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ANTECEDENTS TO THE BALKAN REVOLUTIONS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

L. S. STAVRIANOS

THE famous eighteenth-century Greek scholar Adamantios Korais describes in one of his letters his experience when, during the French Revolution, he applied for a *carte de securité* in Paris. He identified himself as a Greek, whereupon, he relates, "the eyes of everyone present were fixed upon me, some approached me as if to convince themselves that a Greek was the same as any other human."[1] This incident suggests the extent to which the Balkan peoples, including even the Greeks, had dropped out of sight behind the "iron curtain" of Ottoman rule. Korais' experience also reminds us of another fact which is so obvious that its significance is often overlooked—the fact that after half a millennium of foreign domination there should have appeared an individual who still considered himself to be a Greek and identified himself as such.

Korais had his counterparts among the other Balkan peoples. There was, for example, Dositej Obradović, the founder of modern Serbian literature. When Obradović was in Leipzig in 1783, he wrote a letter to a friend in which he expressed his deep national feeling and his determination to aid the national cause:

> Here I purpose to remain for at least a year, and with the help of God and of some kind Serbian I intend to publish in our common Serbian language a book printed in the civil alphabet that shall be called *Counsels of Sound Reason*, for the benefit of my nation, that my toil and my long wanderings may not be all in vain. My book will be written in pure Serbian, just as this letter, that all Serbian sons and daughters may understand it, from Montenegro to Smederevo and the Banat. . . . I shall be overpaid if any fellow countryman of mine says, when the green grass grows over me: "Here lie his Serbian bones! He loved his people! May his memory be eternal!"[2]

This testament by Obradović, as well as Korais' experience in Paris, raises the question of the survival of the Balkan nationalities. How can one explain the preservation of Greek and Serbian (or Rumanian, Bulgarian, and Albanian) national consciousness after centuries of existence in a theocratic, non-national, Moslem empire? Equally important, how can one explain the active awakening and the revolutionary outbreaks of the Balkan peoples during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, culminating in the destruction of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of several independent Balkan nation-states?

We are confronted here with two questions that are related and yet quite distinct. The one has to do with passive survival and the other with active awakening. The first is the question of how the Balkan peoples, during the centuries following the Turkish conquest, were able to resist assimilation, to preserve their identity, and thereby to maintain a basis or potential for future rejuvenation. The second involves the question of the rejuvenation itself—why

[1] *Lettres inédites de Coray à Chardon de la Rochette, 1790–1796* (Paris, 1877), p. 122.

[2] Obradović to Haralampije, Apr. 13, 1783, in G. R. Noyes, *The life and adventures of Dimitrije Obradović* (Berkeley, Calif., 1953), pp. 133, 137.

the Balkan peoples during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries became imbued, one after another, with an active sense of national consciousness and a determination to win national unity and national independence.

Considering first the survival of identity, there can be little doubt that this was greatly aided by the settlement of the Balkan peoples in compact ethnic blocs. It is true that during the centuries of Ottoman rule a much larger proportion of the total Balkan population was Moslem and Turkish than is the case today. Mass conversion to Islam occurred in Albania, Bosnia, Herzegovina, parts of Bulgaria, and the island of Crete. Also Moslem Tatar and Circassian colonies were planted in Bulgaria and the Dobruja, while Turkish settlers dominated eastern and western Thrace and large parts of Macedonia. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the Christian Balkan peoples never were surrounded or outnumbered by Moslem settlements, as happened to the Greek communities in the interior of Asia Minor. This helped the Balkan peoples to retain their identity, in contrast to many Greek communities in Asia Minor that were gradually assimilated by the surrounding Turkish mass.[3]

Religious differences between the Turkish overlord and his Balkan subjects also help to explain the survival of the latter. Christianity rested very lightly on the mass of the Balkan peasantry, who were illiterate and superstitious. Yet religion did serve as a barrier between the Turks and the Balkan peoples, thereby reducing the likelihood of assimilation. Furthermore, the Orthodox church represented a basic element in Balkan historical tradition and helped to keep alive the memories of past independence and greatness. Finally, the church was the repository of the feeble remnants of literacy and culture during the centuries of darkness.

The Orthodox church, it should be noted, was able to play as important a role as it did because of the toleration, or rather the indifference, of the Turks in matters of religion. They recognized the patriarch as the head of the church and also as the leader of the Orthodox community, or millet. In fact, the patriarch was a recognized Ottoman official, holding the rank of vizier and serving as intermediary between the Orthodox Christians and the imperial government. Likewise, the Orthodox bishops functioned in their dioceses virtually as prefects over the Christian population as well as ecclesiastical prelates.

Distinction should be made, of course, between paper privileges and actual practice. The sultan might confirm the institutional rights of the church, but this was no guarantee against outbursts of Moslem fanaticism or arbitrary actions by provincial officials. Church property all too often was confiscated and the clergy humiliated and persecuted. Furthermore, all Christians suffered from various discriminations, including a special capitation tax, certain restrictions concerning style of dress and residence, and the child tribute that was levied until the seventeenth century.

