 176/13.

¹³¹³ The editor of *Çaylak* magazine. He attended this group as a correspondent of *Basiret*. Akün, "Çaylak Tevfik."

¹³¹⁴ For his telegram, see BOA. HR. TO. 554/84. For the publication of this telegram in the newspaper, see *Basiret*, no. 2079.

donate the revenue from his conferences to the wounded Ottoman soldiers.¹³¹⁵

Similar to donating of the book revenues, his gesture had a symbolic significance. It helped create sympathetic feelings towards the Ottoman soldiers in European circles. His involvement in pamphleteering and pro-Ottoman activities, however, was not without contention.

According to a report by Halil Bey,¹³¹⁶ Vambery informed him about a publication on the Ottoman Empire. Both Halil Bey and Vambery, according to this report were suspicious about the publication, which included “infamous slanders” against the Ottomans. Halil Bey claimed that it could have been written by Aristarchi Bey.¹³¹⁷ Whether or not it was written by Aristarchi Bey is not clear, but Vambery’s reasoning is very interesting and sheds light on the details of pamphleteering and organization of conferences by travelers which the Ottoman consular staff had to be engaged with.

Vambery explained to Halil Bey that when Aristarchi Bey was in Berlin as the Ambassador, Vambery invited him to one of his conferences. The Ottoman Ambassador had rejected the invitation. However, according to Vambery, the Ambassador had attended another similar event which was organized by a German traveler, who did not speak favorable of the Ottoman Empire.¹³¹⁸ What this correspondence suggests that during the period, various public events took place, which the Ottoman representatives could not turn a blind eye. Apart from the possible rivalry between the two travelers, the Ottoman diplomat’s choice was interpreted as evidence of his political inclination. The Ottoman representatives, in

¹³¹⁵ BOA. HR. SYS. 176/26 and BOA. HR. SYS. 183/29.

¹³¹⁶ Consul General at Budapest.

¹³¹⁷ Aristarchi Bey (Yanko) was the Ambassador at Berlin between April 1874 and August 1876, not to be confused with the Ottoman representative in Washington.

¹³¹⁸ BOA. HR. SYS. 183/28.

addition to humanitarian circles, were involved in travelers' networks and had to respond to the demands and invitations of various individuals.

4.3.2.2 Relief from Muslims of India

Muslims of India was another prominent group, who provided aid to the Ottoman army during the Balkan Crisis. The relation between the Ottoman sultans and the Muslim populations of India had become a vexed question since the time of the Indian rebellion of 1857. The Ottoman support to British rule during the uprising is interpreted as a compensation for the British support during the Crimean War.¹³¹⁹ Additional factors such as the need for British support in the implementation of Tanzimat reforms and as a buffer against Russian aggression, provided added impetus for the Ottoman government to align with the British during the rebellions.¹³²⁰ The Ottoman support to Britain took on both a military form and the incorporation of soft power methods in supporting the suppression of the Indian revolt. The Ottoman government allowed the passage of British soldiers from Egypt, and send an official decree, suggesting that the Muslims of India do not fight against the British rule.¹³²¹ After the suppression of the rebellion, the Ottoman government also provided aid to the affected British families (*mağdur ve perişan olmuş olan İngiliz familyalarına iane için*).¹³²² The Ottoman justification for the aid rested on the involvement of other royal figures in the campaign, and the Ottoman representatives viewed aid as a mechanism for influencing the public opinion (*efkâr-ı nâssı tadil etmek için*).¹³²³ This example shows that the Ottoman response to Indian uprising did

¹³¹⁹ Özcan, *Pan-İslamizm*, 26; Aydın, *Idea of the Muslim World*, 46.

¹³²⁰ Özcan, *Pan-İslamizm*, 27.

¹³²¹ Özcan, *Pan-İslamizm*, 25.

¹³²² BOA. İ. HR. 147/7750. 19.09.1857.

¹³²³ For the transliteration of the relevant passage see Özcan, *Pan-İslamizm*, page 26, footnote no. 83.

not rest on a solidarity with the Muslims but it was aimed to enhance the Ottoman British alliance.

The aid efforts on the other hand, represented an opportunity for the Ottoman government to participate in the European relief efforts, thus underline the level of civilization and the working of the imperial framework.¹³²⁴ It was also important for the Ottoman government to underline their support for the European system by distancing the Empire from the negative image of the Muslims as rebels, which dominated the British press during the Indian Revolt.¹³²⁵

By the end of 1860s, the Ottoman intellectuals had begun to propagate for Islamic unity as a counter ideology under the influence of “pan” movements and the Young Ottomans were the founding figure of this ideology.¹³²⁶ From the late 1860s, intellectuals who were associated with Young Ottoman circles had been propagating the unity of the Islamic populations in their newspapers.

