

Social and Psychological Factors in the Collapse of the Ottoman Empire ca. 1780-1918

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Introduction

The current paper seeks to consider two issues related to conflict in the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire. First, the social categories which could define the problems of transition within the Ottoman Empire are established, and the social forms such as the vendetta, the feud, and vigilantism which contributed to violence are discussed. Second, psychological conditions related to these social states of being are examined in a summary form, and are accompanied by case studies. The intention of this preliminary study is to avoid abstract psychological categories, and to determine collective or individual states as observable in Middle and Near Eastern cultures and the limitations of nineteenth century literatures.

A. SOCIAL ASPECTS OF OTTOMAN DECLINE.

Social Condition of the Ottoman Empire, 1683-1918.

Particularism or Localism. The Ottoman Empire existed generally in the social form known as particularism throughout most of its early existence. By particularism is meant a social condition in which communities lived in association with one another. Nationalism and broad cultural entities bound together by the principle of assimilation were alien to the Ottoman Empire until the middle of the nineteenth century. Almost all communities lived under the social ideal of the smaller, custom-based societal order, and recognized nothing larger than tribe, village, city quarter, band, or [extended] family as the chief structural element in society.¹

¹ Cevdet Türkay, *Başbakanlık Arşivi Belgerine göre Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Oymak, Ashiret ve Cemaatlar* Tercüman Kaynak Eserler Serisi: 1 (İstanbul, 1970).

Assimilationism. Assimilationism developed in the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, perhaps under the pressure and influence of European governments, notably France, England, and later Prussia (after the unification of Germany under Bismarck). The social ideal of assimilation required all cultural groups from varying backgrounds to abandon their particularist identity and narrower concept of homeland for a broader cultural identity. The influence of France and Britain after the Crimean War initiated a move toward a positive assimilationist principle which culminated in the Social Darwinist thought of Ziya Gokalp early in the twentieth century, and even more ominously in the Turkish racial doctrines sponsored by Atatürk in the early decades of the First Turkish Republic.² Social philosophies espousing assimilationist concepts understood society as dwelling within an evolutionary continuum, evolving from a condition of association, where inter-community conflict was common, to ever greater degrees of assimilation characterized by greater unity and systematized societal ordering, including a national organization.

Localism and Conflict in the Ottoman Empire.

The Feud and the Vendetta. Local communities of the Ottoman Empire existed in conditions where no general law managed intercommunity relations. Custom governed the local social arrangements of most groups until the Tanzimat attempted to institute a general law code to replace customary practices and arrangements. Even then, states Moshe Ma'oz, matters worsened through these reform efforts. "Although the *Tanzimat* regime aimed at creating a new pattern of intergroup accommodation and fraternity among all subjects, in Syria it served in effect to aggravate and further polarize the intercommunal relations particularly between Muslims and Christians as well as between Christians and Jews."³ The effort to impose a new and

Sixteenth Century," in Benjamin Braude, Bernard Lewis (eds.), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society, Volume 2, The Arab-Speaking Lands* (New York, 1982) pp.7-18; George D. Frangos, "The Philike Etaireia: A Premature National Coalition," in Richard Clogg (ed), *The Struggle for Greek Independence* (London, 1973) p. 96 are just a few of the writings which refer to the dominance of localism.

² Speros Vryonis, Jr., *The Turkish State and History, Clio Meets the Grey Wolf* (Thessalonike; New York) Publisher 1993 [1991] examines Turkish racial doctrines.

³ Moshe Ma'oz. "Communal Conflicts in Ottoman Syria during the Reform

alien law, elevating the status of non-Muslims, created more antagonisms, and left the old ones unresolved.

The feud comprised rivalries between or among notable families in all regions of the Ottoman Empire. These rivalries originated and continued for the sake of power, wealth, political and social status, and for the dominance of one elite family over others. The feud usually involved conflicts between or among the affiliates of these elite families as well. Feuds represented the condition of a bitter and lasting hostility; especially such a state existing between two families, tribes, or individuals, marked by murderous assaults, in revenge for some previous insult or wrong.⁴ The vendetta [*intiqâm, he vendeta, osveta*] differed from the feud in the nature of the offense for which revenge was sought. Blood revenge existed at the base of the vendetta, and required a revenge killing by the wronged family or group as a return for some murder committed by the enemy lineage or community.⁵ Traditionally, these forms of violence were limited in scope, and the local communities attempted to intervene if killing increased beyond acceptable levels. Most local customs warranted such interventions. Just as the Tanzimat failed to produce peaceful coexistence in Syria, so did the effort to establish a law of interpersonal and inter-community relations provoke more serious problems elsewhere. Between the intense local and international conflicts fought on Ottoman soil in the nineteenth century, and the Tanzimat's efforts to abandon age-old institutions and practices, the Ottoman Empire plummeted to new depths of local conflict. The feud and the vendetta, which had been limited by custom, evolved into vigilantism, where limits and controls were lacking. The chief form of local conflict in much of the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire was founded upon the principle of vigilantism.

Vigilantism. The vigilante carried the act of vengeance to an extreme. Instead of one killing in response to a murder, large numbers of the enemy were killed, entire villages slaughtered or looted, or depredations far in excess of the original crime were perpetrated. The vigilante could not rely on custom or the law to save him, so he took more extreme measures to protect himself. Even though he may have justified his actions by age-old custom observed toward an enemy lineage or group, his act abandoned the limitations imposed by traditional social relations. In fact, the new reforms introduced confusion. Older customs were abandoned, but the newer laws

⁴ Jacob Black-Michaud, *Cohesive Force: Feud in the Mediterranean and the*

were not accepted. Total lawlessness required a community reaction for the sake of self-preservation. The vigilante needed to "take the law into his own hands" to prevent becoming a victim himself. "The difficulty with vigilantism is that it has no stopping place. Men accustomed to taking the law into their own hands continue to do so long after judicial processes are established."⁶ The feud could become an unregulated vigilante conflict, and existed where there was "little or no instituted 'civil government'."⁷

Vigilantism increased during the course of the nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire. The cataclysmic nature of the empire's collapse, coupled with the inability of reform to succeed, served as the most important causes of vigilante behavior. Wars of nationalism and imperialism provoked further troubles among the empire's subjects, and intensified the vigilante feuds which grew everywhere. Vigilantism was the response of communities which felt the need to take extraordinary measures to defend themselves. A similar pattern could be found in every province and former province of the Ottoman Empire. The new Ottoman reform army, the *nizâmîyye*, had serious difficulties in controlling the entire extent of the Ottoman Empire (including major urban areas on occasion), in spite of the fact that it was better armed than its vigilante subjects. By way of compensation, the Ottoman government exploited the tendency toward vigilantism by settling bands of military colonists (Kurds, Circassians, Albanians, Laz, Bedouins, Turkmen, Zeibeks, and others) in widely dispersed regions to act as government-sponsored vigilantes in the name of the state. These official or semi-official vigilantes functioned in the same manner as the vigilante communities they "controlled". They formed bands of brigands who looted, burned, and raped, occasionally killing people in peacetime, but during the crisis of a war, becoming a serious menace to their local enemies, and to communities they came across. The government irregulars destroyed entire villages, and killed substantial numbers of the population in wartime. Vigilantism went far beyond the feud in such international conflicts, when bands of irregular soldiers formed from the military colonists were brought to serve the regular army in its campaigns. No amount of government reform initiatives could still the clamor of the alarmed and predatory vigilante during the crisis of the Ottoman Empire's collapse. The vigilante came to dominate the regulation of society at the local level in many areas, with dire consequences for public order in the Ottoman Empire.