Despite these handicaps, the fact remains that the Balkan Christians never were subjected to systematic or sustained

[3] On Balkan ethnography see M. E. Pittard, *Les peuples des Balkans* (Paris, 1920); T. Kowalski, "Les Turcs balkaniques," *Revue internationale des études balkaniques*, IV (1936), 420–30; and E. Pittard, "Les peuples que les Turcs ont amenés dans les Balkans," *Revue internationale des études balkaniques*, II (1935), 195–200. The best study of Balkan population movements during the Ottoman period is by T. Stoianovich, "L'économie balkanique aux XVII^e^ et XVIII^e^ siècles" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Paris, 1952), chap. i.

proselytism. They never experienced the persecution endured by the Moslems and the Jews in Spain. Had they done so, the religious map of the Balkans probably would be quite different today. At least two sultans did consider seriously the mass extermination of all Christian subjects who refused to embrace Islam. They were dissuaded by the arguments of their religious advisers as well as by the prospect of losing the revenue from the capitation tax. But it is difficult to believe that, if they had proceeded with their plan, they would not have been substantially successful, given the defenselessness of the Christians and the prestige and attraction of Islam at the time.

If Islam had triumphed in large areas, it would have involved more than simply a shift in the balance of religions. Religious affiliation frequently has determined national consciousness in the Balkans. Thousands of Albanians and Vlachs became hellenized through their membership in the Greek Orthodox church. Likewise, thousands of Greeks on the island of Crete considered themselves Turks and chose to emigrate to Turkey because of their Moslem faith. This suggests that if a large portion of the Balkan peoples had become Moslems, their national consciousness and future national development would have been fundamentally affected. We may conclude, then, that the Balkan Christians retained their identity because of the nature of Ottoman religious policy as well as through the contributions of their church.[4]

A third factor that contributed to the preservation of the Balkan nationalities was the flabby political organization of the Ottoman Empire.[5] With the advent of the Renaissance, western Europe witnessed the rise of nationalism and the nation-state, the one stimulating and strengthening the other. The growth of absolutist monarchies, the appearance of a middle class desiring unity and order, the development of a central educational system fostering uniformity and cohesion—all these contributed to the evolution of the modern nation-state. This state was the mold in which the idea of nationalism was given substance, transforming former ducal subjects, feudal serfs, and town burghers into the all-inclusive nation.

The Ottoman Empire never experienced such a political integration. It remained a congeries of peoples, re-

[4] General histories of the Orthodox church are presented from different viewpoints in A. D. Kyriakos, *Geschichte der orientalischen Kirchen von 1453–1898* (Leipzig, 1902); B. J. Kidd, *The churches of eastern Christendom from A.D. 451 to the present time* (London, 1927); A. K. Fortescue, *The eastern Orthodox church* (London, 1927). For the position of the Orthodox church and the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire see T. H. Papadopoullos, *Studies and documents relating to the history of the Greek church and people under Turkish domination* (Brussels, 1952); H. Scheel, *Die staatrechtliche Stellung der ökumenischen Kirchenfürsten in der alten Türkei: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der türkischen Verfassung und Verwaltung* (Berlin, 1942); G. G. Arnakis, "The Greek church of Constantinople and the Ottoman Empire," *Journal of modern history*, XXIV (September 1952), 235–50; F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the sultans* (Oxford, 1929); and T. W. Arnold, *The preaching of Islam: a history of the propagation of the Muslim faith* (London, 1913). The latter work emphasizes the tolerance of the Turks in comparison with the intolerance prevailing in contemporary Christendom.

[5] A. H. Lybyer, *The government of the Ottoman Empire in the time of Suleiman the Magnificent* (Cambridge, Mass., 1913); H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic society and the West: a study of the impact of Western civilization on Moslem culture in the Near East*. Vol. I, *Islamic society in the eighteenth century* (New York, 1950); F. Giese, "Die geschichtlichen Grundlagen für die Stellung der Christlichen Untertanen in osmanischen Reiches," *Islam*, XIX (1931), 264–77; M. Braun, "Türkenherrschaft und Türkenkampf bei den Balkanslawen," *Welt als Geschichte*, VI (1940), 124–39; and S. N. Fisher, "Ottoman feudalism and its influence upon the Balkans," *Historian*, XV (Autumn, 1952), 3–22.

ligions, and conflicting loyalties. The typical Ottoman subject thought of himself primarily as a member of a guild if he lived in a city or as a member of a village community if he lived in the countryside. If he had any feeling of broader allegiance, it was likely to be of a religious rather than of a political character. It was likely to be directed to his millet rather than to his empire. Thus the Ottoman Empire differed fundamentally from the Western nation-state. It was not a cohesive institution commanding the active loyalty and allegiance of all its subjects. Rather, it was a conglomeration of numerous disparate groups that were to a large degree self-centered and self-sufficient. This looseness of Ottoman organization correspondingly decreased the possibility that the Balkan peoples might be assimilated by their masters.

The significance of this point becomes clear if we compare the rule of the Turks on the mainland with that of the Venetians in the Greek islands and in the Peloponnesus. The Venetians levied much heavier taxes, allowed no self-government, controlled commerce strictly, and encouraged proselytism. In almost every respect their rule was more oppressive and more unpopular. Contemporary observers were nearly unanimous on this point. Stephan Gerlach, chaplain of the Habsburg embassy in Constantinople, noted in his diary in 1575 that "the Venetians kept their subjects in Cyprus (like the Genoese theirs in Chios) worse than slaves. . . . After the Turks came, the poor people are freed of their burden and are equally free, but their masters, who had tortured them, were caught and sold in Turkey."[6]

Venetian rule was not only more oppressive but also more threatening. The Venetians incited dissension among their subjects deliberately and effectively. They treated the aristocratic landowners generously, permitting them to retain their estates and titles. The latter responded by identifying themselves with their foreign masters rather than with their own countrymen. On the island of Crete the native nobles either remained neutral or actively supported the Venetians during the peasant revolt of 1567–73. Likewise, in the Ionian Islands the cleavage among the Greeks was such that the peasants in 1638 revolted against their native landowners rather than against the Venetians. This "divide-and-rule" strategy was so successful that its effects continued to be felt long after the Venetians departed.