The first time that the notion of *İttihad-ı İslam* was proposed as a strategy against the increasing pan ideologies, was in *Basiret* in 1872. Following the publication of this article, *Basiret* was involved in publishing opinion pieces and discussions regarding the ways of conduct for increasing the influence of pan-Islamic ideology among the Muslims populations.¹³²⁷ *İbret* was another newspaper which advocated for pan-Islamic ideology however as Mardin underlines, the Young Ottoman propaganda on the Islamic union was defensive, not an aggressive ideology.¹³²⁸ The idea was formulated around cultural and civilizational tenets.¹³²⁹

¹³²⁴ Aydın, *Idea of the Muslim World*, 54.

¹³²⁵ Aydın, *Idea of the Muslim World*, 55-56.

¹³²⁶ Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 60.

¹³²⁷ For an overview of the discussions see Özcan, *Pan-İslamizm*, 52-55.

¹³²⁸ Mardin, *Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, 61.

¹³²⁹ Özcan, *Pan-İslamizm*, 55.

In his article on Islamic union, Namık Kemal, celebrated *Basiret* for its publications on the matter and championed the Islamic union as a common goal in the face of increasing influence of Western civilization.¹³³⁰ Questioning the degree of civilization of the Islamic populations, Namık Kemal posits that the Islamic union should be based on intellectual production rather than a political ideology with a solid program based on confessional struggle.¹³³¹ The Islamic union was a necessity in the road to civilization for the Muslim populations.¹³³²

The Ottoman government on the other hand, did not utilize a strict pan-Islamic foreign policy. The use of this concept was in fact ambiguous. When the government supported Yakup Han,¹³³³ it was not an aggressive policy but was conducted because of the growing British concerns over Russian expansion in Asia.¹³³⁴

During the Balkan Crisis, Muslims of India were engaged in various forms of relief and support to the Ottoman Empire. Their activities involved the collection of donations, meetings and public gatherings in support of the Ottomans, sending petitions to the British government, urging them to support the Empire against Russia and the organization of public prayers in support of the Ottoman sultan, or more precisely the Caliph.¹³³⁵ The public involvement in the Balkan Crisis led to the establishment of regional newspapers, some of which published extensively about

¹³³⁰ Aydoğdu and Kara, *Namık Kemal*, 84.

¹³³¹ Aydoğdu and Kara, *Namık Kemal*, 85.

¹³³² Özcan, *Pan-İslamizm*, 55.

¹³³³ Yakub Beg (1820-1877) was the Emir of Kashgar between 1864 and 1877. The increasing Russian influence in Asia, the decreasing power of the Manchu rule and the resurgence of Islamic sentiments among the Muslims of Chinese Turkistan was followed by a series of rebellions against the Manchu rule in the region. In 1865, Yakub Beg led a successful uprising and established his rule in the region. His rule rested on Shariat and his connection with the Ottoman Empire is interpreted as evidence of his Islamic orientation. His main strategy in maintaining control was to navigate his rule in the Anglo-Russian rivalry. For the political context leading to Yakub Beg's rise to power and his rule, see Yuan, "Yakub Beg."

¹³³⁴ Özcan, *Pan-İslamizm*, 58.

¹³³⁵ Özcan, *Pan-İslamizm*, 95.

the events in the Ottoman lands.¹³³⁶ One source of resentment among the Muslims of India, was the growing anti-Ottoman campaign in the British public and it was expressed through petitions. Another form of support was the purchasing of Ottoman stocks to free the Ottoman Empire from the burden of financial debt to the Europeans. What prompted the Indian Muslims' involvement in the Balkan Crisis, as depicted in the Indian Muslim press, was the Russian declaration of war on Ottoman Empire on religious grounds and the need for the Muslims to stand in solidarity with the Ottomans.¹³³⁷ Identifying the war with Russia as a jihad, the Muslims also called for contribution in the war effort by way of forming volunteer units. The Akhoond of Swat had declared jihad and invited the Muslims to support the Ottoman Empire by way of subscriptions.¹³³⁸ In fact the preoccupation of the Indian Muslims with the Balkan Crisis pre-dated the Russian War. In August 1876, Muslims in India started to follow the events in the Balkan through the newspapers. Shortly before the declaration of the Serbian War, *The Times of India* identified the uprising as a Russian intrigue and claimed that the Russian Empire wished to destroy Islam.¹³³⁹

Seyyid Suleyman Efendi, the head of the Muslim community in Bagdad had sent his brother to India to encourage support for the Ottomans during the crisis.¹³⁴⁰ Brother of Suleyman Efendi, Seyyid Abdurrahman Efendi, published a bi-lingual pamphlet, targeting the Indian Muslims, asking for their contribution in the War with Russia.¹³⁴¹ Muslim communities in Bombay and Bengal organized meetings and

¹³³⁶ Özcan, *Pan-Islamizm*, 96.