Terrorism. A byproduct of the Ottoman Empire's collapse was terror-

⁶ W. Eugene Hollon, *Frontier Violence: Another Look* (New York, 1974) p. 19.

ism, which rested upon dual foundations in the empire. The vigilante environment produced fertile ground for the planting of terrorism's seeds. Terrorism itself did not originate in the Ottoman Empire, but was first found in the modern social conditions of western and northeastern Europe of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Terrorism differed from political violence based upon palace intrigue in the social origins of the terrorists. Terrorists in the late nineteenth century Ottoman Empire were Muslim religious leaders, teachers, and students, the secularist intelligentsia, reform army officers, and members of secret societies, whatever their social background. The chief terrorist incidents of the period were plots or attempts to kill or depose important political leaders by individuals or cliques belonging to secret societies with no representation in the palace. The Küleli Incident of 1859 occurred as a result of a plot by a secret society intending to overthrow the sultan °Abdülmejid. Its membership included Muslim religious leaders, teachers, students, and secularist army officers, many of whom were arrested.⁸ The New or Young Ottoman plot of 1867 centered upon the New Ottoman secret society which aimed at the establishment of a liberal constitutional monarchy and the overthrow of the autocratic sultan °Abdülaziz. The plotters included Namik Kemal, who left the Ottoman Empire before an attempt was made to attack °Âlî Pasha and his retinue in or before June, 1867. Mehmed Bey led forty to fifty conspirators, but their intended strike was thwarted before it could even get underway. Some were arrested, while others fled and went into exile in France and elsewhere.⁹ In 1878, °Âlî Suavî, one of the conspirators of 1867 and a member of the reform intelligentsia, led a band of Muslim refugees from the Balkans to attack the Sultan °Abdülhamid II, intending to depose and assassinate him. The conspiracy resulted in fighting around the palace, in which Suavî and others were killed. Stefan Stamboulov, former prime minister of Bulgaria, was assassinated in July, 1895 by two men named Tufekchiev and Halo acting for the Bulgarian royal court. Tufekchiev had been convicted by an Ottoman tribunal earlier for complicity in the murder of a Bulgarian official in Istanbul.¹⁰ A number of political murders and attempted murders occurred in conjunction with the Young Turk revolution in 1908. The Otto-

⁸ Frederick Millingen (Osman Seify-Bey), *La Turquie sous la regne d'Abdul-Aziz (1862-1867)* (Paris, 1868), p. 159; Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (Princeton, 1963) p. 101.

⁹ Davison, *Reform*, pp. 187-215.

¹⁰ "Sir A. Nicholson to the Marquess of Salisbury, Sophia, July 18, 1895," in Kenneth Bourne, D. Cameron Watt, *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print, Volume 10, The Ottoman*

man commanding general in Kossovo vilayet was assassinated by a band of Young Turk soldiers, and an attempt was made on the life of Nazim Bey, the commander of Thessalonike.¹¹ Vigilantism contributed to the psychological orientation of many Middle and Near Eastern terrorists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which makes this form of terrorism different than that which occurred in western Europe. The question of terrorism is dealt with by the present author elsewhere.¹²

Assimilationism and the Escalation of Conflict

Assimilationist ideals of state and society propelled local feuds and vendettas into wars between large or medium-sized vigilante groups by the end of the nineteenth century. Vigilantism appeared especially in the Macedonian Question, the Kurdish attacks on Armenian enclaves as at Sasun in 1894-1896, the Young Turk revolution, and in World War I and the Greco-Turkish war. Most of these conflicts were associated with the diversity of assimilationist ideologies growing into prominence in the Ottoman Empire, including Pan Islam, Pan Slavism, various forms of Turkism and pan-Turkism, as well as the nationalisms evident everywhere. These assimilationist ideologies intended to create regions of homogeneous populations and culture for the groups which espoused these ideas to replace the old mixed population zones which had existed under Ottoman associationist practices. All of these ideologies also expressed irredentist and expansionist ambitions to attack their neighbors, and "rescue" communities of their fellow-countrymen. Tsarist Russia provoked pan-Slavic revolutionism among the Slavic subjects of the Ottoman Empire. Greece entertained the irredentist ideal of the *Megale Idea*. And the Ottoman Empire used Ottomanist or pan-Islamic ideals to spread revolution among the Muslims of the Caucasus, North Africa, and the Turkic peoples of Central Asia (where Turkism also became important early in the twentieth century). Assimilationist ideologies tended to adopt the notion of Total War (the eradication or deportation of an "enemy" population, or, at least, the total assimilation of conquered or subject peoples having different cultures from the ruling society). If assimilationism did not achieve its ultimate ends in most cases, the nature of inter-community strife was drastically altered by

Empire: Nationalism and Revolution, 1885-1908, David Gillard (ed.), (n.p., 1988) p. 73. See also: Ivan Dujcev, et.al., *Histoire de la Bulgarie des origines a nos jours*, Collection "Histoire des nations europeenes" (Roanne-France, 1977) pp. 343-54

¹¹ M.G. Barclay to Sir Edward Grey, Therapia, July 9, 1908," *British Documents* p. 489.

the introduction of these new ideologies. The appeal of the total war ideology gave the vigilante a tactic for committing murder on a mass scale, or, at the very least, enabled him to argue for an ethnic cleansing program such as deportation of unwanted neighbors.

B. PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF CONFLICT IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

This discussion will emphasize the feud/vendetta and vigilante conflict as the basis of its approach to psychological orientations in the conduct of war. The concepts of total war and terrorism and their psychological implications will be discussed elsewhere. The psychological aspects of warfare in the Ottoman Empire's last century are very important for understanding the historical roots of crises which have persisted into the twentieth century in different forms. Similarities and differences between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are quite significant. The nineteenth-century soldier maintained a highly aggressive approach toward his enemies, whom he saw all around him. The twentieth century soldier, especially after World War I, has been much less aggressive, but yet crisis, war, death, and destruction still persist, as in the former Yugoslavia. Psychological orientations toward collective conflicts may be represented by a dichotomy in which a soldier identified with either an aggressive or a passive prosecution of war. The literature of war demonstrates this dichotomy quite well, most particularly in letters, diaries, and memoirs written by soldiers of all types from 1789-1918.