The Turks, by contrast, unwittingly strengthened the group solidarity of their subjects. They did so by granting a large degree of communal autonomy, by imposing regulations separating Moslems from non-Moslems, and by exterminating the native aristocracies. The latter policy deprived the Balkan peoples of their leaders but also freed them from social differentiation and strife. During the long centuries of Ottoman rule they continued to exist as a peasant mass—separate but relatively homogeneous and united.

It is interesting to speculate how different the course of Balkan history might have been if the Turks had followed the contemporary Venetian policy of "divide and rule" or the contemporary Western policy of forceful religious conformity. Either course would have strengthened very considerably their hold over the

[6] *Stephan Gerlachs dess Aeltern Tage-Buch der von zween . . . römischen Kaysern, Maximiliano und Rudolpho, beyderseits den Andern dieses Nahmens . . . an die Ottomanische Pforte . . . abgefertigten . . . Gesandtschafft* (Frankfort on the Main, 1674), p. 123.

peninsula. The fact that they adopted neither explains in large part why the Balkan peoples were able to retain their unity and identity.[7]

Ottoman state policy, together with Ottoman technical backwardness, fostered heterogeneity not only in administration but also in culture. The Balkan peoples were spared the assimilating pressures of the new techniques for mass propaganda and indoctrination. They remained illiterate, but this made it easier for them to preserve their languages and their folk literatures. It is significant that some of the Slavs and Albanians who attended Greek schools in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were so affected by Greek learning and culture that they were effectively hellenized. But an insignificantly small number attended such schools, and none at all attended Turkish schools, for there was no imperial educational system for the subject Christians. Consequently, the mass of the people retained their native tongues. These provided the essential basis for later linguistic and literary developments, which in turn represented the cultural prelude to political awakening and action.

The Balkan peoples also retained their folk literatures, which contributed vitally to the preservation of national identity. The bards who sang of past glories and heroes were helping to preserve the consciousness of their peoples and were thereby preparing the way for future revolution. This was particularly true of the Serbians, whose epic poetry represents one of the most artistic creations of European ballad literature. When they narrated the heroic exploits of Dušan and Kraljević Marko, they felt profoundly that the sufferings, defeats, and triumphs of these medieval figures were those of the nation rather than those of individuals. The other Balkan peoples had corresponding folk literatures that expressed their aspirations and strengthened their national consciousness and cohesiveness.[8]

The combination of the above factors enabled the Balkan nationalities to exist for centuries as separate and distinct entities. But at the same time they were comparatively inert until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when certain far-reaching changes created an entirely new climate in the Balkan world and ushered in what may be termed the "age of nationalism."

One of these changes was the decline

[7] The favorable position of the Balkan peoples under Turkish rule in the early centuries is emphasized by G. Vernadsky, "On some parallel trends in Russian and Turkish history," *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, XXXVI (July 1945), 25–36; and by C. Tukin, "Osmanli Imparatorluğunda Girit Isyanlari: 1821 Yilina Kadar Girit" [Cretan revolts in the Ottoman Empire: Crete to 1821], *Belleten*, IX (April 1945), 163–211. The latter work compares Turkish and Venetian administration in Crete and demonstrates the preference of the inhabitants for the former.

[8] Balkan folk literature in general is described in A. Ognjanov, *Die Volkslieder der Balkanslaven* (Berlin, 1941); K. Dieterich, "Die Volksdichtung der Balkanländer in ihren gemeinsamen Elementen; ein Beitrag zur vergleichenden Volkskunde," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde*, XII (1902), 145–55, 272–91, 403–15; G. A. Megas, "La civilisation dite balkanique: la poésie populaire des pays des Balkans," *L'hellénisme contemporain*, IV (January–February, 1950), 8–30. For individual countries see C. Fauriel, *Chants populaires de la Grèce moderne* (2 vols.; Paris, 1824–25); S. Michaelides, *The neohellenic folk-music* (Limassol, Cyprus, 1948); D. Subotic, *Yugoslav popular ballads: their origin and development* (Cambridge, England, 1922); G. R. Noyes and L. Bacon, *Heroic ballads of Servia* (Boston, 1913); H. Rootham, *Kossovo: heroic songs of the Serbs* (Oxford, 1920); D. H. Low, *The ballads of Marko Kraljevic* (Cambridge, England, 1922); W. A. Morison, *The revolt of the Serbs against the Turks (1804–1813): translations from the Serbian national ballads of the period* (Cambridge, England, 1942); A. Strauss, *Bulgarische Volksdichtung* (Vienna, 1895); G. Rosen, *Bulgarische Volksdichtungen* (Leipzig, 1879); R. S. Patterson, *Romanian songs and ballads* (London, 1919); E. D. Tappe (ed.), *Rumanian prose and verse* (London, 1956).

of the Ottoman Empire. Beginning with the late sixteenth century, various factors combined to undermine Ottoman strength and efficiency.[9] The Balkan peoples were directly affected by the deterioration of the Ottoman imperial structure. They were emboldened by the manifest weakness of their Turkish overlords to make bids for independence. Also, in certain areas they were subjected to such anarchy and oppression that they were literally forced to take up arms in self-defense. The outstanding example of this type of action was the uprising of the Serbs in 1804 against the excesses of the janissaries. Ottoman decline stimulated individual as well as mass rebellion. The bolder peasants, driven to desperation by the extortion and exploitation, abandoned their plots and took to the mountains or forests. There they led the perilous but free lives of outlaws. They organized themselves into small bands and robbed at will. Some confined themselves in Robin Hood fashion to the Turks and to the rich Christian oligarchs and monks, while others were virtually brigands and pillaged indiscriminately.[10]