¹³³⁷ Özcan, *Pan-Islamizm*, 100.

¹³³⁸ BOA. Y. PRK. HR. 1/16.

¹³³⁹ For the article published in *The Times of India*, see Ruprecht, "Great Eastern Crisis," 159.

¹³⁴⁰ Shukla, *Britain, India*, 94.

¹³⁴¹ Çetinsaya, "II. Abdülhamid Döneminin," 44.

called for the Muslims to contribute to the relief funds¹³⁴² and these connections helped increase the participation in the campaign.

Basiret referred to *The Times of India* (written as *Hind Times*) as an important source in narrating the relief from India. *The Times of India* and *Daily Telegraph* provided information on the involvement of Indian Muslims in aiding the Ottoman Empire. These articles brought to attention the fact that as the Caliph, the Ottoman Sultan was the leading figure among the Muslim community and that the British needed to support Ottomans against Russia.¹³⁴³ One example of such an article, published in *Basiret* in mid-August 1876, was a letter by a Muslim from India published in *The Times of India*. The letter called for the Muslims of India to participate in the donation campaign and set the contribution of the Arabs as an example of the support to the Caliph (*halife-i ruy-i zemin ve emr-ül el müminin bulunan Devleti Aliye 'ye malen ve bedenen muavenet*). The Indian Muslims were urged to follow the Arabs and aid the Caliph.¹³⁴⁴

What needs to be underlined is that Muslims of India supported the Ottoman administration by contributing to the Stafford House Committee funds. Between May and October 1877, Muslims of India submitted 6,040 pounds to the Stafford House Committee.¹³⁴⁵ The total amount of donations submitted to the Ottoman authorities by the Muslim community of India was 124,843 Ottoman pounds.¹³⁴⁶ This amount, according to Ruprecht's calculations, equaled the amount collected by the British during the Bulgarian uprising campaign.¹³⁴⁷

¹³⁴² Shukla, *Britain, India*, 95.

¹³⁴³ Çetinsaya, "II. Abdülhamid Döneminin," 45.

¹³⁴⁴ *Basiret*, no. 1888.

¹³⁴⁵ BOA. HR. SFR. 3. 250/31.

¹³⁴⁶ Özcan, *Pan-İslamizm*, 101.

¹³⁴⁷ Ruprecht, "Great Eastern Crisis," 175.

During the Russian War, religious authorities in Mecca were also active in creating religious texts in support of the Ottoman jihad, some of which were addressed to the Muslims of India. These texts underlined the British tolerance of Islam and called for the Muslims to support the Ottoman jihad against Russia.¹³⁴⁸ The representation of the Indian support to the Ottoman Empire, particularly published in *Basiret*, rested on pan-Islamic sentiments and it bolstered a sentimental connection with distant Muslims. Yet, the question of why the Indian Muslims embraced such acts of humanitarianism towards the Ottoman Empire need to be addressed from a different perspective.

Despite the Ottoman alliance with the British in the earlier events, the Indian Muslims embraced the aid efforts, and the Muslim community created and participated in a relief campaign. This, according to Ruprecht, was the result of a complex interaction between the local and the international dynamics. In addition to concerns over Russian expansion, Indian Muslims perceived the downfall of the Ottoman rule in the Balkans in relation to the declining position of the Muslims in India.¹³⁴⁹ The Bulgarian atrocities and the ways in which the British anger flared up resting on the despise of Islam, served as a bitter example of collapse of Islam if Muslims failed to adopt to and adjust to Westernization. Identifying the Indian aid campaign as a “public pan-Islam emerging from civil society,” Ruprecht claims that the campaign was different from the Ottoman version of pan-Islam.¹³⁵⁰ It was both humanitarian and political and it reflected on the tensions between the Indian Muslims and the British colonial authorities. The humanitarian wave among the

¹³⁴⁸ These religious texts were published in newspapers. For the transliteration of one of these texts titled “Advice to India” (*Hindistan’a Nasihat*) published in *Basiret*, see Çetinsaya, “II. Abdülhamid Döneminin,” 178.