Soldiers who were (and are) mustered into regular armies, then drilled and disciplined to march and fight as parts of regular battalions tended to be less aggressive about facing the enemy and destroying him. Few soldiers felt ready to sacrifice their lives for ambiguous causes. The Crimea, Afghanistan, the Algerian Sahara, and the Ottoman Yemen all seemed remote and bleak to soldiers sent there by one or another imperial power, and few hoped to remain in these places very long. Soldiers in regularly constituted units fought more aggressively only when confronted with a survival situation, or to save their comrades from death; If they had the notion that they were defending their homes from an invader, regular soldiers also fought with greater intensity. The naive Romanticisms which might have taken them into war or battle, did not last long under battle or campaign conditions, unless they were fed by some very basic instincts of preservation such as saving the lives of those close to them. The unconquerability of

most romantic ideals of war and heroism.¹³

A large minority of soldiers, and many civilians caught in war zones, became mentally ill as a result of their exposure to a wartime environment. Soldiers "are ill: ill in the same sense that they would be if they had influenza or malaria. Their symptoms vary greatly, just as the symptoms of the physically ill do, and the severity of the afflictions may range from temporary and minor to the chronic and totally disabling."¹⁴ The notion that psychiatric casualties occurred only in twentieth century battles has appeared in some authorities writing on the issue.¹⁵ Holmes states that descriptions of battles like Waterloo (1815) indicate that nineteenth century combatants also experienced battleshock and received treatment for psychological illnesses.¹⁶ In an era when generals went into battle with their soldiers, the following comments in a letter from General Picton to General Wellington are most interesting:

I must give up. I am grown so nervous that when there is any service to be done it works upon my mind so that it is impossible for me to sleep at nights. I cannot possibly stand it, and I shall be forced to retire¹⁷

E. E. Southard recorded the case of a World War I soldier who had served in the British army since 1908 as a regular army man. He had been the "perfect" soldier, but developed a severe anxiety disorder after being buried by a mine explosion in 1915. He experienced nightmares in his sleep, and soon was plagued by insomnia. He received a wound in April, 1917, and returned home to Britain. According to the psychologist who treated him, this soldier avoided severe anxiety neurosis because he returned home instead of going back to the front. His aggressive tendencies were minimized by the development of severe anxiety.¹⁸ This "nervousness" or "anxiety" in soldiers often manifested itself in increased aggression according to

¹³ On psychological theories of the soldier's aggressive persona, see: Eric J. Leed, *No Man's Land: Combat & Identity in World War I* (Cambridge, 1979) pp. 6-10; Richard Holmes, *Acts of War: The Behavior of Men in Battle*, (New York: 1985) pp. 229-33.

¹⁴ Holmes, *Acts of War*, p.254.

¹⁵ Colonel L. H. Ingraham, Major F. J. Manning, "Cohesion: Who Needs It, What Is It?" *Military Review*, June, 1981.

¹⁶ Holmes, *Acts of War*, p. 255.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 256.

some authorities. Grinker and Spiegel described this tendency among some of their subjects:

Many soldiers under the influence of a new standard of conduct, the military superego, are enabled to release their aggressions successfully in the process of killing, which is their purpose in the army. But, on returning from combat, they develop difficulties because renewal of inhibitions is not so easily effected. These men have no acceptable goal for their hostilities, no enemy to kill. They often fight among themselves for the sake of fighting, to relieve tensions, without real hostility. Others displace their hostilities to officers, civilians or the army in all sorts of rebellious expressions and behavior. Many become anxious in case they may "blow their tops" and be punished. Those superegos which in the past have been weak in dealing with aggressions refunction with difficulty, and the postcombat behavior is likely to be hostile to the point of psychopathy.¹⁹

The generation of hostile aggression in combat veterans followed this course: trauma [series of traumas] > anxiety > intense or "free" anxiety [Picton's "nervousness"] > hostility and aggression, followed by "every type of psychological and psychosomatic symptom, and of unadaptive behavior." Grinker and Spiegel further emphasized that "the ego loses its power to control anxieties and hostilities in the given situation, and to maintain its functional efficiency."²⁰ Eric J. Leed dissents from the drive-displacement theory of these individuals. "The salient inadequacies of this model lie in its unrealistic portrayal of war. It sees war wholly as an expression of aggressive drives."²¹ Leed, however, wrote of a war where aggressive military drives had been totally stymied by trench war, and the soldier's sense of his aggressive self was totally undermined. Grinker and Spiegel, on the other hand, described World War II, where both tactics and strategy became more offensive and less stationary. In any case, the creation of an aggressive personality in war is well defined by these authorities who observed many cases first hand, and were merely reporting the results of their observed

¹⁹ Roy R. Grinker, John P. Spiegel, *Men Under Stress*, (Philadelphia, 1945) p. 362.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 83. See also: Abram Kardiner, Herbert Spiegel, *War Stress and Neurotic Illness* (New York, 1947) 2nd ed., pp. 212-16. See also Julian M. Wolfsohn, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 70 (1918) 303-08, cited in Southard,

cases. Chaos produced aggressive personalities, who were often afflicted by psychological problems as a consequence of their war experiences. Such an analysis proves interesting for examining the increased violence of the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire, particularly the aggressiveness exhibited by irregular soldiers. The case of the Ottoman Empire is more amenable to the drive-displacement theory which Leed challenged for the case of World War I. *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* shows a variety of symptoms which could belong to a post-traumatic stress disorder syndrome:

Diminished responsiveness to the external world, referred to as 'psychic numbing' or 'emotional anesthesia,' [which] usually begins soon after the traumatic event. A person may complain of feeling detached or estranged from other people, that he or she has lost the ability to become interested in previously enjoyed activities, or the ability to feel emotion of any type, especially those associated with intimacy, tenderness, and sexuality, is markedly decreased.

Persistent symptoms of increased arousal that were not present before the trauma include difficulty falling or staying asleep (recurrent nightmares during which the traumatic event is relived are sometimes accompanied by middle or terminal sleep disturbance), hypervigilance, and exaggerated startle response. Some complain of difficulty in concentrating or in completing tasks. Many report changes in aggression. In mild cases this may take the form of irritability with fears of losing control. In more severe forms, particularly in cases in which the survivor has committed acts of violence (as in war veterans), the fear is conscious and pervasive, and the reduced capacity for modulation may express itself in unpredictable explosions of aggressive behavior or an inability to express angry feelings. Symptoms characteristic of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, or physiologic reactivity, are often intensified or precipitated when the person is exposed to situations or activities that resemble or symbolize the original trauma...²²

²² *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 3rd ed. revised (Washington, D. C., 1987) p.248. An early psychological connection between war and

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders shows that persons suffering from *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder* could be either more or less aggressive, and the stability or instability of the environment would certainly produce one or the other orientation in greater or lesser abundance. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire between 1683 and 1921 produced increasing instability, and in the nineteenth century in particular, Ottoman subjects were left with no alternative but to live in a highly aggression-oriented society. The reaction to trauma under these circumstances was to become more aggressive oneself, and mental disorders in this environment followed the drive displacement model more completely.