The chief significance of these "klephts" or "haiduks" or "haiduts," as they were called in Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria, respectively, was that they kept alive the idea of justice and freedom. They themselves had no ideology or national consciousness. Their ballads did not call upon the Christians to rise in the name of nationalism and to create independent Balkan states. Instead, they glorified local skirmishes and extolled in an extravagant manner the fabulous exploits and the magnificent trappings of individual guerrilla heroes. These warriors were almost invariably illiterate. They had no comprehension of the cultural and historical traditions of their respective peoples. A Greek scholar of this period relates that when he met the renowned guerrilla leader Nikotsaras, he acclaimed his prowess as equal to that of Achilles. Nikotsaras was deeply offended that he should be compared to an unknown. "What nonsense is this," he replied indignantly, "and who is this Achilles? Did the musket of Achilles kill many?"[11]

Despite their limitations, these outlaws did create a tradition of resistance that profoundly influenced the popular mind. They also provided a ready-made fighting force when various factors which they scarcely comprehended culminated in the series of national uprisings in the nineteenth century.

Balkan nationalism was stimulated not only by Ottoman decline but also by certain economic developments that affected the entire peninsula. Outstanding among these developments was the breakdown of the timar landholding system established at the time of the conquest and its replacement with the infinitely more onerous chiflik system.[12]

[9] The decline of the Ottoman Empire presents a fascinating and important problem that has not been studied systematically, at least in its entirety. A survey of the manifold causes and manifestations of Ottoman decline is given in L. S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453* (New York, 1958), chaps. viii and ix, which provide a bibliographical introduction to the subject.

[10] A comprehensive study of the Balkan outlaws is needed. Only restricted studies are available, such as G. Rosen, *Die balkan Haiduken im Beitrag zur innern Geschichte des Slawenthums* (Leipzig, 1878); J. W. Baggally, *The klephtic ballads in relation to Greek history, 1715–1821* (Oxford, 1937); P. S. Spandonidis, "Le clefte," *L'hellénisme contemporain* (January–February 1954), pp. 3–18.

[11] K. M. Koumas, *Istoria ton anthropinon praxeon apo ton archaiotaton chronon eos ton hmeron mas* [History of the acts of man from the earliest years to our days] (Vienna, 1832), XII, 544.

[12] The evolution and character of the chifliks are analyzed in the following works: R. Busch-Zantner, *Agrarverfassung, Gesellschaft und Siedlung in Südosteuropa in besonderer Berücksichtigung der*

Under the timar arrangement the most deserving warriors were alloted fiefs, or timars, from which they had the right to obtain certain services and revenues. In return the timar-holders, or spahis, were required to give military service in time of war. They did not possess hereditary title to their fiefs and could be deprived of them if they failed to meet their military obligations. By contrast, the Christian peasants, or raias, who worked on the timars did enjoy hereditary use of their plots and could not be evicted unless they failed to till them for three years. Furthermore, their obligations to the spahis and to the government were carefully specified in imperial laws, or *kanuns*, which protected them against exploitation. Thus the timar landholding system in its prime was, in the words of a Turkish historian, "a happy combination of the state's military needs and social security for the peasantry."[13]

By the end of the sixteenth century the timar system was disintegrating for various reasons, some of them of an economic nature and others related to the weakening of central authority.[14] The net result was that the timars were transformed into chifliks that were held as free and heritable property. This in turn meant that the chiflik-owners now were at liberty to exploit their raias without check and to evict them when they wished. It follows that rents on the chifliks were much higher than those on the timars. Furthermore, the raias' freedom of movement was in practice severely restricted because of chronic indebtedness to the chiflik-owner. Thus the peasants who worked on the chifliks were tenants in name but serfs in fact.

The spread of the chifliks[15] had profound political repercussions. The dispossessed and exploited Balkan peasantry naturally became increasingly disaffected and rebellious. In fact, a close relationship is noticeable between the spread of the chifliks and the incidence of peasant revolts and of attacks by outlaw bands.[16] The significance of this

Türkenzeit (Leipzig, 1938); J. Tomasevich, *Peasants, politics and economic change in Yugoslavia* (Stanford, Calif., 1955); H. Inalcik, "Land problems in Turkish history," *Muslim world*, XLV (July 1955), 221–28; T. Stoianovich, "Land tenure and related sectors of the Balkan economy, 1600–1800," *Journal of economic history*, XIII (Fall, 1953), 398–411; and the same author's essay in manuscript form, "Lost villages, recolonization, and peasant servitude: a Balkan example."

[13] Inalcik, p. 224.

[14] When the control of Constantinople slackened, the spahis seized the opportunity to violate the two features of the timar system that they found most objectionable: the non-heritable nature of their fiefs and the legal limits on the raias' obligations. The loss of the trans-Danubian provinces in the late seventeenth century forced large numbers of spahis to cross over to the Balkan lands. This led to the division of the existing timars, which became increasingly smaller and inadequate to support the spahis. This in turn created pressure to abandon the limits set upon the raias' obligations in order to increase the income of the spahis. The timar system was undermined also by the pressure of the constantly expanding economy of western Europe, which produced a price dislocation in the Ottoman Empire and which also created a strong demand for Balkan maize and cotton. This demand provided a powerful incentive to violate the timar system in order to obtain full control of the land and to exploit the peasants without hindrance for the maximum production of export commodities.