¹³⁴⁹ Ruprecht, “Great Eastern Crisis,” 177.

¹³⁵⁰ Ruprecht, “Great Eastern Crisis,” 172.

Indian Muslims during the Balkan Crisis also led to the appropriation of humanitarian language into the Islamic and colonial context. The red line, for the British colonizers however was the declaration jihad.¹³⁵¹ Ruprecht's argumentation is important in shedding light onto the internal dynamics of the Indian relief during the Balkan Crisis and to the fact that the Muslim community under British colonial rule created a public aid campaign, resting on pan-Islamic sentiments which initiated discussions on ameliorating the conditions of the distressed co-religionists. While the Ottoman newspapers preferred to narrate the Indian relief as a result of Ottoman extraterritorial influence, the Indian response was indeed enmeshed in a complex web of relations between the Muslim community, the colonial rule and the emerging phenomenon of global humanitarianism.

4.3.2.3 Function of the ORCS in international donations

The establishment of the ORCS during the War of 1877 had a profound effect on aid work. Not only the donation amount increased but also the number of donors increased. The ORCS functioned as the main institution in accepting international donations after its establishment and various branches of ORCS contributed money and materials. The ORCS made the aid to Ottoman soldiers visible and legitimate.¹³⁵² Even in countries which did not officially have a Red Cross branch, philanthropic efforts for the Ottoman soldiers were expressed with the participation of the Ottoman diplomats.

¹³⁵¹ Ruprecht, "Great Eastern Crisis".

¹³⁵² Some of the international donations were: Austrian Red Cross (Societe Austrichienne de secours a Vienne) donated for the fifth time in January 1878 to ORCS. BOA. HR. SYS. 1215/1-138. The employees of the "Albrechts Bahn" railway company donated lint and bandages to the ORCS. BOA. HR. SYS. 1215/1-140. A notable banker from Besançon donated 1,000 francs to the Red Crescent BOA. HR. SYS. 1215/1-144. 74 boxes of ambulance materials and 2,500 francs arrived from Belgium BOA. HR. SYS. 1215/1-145. Hungarians donated 25 boxes of materials to ORCS. BOA. HR. TH. 27/16.

The American Red Cross Society was officially established in 1905, however there were initiatives in America which cooperated closely with international Red Cross Societies. In the official institutional history, the committee which provided aid during the Balkan Crisis is labelled as “a self-appointed committee” which worked to “further the interests of the Red Cross movement in America” and was founded in Washington in 1877.¹³⁵³

The American Society of the Cross and the Crescent, as they called themselves, organized a ball in Washington. A special anthem was composed for the occasion and a huge structure in the form of cross and crescent, made from gas burners was created. Aristarchi Bey noted that some women wore small crescents made of diamonds.¹³⁵⁴ Such gestures underline the fact that the Red Cross and Red Crescent initiatives were dominated by the wealthy and were expressions of both philanthropy and extravagance. The thirty-one women from America, who participated in the donation campaign were later decorated with the Order of Compassion.¹³⁵⁵

Apart from all the institutions and committees, people also made individual contributions. The Ottoman Embassy in London received personal donations and offers to aid the Ottoman wounded soldier and it seems that the Embassy was meticulous in responding to these offers. Diana Doyle, for example donated 10 pounds for the wounded soldiers in January 1877 and the Ottoman delegation informed both the Porte and Musurus Paşa about this donation and responded to

¹³⁵³ Published in an official pamphlet by the American Red Cross. See *American Red Cross*, 19.

¹³⁵⁴ BOA. HR. SYS. 1215/1-159, December 14, 1877.

¹³⁵⁵ BOA. HR. TH. 26/6.

Diana Doyle for her donation.¹³⁵⁶ Another English woman, Margaret Handerson, donated and offered her services.¹³⁵⁷

As mentioned above, some societies used the opportunity to subsidize their publications. The White Eagle Polish Society asked for monetary support to their Gazette, by underlining that they had made donations and were organizing an ambulance service.¹³⁵⁸ They hoped that anti-Russian propaganda would help them win over the Ottoman representative. All these examples show that by the Balkan Crisis, moments of armed conflict and the accompanying humanitarian campaigning resulted in the creation of a constellations of relief efforts, with diverse motivations.