The relationship between trauma and aggression is clearly demonstrated in the case of Makrygiannes (1797-1864). In early adolescence, at the age of fourteen, he was beaten severely by the brother of a friend. The intense shame [ntropi] that overwhelmed him heightened his sense of honor [timi]. The night after he was beaten, he went to the church of his patron saint (St. John, Giannes), and most earnestly prayed for various things, the chief of

1974) pp. 48-49, which shows that a black man was admitted to the hospital with "mania" caused by the "war" [U. S. Civil War]. This commitment occurred in 1865, and the man was released one month later as "cured." Psychological evaluations of PTSD include: Marshall P. Duke, Stephen Nowicki, Jr., *Abnormal Psychology: A New Look* (New York 1986) pp. 249-52 [aggressiveness, cynicism and profound disregard for human life]; Leonard D. Goodstein, James F. Calhoun, *Understanding Abnormal Behavior: Description Explanation, Management* (Reading, 1982) p. 147 [traumas of war produced men addicted to dangerous adventures who were non-functional in regular life, and men who were aggressive to the point of violent behavior, having delusional or hallucinatory symptoms similar to schizophrenia]. Henry Krystal, (ed.) (New York, 1968) passim, offers a wide selection of articles by different authors with case studies. See especially Henry Krystal, "Clinical Observations on the Survivor Syndrome," *ibid*, pp. 343-46 who demonstrates that many victims of the Nazi Genocidal attack on various groups (Jews, Slavs, Gypsies) actually identified with the aggressor in their subconscious. "Hidden in the self-reproach of many younger patients is their repressed rage against now-murdered parents who failed to protect them from persecutions to which survivors were subjected. Closely connected to the persistence of survivor guilt (derived from the rage) and pathological mourning is the unconscious identification with the aggressor on the part of the survivors. We feel that some unconscious identification with the aggressor may have been indispensable to survival. The violent, often sudden destruction of the survivor's whole world makes the acknowledgement and working of such identifications most threatening. To own up to death wishes

which was good weapons [*kala armata*].²³ In Makrygiannes' case, the initial trauma of a beating in childhood created a compensatory attitude in a quickness to defend one's honor and in the obsession with weapons. If one can believe Makrygiannes, he was less aggressive than others serving in the Ottoman and irregular military units of the nineteenth century, but even he recognized that identification with the aggressor (through the adoption of the aggressor's implements, that is, good weapons) would not only save one's life, but could help preserve psychological balance. The need for psychological security was indicated by the prayers sent to the patron saint who could soothe the adolescent's ruffled feelings and lower self-esteem. An extension of the security given by the patron saint was the prayer for weapons to help preserve honor and avoid shame. In this instance, and it was probably characteristic of a broad cross-section of the male population in the Ottoman Empire, the traumatic experience produced a compensatory drive to prevent the same or worse trauma in the future. Aggressive rather than nonaggressive avenues were taken for the resolution to the problem. This solution characterized the majority of approaches described below.

Irregular soldiers, constituting loosely-controlled bands, tended to contrast the regular soldiers sharply in the maintenance of aggressive attitudes toward the enemy, especially a weaker and more vulnerable enemy. Irregular bands often felt a more urgent need to defend home and family against an intruding enemy army, and such urgency heightened the irregular's desire to engage the enemy aggressively. The erosion of the legal and custom infrastructures in the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire made it necessary for the irregular soldier to adopt the aggressive mindset of the vigilante. Defense of one's honor- family, home, and property- became a powerful motivation in the irregular soldier's aggressive tactics and strategy with regard to his neighbors. Another potent incentive was cupidity and avarice. The prospect of plunder enabled irregular raiders to penetrate deep into enemy territory, and empowered them to destroy entire villages. In a society where everyone engaged in multiple conflicts with their neighbors, it was improbable that any could develop and retain a more passive orientation. Local conflicts abounded throughout the entire Ottoman Empire from Kurdistan to Albania, and from Palestine to Bulgaria. Ottoman governors and military authorities had no choice but to establish military colonies of irregular soldiers in many places. These "colonists" participated in the local feuds, and even increased the violence because they brought greater firepower, supplied to them by the government, to their regions, and could

Both passive and aggressive poles of identification appeared in the nineteenth century Ottoman military organization. *Nizâm*, or regular army troops, could fight well in pitched battles, but many observers from the Crimean War to World War I saw that *nizâm* soldiers were lacking in spirit, and maintained more passive approaches to the prosecution of the fight. During the crises of the nineteenth century, passive orientations developed only in groups where some insulation from chaos protected the individuals experiencing trauma from aggressive conflicts. In a society where threats of danger and death appeared on all sides, and the legal system retreated before these dangers, violent trauma was likely to promote a never-ending spiral of aggression. The absence of external controls caused the loss of control, especially considering the decreasing significance of custom for many as a restraining force. The vigilante mentality was related to the "hypervigilance" described by *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* for the *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder* sufferer. The vigilante was afflicted by the *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder* syndrome to such an extent, that vigilance became an institutionalized and regular form of behavior. Did the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century owe something to the routinization of aggressive responses resulting from post-traumatic stress disorder? The answer to this question is not an easy one. In many respects, this query could be answered in the affirmative, and this paper will deal with these aspects. In other respects, it is possible to give a negative response to this question, but the examination of the more stable areas of the empire and its successor states is not possible in this article.

The irregular band appeared everywhere in the provinces and former provinces of the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²⁴ Such bands epitomized the growth of vigilantism, and it is nec-