[15] The formation of chifliks was never legally recognized, but it was tolerated to such an extent that these private holdings eventually replaced the timars as the basis of Ottoman feudalism. The conversion process began in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and continued at an accelerated pace during the following two centuries. The chifliks spread throughout the fertile plains areas, including the Peloponnesus, Thessaly, Macedonia, Thrace, the Maritsa Valley, Danubian Bulgaria, the Kossovo-Metahija Basin, parts of Bosnia, and the coastal plains of Albania.

[16] This relationship is emphasized in the case of Bulgaria by H. Inalcik, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi* [The Tanzimat and the Bulgarian question] (Ankara, 1943), and N. G. Levintov, "Agrarnye Otnosheniia v Bulgarii nakanune Osvobozhdeniia i Agrarnyi Perevorot 1877–1879 Godov" [Agrarian

peasant unrest is that it provided a mass basis for the nationalist movements and insurrections among all the Balkan peoples during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

Another economic development that stimulated Balkan nationalism was the marked expansion of commerce, handicrafts, and maritime activity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[17] This economic growth affected directly and profoundly the development of Balkan nationalism. The new middle-class elements that now appeared were by their very nature dissatisfied with the Ottoman status quo. They had little use for a government that was unable to maintain roads, curb brigands, or prevent the open and never ending extortions on the part of its own officials. In this respect the following anonymous letter that appeared in the Moscow journal *Vestnik Evropy* (Herald of Europe) in January 1805 is revealing:

> The insecurity of life and property take away the stimulus to establish factories. Even the boyars in the Danubian Principalities consider this dangerous. . . . Not long ago a wealthy lord, Sandulati Sturga, the son-in-law of the present hospodar, Muruzi, started a woolen factory, but for safety's sake he built it in his village and not in town. . . . They have no understanding of promissory notes. . . . [Borrowers] have to pay 30 to 40 per cent, which sum is subtracted at once from the loans. For transfer to Germany or to France, the banker charges 10 to 20 per cent.[18]

The new middle-class groups also tended to be radical-minded because of their contracts with the West. Merchants and seamen who had journeyed to foreign lands could not help contrasting the security and enlightenment they had witnessed abroad with the deplorable conditions at home. Very naturally they would conclude that their own future and that of their fellow countrymen depended upon the earliest possible removal of the Turkish incubus. It does not follow that every merchant and shipowner was an ardent revolutionary. When the Greek war of independence began in 1821, some of the fabulously wealthy shipowning families hesitated to enter the struggle precisely because they had so much to lose. But they were exceptions. More typical of this group was the following lament of a Greek merchant, John Priggos, who had made his fortune in Amsterdam. While living

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relations in Bulgaria on the eve of liberation and the agrarian revolution of 1877–1879], in *Osvobozhdenie Bŏlgarii ot Turetskogo Iga* [The liberation of Bulgaria from Turkish rule] (Moscow, 1953), pp. 139–221; and in the case of Greece by M. B. Sakellariou, *E Peloponnesos kata ten deutern Tourkokratian, 1715–1821* [The Peloponnesus during the second Turkish rule, 1715–1821] (Athens, 1939).

[17] Commerce was stimulated by the increasing export of Balkan cotton and maize to western Europe (see above, n. 14, for the tie-up with the spread of chifliks), by the restoration of peace in the Danube Valley with the 1699 Karlovitz treaty, by the Russian expansion to the Black Sea, which resulted in a lively commerce between the new Black Sea ports and the Balkan lands, and by the Anglo-French wars of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which ruined Western merchants in the Levant and correspondingly aided the native merchants. The expansion of trade in turn stimulated the demand and the output of handicraft products, especially in isolated mountain areas that were not vulnerable to Turkish interference and extortion. The rise of commerce and industry led to the growth of merchant shipping in various ports along the Dalmatian, Albanian, and Epirote coasts and on the Greek littoral and islands. The best study of this economic expansion is by Stoianovich, *L'économie balkanique...* . See also Gibb and Bowen; F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (Paris, 1949); economic histories of individual Balkan states, such as I. Sakazov, *Bulgarische Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (Berlin, 1929); and contemporary accounts, such as F. Beaujour, *A view of the commerce of Greece formed after an annual average from 1787 to 1797* (London, 1800).

[18] Cited by A. F. Miller, *Mustafa Pasha Bairaktar: Ottomanskaia Imperia v Nachale XIX Veka* [Mustafa Pasha Bairaktar: the Ottoman Empire in the beginning of the nineteenth century] (Moscow, 1947), p. 102.

in that city, he had been impressed by the security and justice with which commercial operations could be conducted:

> But all this cannot exist under the Turk. He has neither order nor justice. And if the capital is one thousand he multiplies it tenfold so that he may loot and impoverish others, not realizing that the wealth of his subjects is the wealth of his kingdom . . . he is altogether unjust, and he is not one for creating anything but only for destroying. May the Almighty ruin him so that Greece may become Christian, and justice may prevail, and governments may be created as in Europe where everyone has his own without fear of any injustice.[19]

The experiences and the sentiments of Priggos indicate why the new middle-class groups played such important roles in all the Balkan national movements. Their historical significance lies in the fact that they provided leadership for the peasantry that had become disaffected with the spread of the chifliks. The middle class possessed the funds, the organization, and the political sophistication necessary to channel and to guide the peasant unrest. The triumph of Balkan nationalism can be explained to a considerable degree by the combination of the peasants who furnished the mass basis and the merchants and artisans who provided the leadership.[20]