4.4 Conclusion

By revealing the dynamics and the complexities of international and medical aid to Ottoman soldiers, this chapter aimed to offer a two-fold analysis. First, the rhetorical and institutional dimensions were scrutinized. It is imperative to underscore the rhetorical aspect of international aid because the way aid was articulated occupied a central role in the making of the phenomenon and in the consolidation of the European imperial mindset. Resting on the catchphrase “victim,” the parties involved sought to justify their actions by positioning themselves in a web of power relations. Defining who the victim was not easy, it was disputed among the politicians, state elites, newspaper editors and the public. The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that the formulation of victimhood was contextually bound. Defining the Ottoman soldiers as victims right after the popularization of the Bulgarian atrocities was challenging but during the War of 1877 it became more acceptable in the

¹³⁵⁶ BOA. HR. SFR.3. 250/30. January 1877.

¹³⁵⁷ BOA. HR. SFR.3. 250/30.

¹³⁵⁸ BOA. HR. SFR 3. 253/38.

European sphere. Also, the act of defining a victim also implied a hegemonic position. Complicating the matter further was the question of the “subject”. The conservative British philanthropists could equate victimhood with the Ottoman soldiers. The Ottoman diplomats on the other hand, had to consult the *British Medical Journal* publications – the very mechanism which created an aura of medical power through the objectification of the Ottoman doctors - as their evidence to their victimhood.

Additionally, the analysis on the complex phenomenon of medical and international aid revealed that practices in the field could diverge from the ways in which they were envisioned. The attempts to institutionalize and rationalize the phenomenon were embedded in the political discussions. The aid work and their agents were not just delivering relief to Ottoman soldiers but by being identified as experts, they intervened in the larger transformations, contributing to the construction of identities and mindsets.

The practical outcomes also mattered. The fact that the Ottoman army lacked the necessary medical arrangements contributed to the growing involvement of medical volunteers, and in this way the suffering of the Ottoman soldiers could be reduced. The foundation of the ORCS, as evidenced in the chapter was not a coincidence. The condition of the military sanitary organization and the increasing dominance of the rhetoric of relief contributed to its formation. The chapter also aimed to show that the relief efforts of the initial period of the Crisis – the revolts and the Serbian War - should not be disregarded or merely seen as a limited earlier experimentation but that they emerged at a specific period in which the phenomenon of relief was transforming.

Cooperation between different institutions was another important aspect of the relief efforts. This was a period of making for international relief efforts and Ottoman military medicine. Clashes, tensions and ambiguities were always part of the efforts, resulting in both impromptu solutions and long-term discussions on the nature of medical aid. The motivations of the agents mattered. Not all international agents acted with “pure” moral interests. The fact that this period marks a turning point in interventions based on humanity and civilization necessitated revealing the agents’ relations with different people in positions of power. The above survey also aimed to reveal that the Ottoman government tried to balance and maneuver in a highly tense context by negotiation and adaptation. Not all its efforts proved useful or sufficient to solve the major problems, but the central government and its local representatives tried to impose new methods in dealing with the acute problems of the war.

Lastly, the chapter also illustrated how groups and individuals could participate in the growing international humanitarian efforts, reflecting their preoccupation with the spread of humanitarian sentiments and philanthropic practices. The involvement of different groups could serve to establish and/or enhance cross-border network and arouse public sentiments during the mobilization campaign. International donations could also be perceived as a measure in securing individuals or groups’ own agendas, by aligning with the humanitarian impetus.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Focusing on the aid to Ottoman soldiers, this dissertation looked at a largely neglected phenomenon of the late 1870s. Situated at the intersection of international politics and domestic transformations, this research revealed that the relief practice of the Balkan Crisis served as a watershed moment both for the Ottoman Empire and for the global actors. The entanglement of the domestic and international dynamics necessitated a three-fold approach. Thus, this dissertation aimed to shed light on the political and social ramifications of the aid to Ottoman soldiers on three layers. The second chapter focused on the stately conduct and how it was made to fit into an increasingly moral and humanitarian discourse. This discourse molded the philanthropic activities and brought with it new elite networks, in which the Ottoman diplomats sought to create legitimate and favorable rhetoric. Traversing through conflicts and changes, the state rhetoric did not remain fixed. It was appropriated according to the requirements of the context and the outcomes further imposed fine adjustments.

As discussed in the third chapter, relief to Ottoman soldiers was articulated along patriotic lines and resulted in new forms of impromptu civil initiatives. The research on the *iâne* campaign revealed that treating the matter as purely an extraordinary tax would not suffice. On the contrary, tracing the dynamics of the campaign allows the researcher to highlight some of the larger socio-political transformations of the late nineteenth century Ottoman Empire. The shifting rhetoric, the emphasis on the duties of the subjects, the influence of the Tanzimat ideals and the tensions arising from these, are important factors which contributed to the

process. The process turned out to be a mutually transformative experience both for the state and society.