²⁴ Terminology concerning irregular soldiers and bands. Ottoman Turkish: *asâkir-i mu'âvin*; "armees auxiliares, irreguliere." Samy-Bey Franschery, *Qâmûs-i Feransavî, Türkcheden Feransizjaya Lughât, Dictionnaire Turc-Français* (Constantinople, 1885) p. 1046; Ahmed Midhat, *Üss-ü Inkilâp, kism-i sani* (Istanbul 1295/1878) p. 288; Mahmûd Jelaleddin Pasha, *Mirat-i Hakikat* (Istanbul 1983) passim, esp. p. 653. *bölük*: Frederick Millingen (Osman Bey), *Wild Life Among the Koords* (London 1870) p. 335 has *buluk-bashi* "a sort of captain," but referring to commanders of irregular bands ideally numbering 1-2,000 soldiers. *çete* or *çete* (from Slavonic, or Albanian): Evliya Celebi, *Evliya Celebi in Diyarbekir, The Relevant Section of the Seyahatname*, Martin Van Bruinessen and Hendrik Boeschoten, eds. and trans. (Leiden, 1988), f. 209r, line 7, pp. 186-87, 260, from 1065/1655 "band of rebels, brigands" (260) refers to "*çete ve potûra ve aatona kâfirleri*"

essary to devote some space to describing their psychological states of being. Few scholars have made any attempt to examine this phenomenon, with the result that extremely optimistic views of Ottoman reform and Ottoman benevolence have come to dominate the field of study.²⁵ The band comprised a distinctive psychological reality given life and purpose by the action and existence of the vigilante. Brigands used aggression as a means of defining and defending the group integrity of the band. The psychosociological dynamic of the armed band adopted the qualities of the vigilante. Members of the band internalized their loyalty to one another so strongly, that the only external links they had were to their families, and even these bonds may have been significantly diminished for one reason or another. The band replaced the family as the chief focus of loyalty for at least a period in life. In some cases, the defining social principle of the family was its existence as a band, or within a band. When so internalized, these vigilante-type bands demonstrated a "diminished responsiveness to the external world" and felt detachment and estrangement from people and communities around them, who became the enemy. The operation of this *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder* factor of alienation and diminished responsiveness was evident in the large numbers of revolts, raids, and atrocities attributed to irregulars, especially during the century's many wars. Military colonists such as Circassians, Albanians, and others often lived as aliens in the midst of subject populations whom they despised, an attitude which

ands, d 'insurges..." Wilhelm Radloff, *Versuch eines Wörterbuches der Türk-Dialecte*, (s'Gravenhage, 1960), Volume 3, column 1983, "eine Räuberbande." Manga: Franchery, *Qâmûs-i*, p. 956, "Anneau, m. Groupe reuni en ronde." John Koliopoulos, *Brigands with a Cause, Brigandage and Irredentism in Modern Greece, 1821-1912* (Oxford 1987), p. 58, "...the basic component of the insurgent band (and of the klephtic band before that and, for that matter, the brigand band after that), consisting of some ten men and commanded by a *mangatzi* (*mangaci*) or *bouloukbashi* (*bölükbashi*), was a unit of armed men held together by family or other bonds and led by a chief possessing the qualities expected of a leader of armed men in that part of the world." *Sergerde*: According to Millingen (active ca. 1860), commander of a *bashi-bozuk* corps of 400-1,000 men, whom he equated with a major or battalion commander. Many of these terms appear in Greek, the Slavic languages, Albanian, Kurdish, Arabic, and other languages used within the confines of the Ottoman Empire. Makrygiannes has *To boulouki*, referring to a band to which he belonged; Makrygiannes, *Apomnemeumata*, p. 32.

²⁵Eric Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (Middlesex, 1969) gives a good general account of the phenomenon from a moderate Marxist position. John Koliopoulos, *Brigands with a Cause*, has done an admirable job for Greek irregular bands. The last Turk-

was reciprocated. In some cases, the colonists had been uprooted violently from their homelands. They came to their posts as the proteges of the Ottoman government, and as refugees from some distant feud or war seeking to assert their power in a new homeland. Circassians sought asylum in the Ottoman Empire from Russian onslaughts in the Caucasus,²⁶ while Albanians, Kurds, Turkmen, and others moved from one part of the Ottoman Empire to another.

The armed band developed into a vigilante group which usually exceeded the norms of behavior defined by customary practices.²⁷ As society changed, custom ceased to be acceptable as a means of resolving local problems for many. The feud became the vehicle for vigilante behavior, and the means by which vengeance led to acts of violence which were made indiscriminately against innocent victims. This violence perpetrated against the innocent may have resulted from massive communal traumas or threats of trauma. The traumatic events of the recent past, whether occurring in one's own or a neighbor village created an aggressiveness and a detachment from humanity. The greater the trauma was, the more complete became the detachment from the world, and the worse the aggressive behavior was.²⁸

The alarmist mentality of the vigilante necessitated the continual bearing of arms. In 1837, Horatio Southgate noted for Kurdistan that "Feuds and quarrels are frequent among them, and often end in bloodshed. Mutual confidence is almost unknown, and they always wear their arms for fear of

²⁶Marc Pinson, "Ottoman Colonization of the Circassians in Rumili after the Crimean War," *Etudes balkaniques*, 8 (1972) 71-85, does not, however, describe this state of defensive-mindedness.

²⁷"Letter, Foreign Office, October, 1854," in W. F. Beatson, et. al., *Letter to the Earl of Clarendon* (London, n. d.) (ca. 1857), no. 4, pp. 7-8. Lord Raglan refused the service of *bâshi bozûks*, "who made themselves notorious by their lawless conduct" by attacking "loyal subjects of the Porte." These attacks still constituted vigilante-type behavior, even if Raglan was applying British standards, because the irregulars were making assaults on people they had no cause to molest. The [Albanian] *bâshi bozûks* in General Beatson's troop mutinied, deserted, and made raids along the Dardanelles. On approaching the main local town, the irregular troops fought a skirmish with an Ottoman regular army unit, and committed other depredations. An eyewitness account is given in Messrs. Calvert and Skene, "Letters from Messrs. Calvert and Skene, Consuls, Dardanelles, 25 September, 1855," in R.J.H. Vivian, *Narrative of Circumstances which Led to Major General Beatson Being Relieved*, "Indian Mutiny Pamphlets" No. 3 (London, 1856), p. 9.

²⁸On the nature and development of vigilantism in the Ottoman Empire, see: James J. Reid, "Irregular Military Bands and Colonies in the balkans, 1789-1878," *VIIe Congres International d'Etudes du Sud-Est Europeen* 29 aout au 4 septembre

each other."²⁹ Feuding might come under customary practices, but attacks made upon non-traditional targets would be considered either brigandage, or vigilantism, or both. A brigand might function as a vigilante if his acts of banditry were intended to establish a territorial prerogative. A vigilante did not necessarily need to protect his family or village, but might also be concerned with defending the territory of his brigand band.

Murders of women and children and massacres belonged to the category of vigilante action when the band killed indiscriminately while on campaign. General motives for punishing a certain population, or brigandage and lust for loot did not remove these acts from the category of vigilantism. Both acts of killing represented the irregular soldiers' "taking the law into their own hands" at the heart of the vigilante ethic. The only reason for violence committed against "non-combatants" was the attackers heightened sense of vigilance. Soldiers who killed women and children felt the need to eradicate an enemy population in their midst. The vendetta represented the *lex talionis* - a death for a death. Vigilantism went much further, however, exacting the deaths of an entire village for even the threat of one death (without waiting for a crime to be committed).³⁰ Acts of violence which went beyond the limits of the traditional feud or vendetta would usually be considered vigilantism, except in actions employing Great War tactical and strategic maneuvers.³¹ The destruction of entire populations during a major war by regular army or air forces represented a different, though related, phenomenon which must be discussed elsewhere.