Balkan nationalism was the product not only of the political and economic developments noted above but also of a concurrent and closely related intellectual revolution. Merchants like Priggos made important contributions to Balkan national development not only because of their political activities but also because of their role as intermediaries between their native countries and the outside world. The Serbian merchants in southern Hungary, the Bulgarian merchants in southern Russia and in the Danubian principalities, and the Greek merchants scattered widely in foreign cities such as Trieste, Venice, Vienna, Amsterdam, Budapest, Bucharest, and Odessa all contributed greatly to the intellectual awakening of their fellow countrymen. They did so by bestowing upon their native towns and villages lavish gifts of books, equipment, and money. Frequently they financed the education of young men of their race in foreign universities. They also made possible the publication of books and newspapers in their native languages. These books usually were printed in European cities and then shipped to the Balkan lands. It is a striking and significant fact that the first Greek newspaper and the first Serbian newspaper were published in Vienna in 1790 and 1791, respectively; that for many years almost all Serbian and Bulgarian books in the Cyrillic script were printed by the Budapest University Press; that the first Bulgarian book was published in Rimnik, Wallachia, in 1806; that the Philike Hetairia which planned the Greek war of independence was organized in 1804 by Greek merchants in Odessa; that Bulgarian merchants in the same city were responsible for the first

[19] Cited by G. K. Kordatos, *Regas Pheraios kai e Balkanike omospondia* [Rhigas Pheraios and Balkan federation] (Athens, 1945), p. 28.

[20] This generalization is made with the proviso that modifications and exceptions need to be recognized in considering specific cases and regions. In the Peloponnesus, for example, Sakellariou has shown that the commerce was controlled not by a new middle class but rather by the primates who owned the chifliks. Likewise, the very wealthy shipping magnates of Hydra were at first opposed to the Greek revolution because they feared the loss of their fortunes and because earlier revolts had failed. Yet the fact remains that Greek merchants organized the revolutionary Philike Hetairia; that pig dealers were prominent in the Serbian revolt; and that "the history of the Bulgarian national revival is the history of the craft gilds" (J. F. Clarke, "Bible societies, American missonaries and the national revival of Bulgaria" [unpublished doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1937], p. 118).

Bulgarian schools and the first Bulgarian textbooks used in their homeland; and that Novi Sad in southern Hungary was long known as the "Serbian Athens" because of its contributions to the development of Serbian culture and national consciousness.

Special note should be made of the dynamic ideological and political impact of the French Revolution.[21] Despite the relative isolation of the Balkan Peninsula, revolutionary ideas and literature did seep in through various channels. The uprisings in Paris and the exploits of Napoleon made the subject peoples more restless, more independent, and more determined to win their freedom. Furthermore, all the powers involved in the Balkans during this period enrolled in their respective armies a considerable number of recruits from the local populations. This military service under the French, British, and Russian flags was quite significant, opening new horizons for the recruits as well as instructing them in military techniques. For example, Sir Richard Church, who organized a regiment of the Duke of York's Greek Light Infantry while stationed in the Ionian Islands, reported on November 12, 1811 that he had been able to transform his men "from the most lawless of mankind, not only into good soldiers, but also into praiseworthy members of civilized society. . . . The number of recruits that flock to me from all parts of Greece is really extraordinary."[22] A contemporary Greek revolutionary described the over-all impact of the French Revolution upon the Balkan peoples as follows: "The French Revolution in general awakened the minds of all men. . . . All the Christians of the Near East prayed to God that France should wage war against the Turks, and they believed that they would be freed. . . . But when Napoleon made no move, they began to take measures for freeing themselves."[23]

The manifold developments described above combined to create a new Balkan world. The transformation may best be summarized as the ending of the age of theocracy and the beginning of the age

[21] There is no comprehensive study of the impact of the French Revolution and of Napoleon on the Balkans as a whole, although there is a considerable body of literature concerning the influence in specific localities. The following studies are of a general nature but superficial: N. Iorga, *La révolution française et le sud-est de l'Europe* (Bucharest, 1934); F. Thierfelder, *Ursprung und Wirkung der französischen Kultureinflüsse in Südosteuropa* (Berlin, 1943); N. Moschopoulos, *La presse dans la renaissance balkanique* (Athens, 1931); *1789; éveil des peuples: la révolution française, l'Europe centrale et las Balkans* (Paris, 1939).

[22] S. Lane-Poole, *Sir Richard Church* (London, 1890), p. 27. For other examples of Balkan soldiers in great-power armies see S. I. Samoilov, "Narodno-osvoboditelnoe vosstanie 1821 g. v Valakhii" [The national liberation uprising of 1821 in Wallachia], *Voprosy Istorii* (October 1955), pp. 94–105; N. I. Kazakov, "Iz Istorii Russko-Bôlgarskikh Sviazei v Period Viony Rosii s Turtsiei (1806–1812 gg.)" [From the history of Russo-Bulgarian ties during the war of Russia with Turkey (1806–1812)], *Voprosy Istorii* (June 1955), pp. 42–55; P. K. Fortunatov, "Boevoi Russko-Bolgarskii Soiuz v Voine 1877–1878 Godov" [The Russo-Bulgarian military alliance in 1877–1878], in *Osvobozhdenie Bôlgarii ot Turetskogo Iga* [The liberation of Bulgaria from the Turkish yoke] (Moscow, 1953), pp. 47–70; and J. Savant, "Napoléon et la libération de la Grèce," *L'hellénisme contemporain* (July–October 1950), pp. 320–41.