This campaign envisioned an imperial collective through the mobilization of all the groups within the empire, united under a common cause. Yet the ways in which relief efforts were conducted, advertised and categorized, suggest that there was, to a certain extent, an expansion of the civil realm during a period in which the state and society were aligned. Revealing how the act of giving was categorized and participation in the patriotic campaign was identified provided valuable insights into the workings of this collective ameliorative action.

Incorporating imperial ideologies and integrating new practices into relief work, aid campaign of the Balkan Crisis thus impacted the future practices of giving. By creating networks of relief, setting exemplary practices and defining a new rhetoric, aid initiatives of the period served as the ground upon which the philanthropic activities of the later periods were built.

The volunteer units, the notion of donating oneself to the war effort, has helped to put an added emphasis on the necessities of integrating novel practices into mobilization both as a response to the social transformations and to the pressure exerted by the external agents. To ward off the negative campaign revolving around the *başıbozuk* violence and to unite the Ottoman subjects in mobilization, the structure of the volunteer units underwent changes during the relatively short duration of the Balkan Crisis. This process was perceived as a solution to strive out from the immediate backlash prevailing in the diplomatic and humanitarian circles. Concurrently through the incorporation of soft-power tools such as promotion, advertising and rewarding, the relief to Ottoman soldiers came to exemplify one of the many examples of fine-tuning of the Ottoman governments. The phenomenon of

volunteering was at the same time embraced by different groups. Viewing it as a chance to prove their allegiances to the state and hoping to promote their standing, this phenomenon was articulated with reference to voluntary action and within the confines of an imperial duty.

By underlining consent, both the state and society experienced a new mobilization practice through the prism of aid. This transformation had its roots in the Tanzimat ideals and reached its apogee during the experimentation with constitutionalism. Yet, after a dramatic change in power relations, the phenomenon of volunteering was eventually limited, redefined, and fit into a new political system. The claim to power by the constitutionalists through their involvement in the formation of auxiliary troops proved as a danger to Abdülhamid II's rule and were eventually curbed down.

The fourth chapter focused on international actors and institutions. This section put forth that aid to Ottoman soldiers had a significant international component. The two leading British institutions and the newly formed Ottoman Red Crescent Society were part of the larger phenomenon of international humanitarianism. The involvement of foreign actors necessitated an analysis of their actions and their narratives. Thus, special emphasis has been placed on how their humanitarian actions were narrated and how these narratives were utilized in different spheres. By tracing the journey of international medical aid, this chapter scrutinized the condition of the Ottoman military medical system throughout the Balkan Crisis. This chapter also revealed how humanitarian agents were part and parcel of the larger political framework and that their actions were situated within the colonial, hegemonic mindset. The status of humanitarians as experts had serious consequences for knowledge production and construction of discourses. Their

narratives revealed the implicit hegemony and superiority that they believed to embody. What proved particularly challenging for the humanitarian volunteers in Ottoman lands were the massacres that they witnessed and, in some cases, prevented. These realities of the battlefield did not always coincide with the definitions of their duties. All the above-mentioned factors reveal that the humanitarian agents' diverse motivations, their political inclinations and expectations complicated the phenomenon of international aid. All in all, these contradictions and ambiguities were formative in the making of institutionalized and codified humanitarian actions. Lastly, the chapter focused on the international donations and exemplified the humanitarian acts of the imperial household, and the cross-border humanitarian connections. These connections shaped the imagination of Ottoman society and created an aura of sentimental solidarity.

After the ceasefire at the end of January 1878, the Ottoman Empire was caught up in yet another relief campaign, this time the target group was the *muhacirin*. Large number of refugees, who had been migrating to the capital since the beginning of the Ottoman retreat, took shelter in various locations around the city anticipating their return or a resettlement. The remaining amount from the *iâne* fund was transferred to the aid committee for the refugees and both domestic and international actors continued to be involved in relief to refugees for some time after the war. Thus, relief did not immediately end with the war, but the philanthropic expressions continued in different forms.