The inability of the Ottoman state and its army to govern all parts of the empire meant that the state needed to create conflicts among its diverse subject populations as a means of remaining independent of their subjects'

²⁹ Horation Southgate, *Narrative of a Tour through Armenia, Kurdistan, Persia and Mesopotamia* (New York, 1840) p.227.

³⁰ M. E. Durham, *Some Tribal Origins Laws and Customs of the Balkans* (London 1928), pp. 167-68 cites some mid-nineteenth century epics where more than the number of Serbian dead were avenged. "Turkish" leaders were killed, and they accounted for the Serbian dead. "As for the rest of the Turkish heads, reckon them in payment of whom you will."

³¹ The bombing of cities in World War II, for example, caused numerous civilian casualties, but the pilots were not vigilantes because they were part of an organized government and military operation. Likewise, the gassing of millions in Nazi concentration camps, however much an atrocity, did not represent the guards' effort to "take the law into their own hands," even though many were held personally responsible for their actions. Many excellent studies have examined the functioning of the Nazi state and its regular army in the genocide of European Jews, and the extermination of other groups. See, for example, *The Holocaust: A History* by Yehuda Bauer (New York, 1961) and *The Final Solution* by Raul Hilberg (New York, 1961).

aggressions and of channeling military energy toward local conflict and away from rebellion. The success rate of this "divide and conquer" policy was high enough to warrant its continued use, though it is evident that many insurrections against Ottoman authority did occur in the Empire in the nineteenth century. The rural police, called *zaptîyes*, became part of the divide and conquer scenario, and emerged as some of the most notorious vigilantes of this period. They became, to some degree, the local opposition of many communities, and the Ottoman state used them as a lightning rod for the aggressive inclinations of their subjects. By inserting them into a region, the Ottoman government actually created the vigilantism which plagued the Empire, and increased the violence of the local conflicts to heights of greater intensity. This social condition allowed the mentality of the vigilante to dominate as well. Both victim and victimizer needed to defend themselves from feared aggressive actions by their neighbors, or by the local rural police. As a consequence, vigilance became the chief psychological framework for many communities and the army in the Ottoman Empire.

CASE STUDIES OF VIGILANCE

Case Study 1: Vigilantism caused by trauma and the need for self-defense

One of the most interesting cases of vigilance appears in Theodoros Kolokotronis' memoirs. The effect of continued traumatic experiences upon Kolokotronis between the years 1780 and 1806 shows itself definitively in the memoirs. Only those who guarded themselves and their followers achieved protection in a society where neither law nor custom functioned to protect man, woman, or child. The general 'Ali Bey besieged the Kolokotronis and Pangioras families in a group of towers at Kastanitsa during 1780, when Theodoros was a young boy. Theodoros saw many of his relatives killed in this skirmish. Among the dead were women and children. The women were killed during the families' escape, and some of the children were captured and enslaved. Theodoros included a list of his slain relatives in his memoirs. His father and two uncles (Giorgos and Apostoles) died among others. No record exists of Theodoros' emotional reaction to these events, but this small war may have been an early crisis which formed his own resolve in later life to protect himself and his family. His boyhood trauma might have become apparent to him every time he felt the absence of his father and two uncles during his subsequent life. He remembered

tation, and which head was not recovered, a matter he considered a great dishonor. These traumatic memories helped to develop his sense of vigilance. His mother and surviving uncle probably saw him as a possible avenger, and kept the traumatic memories alive.³² He recalled in his memoir the flight from the "Turks" and the life of fear in exile, all mixed with the fresh memories of his family's tragedy.³³ The requirement of constant vigilance was impressed upon him by all these events.

Theodoros married at the age of twenty, when he became an *armatolos* [ἀρματωλός], and received property in the form of a dowry. His vigilance expressed itself without question in this passage. He always wore weapons while moving about his *armatolik* in Leontari.³⁴ Kolokotrones also had a feeling of invincibility about himself. He stated that,

Ὁ Δεληγιάννης ὀρκώνει δύο προεστούς νά μέ σκοτώσουν.
Ἦτον δύσκολο διότι ἤμουν πολλά προφυλακτικός.³⁵

This period of peace and relative security eventually disappeared, and in 1805-1806, Kolokotrones and his followers became a hunted band fleeing desperately from an Ottoman pursuit column. When the Russian Emperor Alexander called for Greeks to join military units under Russian control, some left Greece, but others, like Kolokotrones, remained, and rebelled against Ottoman rule. An imperial *ferman* was issued calling for the rebels to be captured or killed. The Greek Orthodox Patriarch also excommunicated Kolokotrones and the other rebel leaders. A force of Ottoman troops marched on Leontari to attack Kolokotrones and his supporters. Theodoros and his band of one-hundred and fifty men left Leontari with their families,

³²George Gordon, Lord Byron, *'For Freedom's Battle,' Byron's Letters and Journals*, Volume 11, 1823-1824, Leslie A. Marchand (ed.) (Cambridge 1981) p. 41. Byron observed a Greek mother encourage her four-year old son to avenge his father's death. In a letter dated October 6, 1823, Byron wrote that the chief Giavella's son "already talks of revenging his father's death on the followers of Mahomet - according to the good old custom which of course his mother carefully patronizes. - His organ of combativeness seems considerably developed - and he will doubtless if he lives be a Credit to the Courage line of business."

³³Theodoros Kolokotrones, *Διήγησις συμβάντων τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς φυλῆς (Apomnemoneumata)*, G. Tertsetes (ed.), Tasos Vournas (introduction), (Athens, n. d.) p. 115; idem., *Kolokotrones, The Klepht and Warrior, Sixty Years of Peril and Daring, An Autobiography*, Mrs. Edmonds (tr.) (London 1891), p. 88.

³⁴Ibid, p.89.

³⁵Kolokotrones. *Diegesis*. p. 118; idem. *Autobiography*, p. 92. "Deligianni made

and parried with pursuing Ottoman troops on a daily basis. The band of refugees could not find asylum in Mani, and split into two groups. The majority, who went into the Peloponnesos, were killed by Ottoman troops. The minority who followed Theodoros and his family set their sights on Zakynthos (Zante) to leave Ottoman control completely. When Kolokotrones and his relatives reached Zakynthos, they had experienced starvation, fatigue, and the betrayal of the *kapetanios* Dourakes. Kolokotrones continued to refuse entry into Russian service at Zakynthos, and intended to return to the Peloponnesos to seek revenge for his kin:³⁶

Δέν ἐμβαίνω εἰς τὴν δούλειαν, διότι ἔχω σκοπὸ νά ὑπάγω
πάλι εἰς τὸν Μορέα, διὰ νά ἐκδικηθῶ διὰ τὸν θάνατον
τῶν συγγενῶν μου καὶ διὰ τὰς ζημίας ὅπου ἔλαβα, καὶ δέν
ἤμπορῶ νά κάμω ὄρκον καὶ ἔπειτα νά γίνω ἐπίορκος μέ
τό νά φύγω κρυφίως.