[23] Ch. Photios, *Apomnemoneumata peri tes Ellenikes epanastaseos* [Memoirs of the Greek revolution] (Athens, 1899), I, 1. Similar is the testimony of another Greek revolutionary, the colorful Theodore Kolokotrones, who, after being a klepht in the Peloponnesus, served under the British in the Ionian Islands and then played a leading role in the Greek war of independence: "According to my judgment, the French Revolution and the doings of Napoleon opened the eyes of the world. The nations knew nothing before, and the people thought that kings were gods upon the earth and that they were bound to say that whatever they did was well done. Through this present change it is more difficult to rule the people" (T. Kolokotrones and E. M., Edmonds, *Kolokotrones: klepht and warrior* [London, 1892], pp. 127–28).

of nationalism. The age of theocracy, which had prevailed since the Ottoman conquest, was characterized by the all-pervading influence of the church. In the theocratically organized society of this early period the Orthodox church naturally dominated education, written literature, and intellectual life. The few teachers invariably wore priestly robes. The few books, with unimportant exceptions, were theological treatises. In place of several Balkan literatures, there existed only one Orthodox ecclesiastical literature, written either in a debased ecclesiastical Greek incomprehensible to most Greeks or in an archaic Church Slavic incomprehensible to most Slavs. Likewise, in the realm of politics the leadership of the church was unchallenged. National policies and national objectives were virtually nonexistent. The Balkan world at this time was a non-national Orthodox world, and Balkan politics were conceived and expressed in non-national Orthodox terms.

This Orthodox hegemony was undermined by the disruptive force of nationalism. Ecclesiastics no longer were the sole spokesmen of the faithful—witness the appearance of revolutionary leaders like Rhigas, Karageorge, Vladimirescu, and Rakovsky. Priests were no longer the sole instructors in the schools; they were challenged by new teachers with new learning, like Korais and Obradović and the directors of the Gabrovo school in Bulgaria. Theological treatises no longer were the sole texts for instruction; they were being replaced in the new schools with humanistic curriculums, including modern languages and sciences. In short, the age of theocracy was giving way to a new age of secular and national ideas and leaders and aspirations.

The age of nationalism did not culminate in a united peninsular revolution against Ottoman rule. Instead, there occurred a series of independent uprisings spread over the whole of the nineteenth century. And in place of common effort there was continual rivalry and occasional open conflict.

One reason for this dissension was that the tempo of national revival varied greatly from people to people. The Greeks came first because of certain favorable circumstances: their numerous contacts with the West, their glorious classical heritage which stimulated national pride, and their Greek Orthodox church which embodied and preserved national consciousness. After the Greeks came the Serbs. They led the other south Slavs because of the high degree of local self-government and because of the stimulating influence of the large Serbian settlements in southern Hungary. These advantages enjoyed by the Greeks and the Serbs suggest the reasons for the slower rate of national revival among the other Balkan peoples. The Bulgars had no direct ties with the West and were located near the Ottoman capital and the solid Turkish settlements in Thrace and eastern Macedonia. The Rumanians suffered from a sharp social stratification which was unique in the Balkan Peninsula and which produced a cultivated upper class and an inert peasant mass. Finally, the Albanians were the worst off, with their primitive tribal organization and their division among three creeds—orthodoxy, catholicism, and Islam.

For these reasons there occurred, in place of a Balkan revolution, separate uprisings ranging from the early nineteenth century to the early twentieth. An underlying and persistent hostility between the Greeks on the one hand and the Slavs and Rumanians on the other contributed further to Balkan disunity.[24]

[24] This hostility is frequently described by con-

One reason for this hostility was the Greek domination of the Orthodox ecclesiastical machinery in the Balkans.[25] Greek prelates filled virtually all the top church posts in the northern Balkans, while the Greek language was used in the church services and in the church schools.

This situation led to charges that the Greeks were conducting a deliberate hellenization and denationalization campaign against the south Slavs. In actual fact, Greek cultural and ecclesiastical hegemony was more the product of historical tradition and contemporary reality. The south Slavs and the Rumanians had neither the trained personnel necessary to fill ecclesiastical posts nor the literary languages and national literatures needed for educational purposes. The Rumanian historian Nicolae Iorga has emphasized this point as follows:

> For many years a struggle had been conducted in my country against what is called "the Greek oppression." For forty years I have opposed this manifestly erroneous viewpoint. . . . If there was a Greek school [in Rumania], it was not a national school of contemporary hellenism; it was for the whole world, like the Latin schools in the West. It provided a common bond with its use of one language and its propagation of one body of thought. . . . Common life under the Ottoman Empire, cooperation within the context of a civilization and one of the great languages of antiquity, made possible continual rapport [among the Balkan Christians].[26]

The fact remains, however, that with the first signs of national consciousness, the northern Balkan peoples naturally turned against the cultural and ecclesiastical domination of the patriarchate. It did not matter that the Greek nationalists also found themselves at odds with the essentially antinational church hierarchy. The south Slavs and Rumanians understandably identified the Greek-dominated church with the Greek nationality and became generally anti-Greek.

The northern Balkan peoples also had economic grievances against the Greeks. They heartily disliked the Greek financiers, who frequently were the local tax farmers and moneylenders. Underlying these specific considerations was the traditional antipathy and distrust of the peasant for the man from the city. The overwhelming majority of the Greeks at this time were engaged in agriculture. But the Greek that the Rumanian and Slav peasants had dealings with was likely to be a merchant, a government official, a moneylender, a tax farmer, or an ecclesiastic—hence the popular conception of the Greek as well educated and intelligent but also cunning, avaricious, and unscrupulous. The Greeks naturally reciprocated in kind. They tended to look down upon the other Balkan peoples as dull and ignorant country bumpkins. A contemporary observer re-

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temporary travelers but has not been systematically studied, apart from indirect references in works like A. Gorovei, "Les peuples balkaniques dans le folklore roumain," *Revue intenationale des études balkaniques*, II (1938), 469–85. It should be noted that there were also cases of co-operation and common action against the Turks. This requires study, especially because each nationalist movement seems to have had an early peninsular phase before becoming exclusive and antiforeign. Greek-Serbian co-operation has been studied carefully by M. Lascaris, *Ellenes kai Serboi kata tous apaleytheretikous ton agonas 1804–1830* [Greeks and Serbians during their wars of liberation 1804–1830] (Athens, 1936).