Notwithstanding the impact of the refugees on the Ottoman government and society, this was not the only catastrophic result of the Balkan Crisis. The Treaty of Berlin had serious ramifications for the Ottoman political order. Large territories in the Balkans and Eastern Anatolia were lost, war expenses had further deteriorated the

Ottoman finances. Sovereignty of Rumania, Serbia and Montenegro and autonomy of Bulgaria were internationally recognized. Kars, Ardahan and Batum were under Russian rule. The Treaty of Berlin set a trajectory for turning the Armenian reforms into an international concern. The Treaty and the subsequent developments in and around the Ottoman lands, are regarded as the beginnings of monoethnic sovereignty, demographic engineering, continued mass migration, ethnic violence and state related violence towards communities in resentment.¹³⁵⁹

Enthroned during the turbulent years, Abdülhamid II established a tight grip on the government. The Sultan was to enforce an authoritarian regime, following a major defeat and swing the imperial ideology from Ottomanism towards pan-Islamism, which would rest on an integrationist policy, and which would be less ecumenical. Additionally, Abdülhamid II's reign marked a turning point in the invention of an imperial tradition, incorporating symbols based on Islamic tradition as opposed to the ideal of equality of the Tanzimat period.¹³⁶⁰ The patriotic campaign of the Balkan Crisis, which was based on Ottomanism thus ended abruptly.

Another characteristic of the Hamidian regime was the establishment of a welfare state. The development of a vibrant and expanding civil society during the Hamidian era is interpreted in relation to creating new venues for legitimacy and a new form of dynastic rule. The civil initiatives of the Hamidian era were, however, controlled and limited.¹³⁶¹ The relief campaign of the Balkan Crisis, as explained above, served as the first example of Hamidian supervision over relief work.

Witnessing the need to mobilize communities, while at the same curbing down the constitutionalists' campaign must have served, for the Sultan, as an

¹³⁵⁹ Yavuz and Sluglett, "Introduction."

¹³⁶⁰ For the discussion on the less ecumenical pan-Islamism of the Hamidian period and the details of the symbolisms see Deringil, "Invention of Tradition."

¹³⁶¹ Özbek, "Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism," 64.

important example regarding the possibilities and limits of civil initiatives in emphasizing legitimacy and constructing subjecthood ties. Thus, while tolerating the philanthropic activities of different communities as evidence of his amity, he was determined to survey the charitable events and place them under the control of stately mechanisms.¹³⁶²

Some of the charitable activities of the Hamidian period had their roots in the civil initiatives of the Balkan Crisis. The first female associations, some of which were formed immediately after the Russo-Ottoman War, also had their roots in the aid campaign of the Balkan Crisis. The activities of women of Salonica, İstanbul and Egypt all suggest that the impromptu relief of the Balkan Crisis, served as the precursory example of women's involvement in relief and charity throughout the rest of the century. It is no coincidence that the year 1879 witnessed the foundation of different women's organizations around the empire.¹³⁶³ Order of Compassion (*Şefkat Nişanı*) and Compassion bazaars, which were established during the Balkan Crisis, become symbols of female philanthropy in the upcoming decades. The Ottoman Red Crescent society, on the other hand, was left in an ambiguous position during the Hamidian era. ORCS central committee continued to exist, but its activity was limited.¹³⁶⁴ ORCS would reappear in the international arena during the Balkan Wars.

International humanitarian activities on the other hand, would increasingly be concerned over the Armenians in the upcoming decades. The expansion of nationalist ideologies and the international preoccupation with reforms in the Eastern provinces were combined with ever-increasing ethno-religious tensions. The state response to internal unrest was based on the mobilization of *Hamidiye* troops, irregular Kurdish

¹³⁶² Özbek, "Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism," 65.

¹³⁶³ Thessalonian Philanthropic Organization of Women was founded in Salonica in 1879, Armenian women formed organizations in the same year. Van Os, "Feminism, Philanthropy and Patriotism," 54.

¹³⁶⁴ Ada, "Osmanlı," 181-223.

units. The short-lived unity of the cross and crescent in some of the urban centers did not continue into the Hamidian era. On the contrary, Eastern lands became the stage for new waves of violence committed by irregular units. The discussions between the British representatives and Abdülhamid II on the Armenian massacres of the 1890s, would revolve around the violence committed by the irregular troops, with references to the Bulgarian uprising of 1876, and Gladstone would again lead a public campaign against the Ottoman Empire.¹³⁶⁵ The continued use of irregular troops in internal unrest indicates that the Ottoman state continued to resort to the same method, with modifications. The continues and contrasts between the irregular units of the Hamidian era and the Balkan Crisis can potentially present insight into the utilization of irregular units and reflect on the details of Hamidian state conduct.

The Armenian Question attracted the attention of the politicians and humanitarians alike. Having developed out of the Eastern Question, international humanitarianism took on a new form after the Balkan Crisis and aid to Armenians throughout late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries would mark an important step in the institutionalization of international humanitarian activities.