This statement demonstrates that Kolokotrones retained a powerful sense of the traumas his family and others experienced under Ottoman rule. The essence of the trauma experience appears in the following statement:³⁷

Αὐτό τό εἶδος τῆς ζωῆς ὅπου ἐκάμναμε μᾶς ἐβοήθησε πολὺ
εἰς τὴν ἐπανάστασι, διότι ἤξεύραμεν τὰ κατατόπια, τοὺς
δρόμους, τὰς θέσεις τοὺς ἀνθρώπους. Ἐσυνηθίσαμεν νά
καταφρονοῦμεν τοὺς Τούρκους, νά ὑποφέρωμεν τὴν πείναν,
τὴν δίψαν, τὴν κακοπάθειαν, τὴν λέρα, καὶ καθεξῆς.

While some questions remain about the truthfulness of many claims made in this autobiography, the underlying patterns may be divided into two parts. First, an epic reality such as one would find in Demotic songs exists in this retelling of Kolokotrones' early life. Kolokotrones indicates that the klephts and armatoles may have sung heroic songs about themselves, and for this reason, one could argue that Kolokotrones may have followed a mixture of truth and legend in the creation of his own autobiography, following a cultural tradition of the klephts.³⁸ Secondly, even the false claims may have

³⁶Kolokotrones, *Diegesis*, p. 130; idem, *Autobiography*, p.102. "I do not intend to enter Russian service, because my purpose is to return to the Morea and avenge the slaughter of my kindred, and the injuries I have sustained myself. I could not take an oath, and afterwards become a perjurer by fleeing away secretly."

³⁷Kolokotrones, *Diegesis*, p. 129 idem, *Autobiography*, p.108. "The kind of life which we had already led aided us much throughout the war of Liberation, because we knew all the passes on the hills, and we knew the habits and ways of men.

represented a symbolic, psychological reality. The gruesome acts such as beheading and killing of women and children actually occurred. The claims in and of themselves represented a vigilante's recollection of his own past, and even the exaggerations of the truth or the outright lies represented psychological truths about the vigilante's condition. Kolokotrones appealed to the ideal vision of a hero who survived through his own measures of self-defense. The psychological pattern developed in this way. Constant and unremitting traumata suffered from the age of ten caused the emergence of an aggressive personality searching for revenge against the enemy, who needed to atone for his atrocities. The vengeance could not be specific, but was generally aimed at the enemy's progeny, who had not caused the deaths of Kolokotrones' relatives, but who were in a position to cause harm later. This aggressive inclination created both the undying desire for revenge, and a vigilante mentality.

His life story shows that the vigilante was not entirely an unsympathetic character who committed atrocities for the sake of violence. Vigilantism was a way of life, a psychological reality, imposed upon entire populations which had no other alternative in a society where the only protection was the safe zone one created around oneself. This reality emerges clearly from the memoirs, whatever their merit as history. The vicissitudes caused by violent inter-community relations constituted an underlying pattern in Kolokotrones' life story. One moment he lived as a klepht skulking in mountain fastnesses fearing attacks by the Ottoman enemy, and the next moment he held a position as an *armatolos* living in an insecure peace with the Ottoman state. Theodoros and his band lived a nomadic existence on the run when they could no longer live at peace with the Ottoman government of their region. As fugitives, they fought day and night, they evaded their pursuers, and finding no place of sanctuary, they starved until they arrived at a sympathetic place. This life of constant preparation for battle and fear of attack by the enemy, whether Turk, Albanian, or Greek, provoked a continuous state of alarm which represents the vigilante's psychological state of being in its penultimate expression. Survival required continuous vigilance and "caution" [*profylaktiko*],³⁹ as Kolokotrones put it, and he who proved incautious could easily be killed, survived by a family existing on the mercy of others. The eternal threat of traumata in life fed the psychological state of vigilance, which appears in a particularly stark form in Kolokotrones' autobiography.

According to his memoirs, Kolokotrones' vigilante orientation was a matter of self-protection, not a desire to victimize others. This distinction

is important to make. In order to confront the victimizing vigilante, one must identify with that enemy's methods for the sake of self-defense. Kolokotrones definitely did not sympathize with the enemy, but he did identify with the enemy's power, and in so doing, he emulated their method and adopted their psychological perspective. How did one obtain a victory over a force which was superior in numbers and technology to one's own band? Kolokotrones and others throughout the Ottoman Empire faced this very question. Psychologically-speaking, a contemporary perception of the matter was through the magic of invincibility. This sense of his invincible nature appears in the passage where he described Deligiannes' efforts to send men against him, and his contempt for their ability to kill him because he always wore arms and was very cautious.⁴⁰ This magic invincibility may have been the result of Kolokotrones' survival from some of the terrible events he describes, and from an identification with a magical power which he stole from the enemy, a reverse identification with the enemy. Magic of this type worked as follows according to Alexander and Slesnick:⁴¹

Another important principle in magic is the idea that two things at a distance from one another can produce an effect upon each other through a secret relationship....Two things that look alike affect each other through their *similarity* because they are in sympathy with one another. From this reasoning are derived so-called homeopathic, imitative, and mimetic magic. A medicine man may himself enact his patient's illness and recovery, pretending to be near death, writhing in agony, and then slowly recovering, prompting by mimetic magic the recovery of the dying man. A form of

⁴⁰ See above, p. 18. Nineteenth-century soldiers could not explain why they survived battle. They marched or ran toward the enemy, and suddenly they were greeted by a hail-storm of bullets. One soldier attributed his escape from such death and destruction to his magic quality of being "ball-proof." Corporal Edmund Pollard, "Letter, January 9, 1855," in E. H. Nolan, *The Illustrated History of the War Against Russia*, (London, 1857) 1, pp. 796-97. Another soldier believed that Providence protected him in and out of battle: Sgt. Clarke, "Letter to Elisha, May 21st, 18[54?]," National Army Museum, London, 7301-56, ff. 1-2. In the same manner, a similar trust in Providence may be seen in Makrygiannes, *Oramata Kai Thamata*, Angelou Papacostas [transcription], (Athena, 1989) p. 41, where he prayed to God to free him from a number of evil things, including the evil will [*epiboule*] of others directed toward him. Kolokotrones saw his invincibility as a matter of some magical quality which he possessed in the same manner as these soldiers.

⁴¹ Franz G. Alexander, Sheldon Slesnick, *The History of Psychiatry: An Evaluation*, (New York, 1966) p. 8. On identification with the aggressor, see above, note

sympathetic magic works through the law of contiguity, whereby there is continued action upon each other of things once close but now separated.