[25] The abolition of the Serbian patriarchate of Peć in 1766 and of the Bulgarian archbishopric of Ochrida in the following year placed both Serbians and Bulgarians under the direct jurisdiction of the Greek patriarchs in Constantinople. This arrangement continued in Serbia until 1831, when the patriarchate recognized the autonomy of the Serbian church, and in Bulgaria until 1870, when the Bulgarians obtained a firman from the sultan establishing their church as independent of the Ecumenical patriarchate.

[26] Article in *Eleftheron Vema* of Athens, Sept. 2, 1931, cited by N. Moschopoulos, pp. 130–31.

lates that "the Greeks despise the Sclavonians, calling them barbarians and 'kondrokephalai' (wooden-heads), as they did even in the time of Michael Palaeologus, 1261: on the other hand the astute and wily spirit of the Greeks is utterly repugnant to the Sclavonians, who regard them with jealousy and distrust."[27]

There was division within the Balkan countries as well as between them. Merchants, mariners, and land-hungry peasants were likely to be dissatisfied with the imperial status quo, but religious and secular leaders who were closely associated with the Ottoman imperial structure were not so ready to turn against it. This was the case with the higher clergy, who opposed revolutionary agitation because of its rationalism, secularism, and Western origins and also because it threatened their privileged position and their vested interests within the Ottoman framework.[28]

Another important group that was lukewarm to change was the primates, known to the Greeks as "kodjabashi," to the Bulgarians as "chorbadji," and to the Serbs as "knez." The typical primates were combination landowners, administrative agents, and tax-collectors. They collected taxes, tried civil cases, and served as intermediaries between the Turkish overlords and the Christian subjects. In most regions they formed a provincial aristocracy with an almost exclusive and hereditary control over local government. At best these primates strove to wrest concessions from the Turkish officials, to dissuade them from undesirable actions, and to raise the health and educational standards of their constituents. At worst they used their authority to exploit their fellow Christians and were bitterly referred to by the latter as "Christian Turks." In either case the primates, by virtue of their function as intermediaries between rulers and ruled, had no choice but to maintain good relations with the Turkish officials. Their very existence as a class required acceptance and, if necessary, support of Ottoman rule. Thus the primates throughout the peninsula usually were opposed to revolution unless they could see their way clear to a successful outcome and to the preservation of their position and interests.

Contemporary travelers frequently reported that the Balkan peasants complained openly that they suffered more from the exactions of their own primates and clergy than from those of the Turkish officials. One English traveler, for example, relates that he encountered "a saying common among the Greeks, that the country labours under three curses, the priests, the cogia bashis and the Turks; always placing the plagues in this order."[29] This point should not be exaggerated, but neither should it be ignored. Ottoman administration, with its extreme decentralization, created certain native vested interests that in-

[27] J. H. A. Ubicini, *Letters on Turkey: an account of the religious, political, social and commercial condition of the Ottoman Empire . . . Translated from the French . . . by Lady Easthope* (London, 1856), II, 173.

[28] The Orthodox prelates were not at all times loyal to the sultan. A considerable number of them made the pilgrimage to Moscow to implore the aid of "our Orthodox Tsar," "our sovereign of the True Faith." But when the call for revolution came from Western-inspired leaders who wished to establish modern nation-states rather than to further the cause of orthodoxy, the church leaders reacted negatively. They did so not only for material reasons but also because they considered the new doctrines from the West to be a challenge to the intellectual foundations of orthodoxy. See L. Hadrovics, *Le peuple serbe et son église sous la domination turque* (Paris, 1947), pp. 124 ff.; and Papadopoullos, pp. 143–45.

[29] W. Gell, *Narrative of a journey in the Morea* (London, 1823), p. 65.

evitably were committed to the status quo. Lord Broughton was so impressed by this factor when he journeyed through the Greek lands in 1810 that he concluded that a national uprising was out of the question.

> Any general revolution of the Greeks, independent of foreign aid, is quite impracticable; for notwithstanding the great mass of the people, as is the case in all insurrections, has feeling and spirit enough to make the attempt, yet most of the higher classes, and all the clergy . . . are apparently willing to acquiesce in their present condition.
>
> The Patriarch and Princess of the Fanal [Phanariots] are at the devotion of the Porte. The primates of the towns and the richer merchants would be cautious not to move, unless they might be certain of benefiting by the change; and of this backwardness in the chiefs of their nation, the Greeks are by no means insensible. They talk of it publicly, and make it the subject of their satire, revenging themselves, as is their constant practice by a song. . . . "We have found a Metropolitan, and a Bey of Wallachia, and a Merchant and a Primate, all friends to tyranny."[30]

Lord Broughton's pessimistic conclusion concerning the likelihood of a Greek revolt was not borne out by the course of events. Nevertheless, his observations, like those of other contemporary travelers, suggest why the Balkan nationalist awakening took the varying forms that it did. Their evidence indicates that Balkan nationalism was a complex movement, with centrifugal as well as centripetal forces operating within and among the various peoples.

[30] J. C. R. Hobhouse [Broughton], *A journey through Albania and other provinces of Turkey in Europe and Asia to Constantinople during the years 1809 and 1810* (London, 1813), p. 597.