Lastly, the increasing importance of morality in the diplomatic language did not come to an end with the Balkan Crisis, it continued to shape the rhetoric of politicians and humanitarian agents, as violence continued to dominate large territories around the empire. Image management strategies continued to be linked with growing humanitarian sentiments and further research which would compare the practices of the Balkan Crisis and the soft power tools of the later period would certainly prove beneficial.

¹³⁶⁵ See chapter eight in Rodogno, *Against Massacre*.

APPENDIX

BRITISH SURGEON'S CONTRACT¹³⁶⁶

4

N^o 4.

Articles of Agreement, made this Thirtieth day of July One Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventy-seven,
Between HIS EXCELLENCY MUSURUS PASHA, Ambassador of His Imperial Majesty
The Sultan, acting for and on behalf of the Imperial Ottoman Government, of
the one part, and Robert Jaffray Hughes
Youlgreave near Bakewell Derbyshire
of the other part.

Whereby the said Robert Jaffray Hughes
engages to enter the Sanitary Service of the Army of His Imperial Majesty The
Sultan on the following conditions:—

1. For the term of one year, or until the end of the present war, he will serve the Imperial Ottoman Government in the capacity of a Physician and Surgeon attached to the Military service.
2. For the whole term of his service he places himself at the disposal of the Superior Council of Military Health (Sanitary Section of the Dari-Shoura at the Seraskierat) and of the Commanders in Chief of the Army Corps to which he shall be sent, and declares that it will be his duty to accept all the places and all the changes of place that the said Council or Commanders of Army Corps may appoint or order him to, and to serve under all the conditions that they may make in time of peace as well as in time of war.
3. He engages to perform his Medical Service according to the regulations and usages adopted in the Sanitary Service of the Imperial Ottoman Army, to submit himself to the discipline proper to the Sanitary Corps of the Imperial Army, and to scrupulously obey the orders of the Military and Medical Authorities.
4. His salary shall be at the rate of Five hundred francs or their equivalent per calendar month, payable punctually at the end of every month, with four rations as allowed to a Col-Aghassi (Adjutant-Major) and forage for one horse; and beyond such salary, rations and forage, he acknowledges that during the whole time of his service he will have no right to any recompense or advancement for services rendered or otherwise, except in the case of his being incurably disabled in the execution of his duty by an act of war, in which case he would be entitled to a pension within the limits fixed by the Code of Military Pensions of the Ottoman Empire.
5. He will receive from the Imperial Ottoman Government the sum of Twenty-five pounds sterling for his travelling and other expenses to Constantinople, and he engages to proceed to Constantinople with the utmost dispatch, by the first steamer from Marseilles of the Messageries Maritimes, or by any other route by

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¹³⁶⁶ BOA. HR. SFR. 3 255/12.

which he may sooner reach Constantinople. As to his travelling expenses from Constantinople to the place where he shall be ordered, they will be borne by the Imperial Ottoman Government.

6. His salary shall begin to accrue from the date of his presenting himself at the Superior Council of Military Health at Constantinople (Sanitary Section of the Dari-Shoura at the Seraskierat), and until that time he will have no right to any salary, rations, or forage.

7. He hereby acknowledges that the Imperial Ottoman Government will have the right to put an immediate end to this agreement in case of a refusal on his part to accept the place to which he shall be named by the said Council or Commanders of Army Corps. He further acknowledges to the Imperial Ottoman Government the right to put an end to this agreement in case of a contravention by him of the rules of discipline or of Military honor and dignity, or if he mix himself up with politics, or if he do any act hostile to the Imperial Ottoman Government. In either of which cases, or in the event of his abandoning the service otherwise than as hereinafter mentioned, he will return to the Imperial Ottoman Government the Twenty-five pounds which he will receive in London for his travelling expenses.

8. If he choose to terminate his engagement at the end of the present war, the Imperial Government will pay him Twenty-five pounds for his travelling expenses back to England; but, if he choose to terminate his engagement at the expiration of one year, he will have no right to claim travelling expenses back to England.

9. The Ambassador hereby engages on behalf of the Imperial Ottoman Government that all the conditions and stipulations herein contained and on its part to be observed and performed shall be faithfully maintained and executed.

In Witness whereof the parties hereto have hereunto set their hands the day and year first above written.



Musuruz

N. J. Hughes

Received from the IMPERIAL OTTOMAN GOVERNMENT the before-mentioned sum of Twenty-five pounds sterling for my travelling and other expenses to Constantinople.

£ 25 : 0 : 0



N. J. Hughes

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