In the case of Theodoros, the mimesis of the Turkish overlord was not entirely sympathetic. In order to confront enemy soldiers, Theodoros was forced to assume some element of the soldier's persona, not the personality of an enslaved Greek *reâyâ*. By being a Greek who took such a step, he represented an aspect of independence which formed an important part of the Greek Revolution. Likewise, in order to maintain his independence, he had to become a force of law on his own terms, answerable only to the dictates of Providence in his own view. Kolokotronis thus represented an Ottoman subject who had no choice but to become a vigilante under circumstances which favored independence only for those who were able to confront the rulers on their own terms. Theodoros did not engage in the annihilation of civilians in the manner of more aggressive vigilantes.

Recapitulation: The Kolokotronis case represents a low degree of vigilantism caused by unavoidable circumstances in which everyone lived. This syndrome may be characterized as follows:

- a) trauma due to destruction of kinfolk and exile from homeland > detached feelings and dehumanization of the enemy and his surrogates;
- b) insecurity due to a lawless environment;
- c) traumas resulting from violent acts;
- d) defenseless feeling leading to a desire for power;
- e) development of a vigilance and "cautiousness" for the sake of self-defense and a *defensible personal domain*;
- f) formation of an aggressive personality capable of violent acts;
- g) acts of violence committed, but with limitations (killing of large numbers of enemy soldiers, as in battles, endorsement of some massacres of combatants only);
- h) Conclusion: A limited or moderate vigilante orientation is evident with hesitation to commit atrocities against or massacres of noncombatants.

Case Study 2: Vigilantism taken to aggressive extremes.

The following case study must define collective rather than individual actions. Few soldiers left memoirs in the Ottoman Empire, while independent Greece produced many more memoirs and collections of personal documents. While a majority of Ottoman subjects were forced to adopt a vigilante stance to save themselves, a certain percentage took vigilantism

to an extreme. Individuals or groups which held the position of the local government, and were supported in their actions by the Ottoman state, felt they could act with impunity. The following illustrate the problem.

In most cases, it is difficult to describe the genesis of this aggressive vigilantism. Trauma, or the threat of trauma, may have been a very powerful inducement for the commission of atrocities. Destroy the enemy before the enemy destroys oneself, this may have been the attitude caused by the general alarm of the Ottoman Empire's crisis. Irregular soldiers and vigilantes in power, however, could go far beyond the simple urge for self-defense found in many vigilantes seeking merely to protect their own homes. The following examples represent the aggressive extreme found in the vigilantes serving as Ottoman surrogate governors.

During the Crimean War, French and British officers commanded irregular Ottoman soldiers, and found them to be nothing but trouble. A French officer, the Vicomte de Noë, left his memoir of the Dobruja campaign (1854), in which *bâshibozuks* were used as the advance column of a French military force. Before cholera destroyed the initiative, the irregulars demonstrated well the character of the vigilante. First, and foremost, these irregulars were almost impossible to command. The heterogeneity of the force made the French officers' ability to command difficult, but, accustomed to the free movements of the band (many were brigands in their homelands), these irregulars refused to accept military authority and discipline. Nothing marked the vigilante mentality more than this recalcitrance. An unwillingness to accept orders was evident in all similar irregular units throughout the Ottoman Empire during all the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth century. De Noë and the other officers had no chance to give commands to their troops. The war brought out their extremely predatory instincts, and marching into an area where the chances for plunder were many, they spread across the land like locusts [*sauterelles*], devouring everything in sight, in the manner of the locust swarm. De Noë styled them "*les premiers pillards du monde*,"⁴² and noted that, given the opportunity to release their aggressive instincts, these irregulars also committed horrible atrocities and behaved in generally aggressive ways. De Noë recorded:

Partout sur notre passage, les habitants faisaient entendre des cris d'indignation contre les étranges soldats que nous avions commandé. Les plus horribles récits arrivaient à nos oreilles. Dans un petit village, par exemple, ils avaient coupé en morceaux

⁴² Vicomte de Noë, *Les Bachi-Bozüks et les Chasseurs d'Afrique* (Paris, 1861)

Dans un petit village, par exemple, ils avaient coupé en morceaux un enfant de cinq mois: je tiens l'histoire des parents eux-mêmes. Juger du reste.⁴³

On all sides of our route, the inhabitants made cries of indignation against the strange soldiers whom we have commanded. The most horrible narratives came to our ears. In one small village, for example, they [the irregulars] had cut a child of five months into pieces: I heard the story from the parents themselves. Judge the rest for yourself.

These irregulars also assaulted British soldiers, their allies, in different occurrences of the same period.⁴⁴ Avarice alone could not explain this atrocity and the attacks on allied soldiers. The atrocity of carving a live baby into pieces before its parents' eyes was an act of extreme detachment from humanity resulting in a dehumanization of the victims. This detachment or withdrawal from humanity not only exhibits a PTSD symptom, but demonstrates a possible factor in vigilantism. A vigilante in establishing his own independent sphere of existence disdained the community of another, even to the point of an extreme dehumanization of the alien group.⁴⁵ The contempt which Kolokotronis felt for the Turks became extreme degradation in these *bâshibozûks*, a misanthropy which went far beyond what Kolokotronis or Makrygiannes would have openly admitted to.

A more extreme action was the massacre, in which atrocities such as that mentioned in the previous paragraph were multiplied many times. One such massacre occurred at Batak, Bulgaria in 1876. Januarius MacGahan, an Irish-American journalist working for a British newspaper, saw first hand the aftermath of the massacre. As he and Eugene Schuyler rode toward the village, they came into a small hollow,⁴⁶

but all suddenly drew rein with an exclamation of horror, for right before us, almost beneath our horses' feet, was a sight that made us shudder. It was a heap of skulls, intermingled with bones

⁴³ Ibid. p.106.

⁴⁴ Ibid. p. 34; W. H. Russell, *The War, From the Landing at Gallipoli to the Death of Lord Raglan*, (London, 1856) p. 114.

⁴⁵ See above, p. 11; *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*, p. 248 "Diminished responsiveness to the external world, referred to as 'psychic numbing' or 'emotional anesthesia,' [which] usually begins soon after the traumatic event. A person may complain of feeling detached or estranged from other people..."

⁴⁶ J. A. MacGahan, Eugene Schuyler, *The Turkish Atrocities in Bulgaria*, (Lon-

from all parts of the human body, skeletons, nearly entire, rotting, clothing, human hair, and putrid flesh lying there in one foul heap, around which the grass was growing luxuriantly. It emitted a sickening odour, like that of a dead horse, and it was here the dogs had been seeking a hasty repast when our untimely approach interrupted them.

In the midst of the heap I could distinguish one slight keleton form still enclosed in a chemise, the skull wrapped around with a coloured handkerchief, and the bony ankles encased in the embroidered footless stockings worn by the Bulgarian girls. We looked about us. The ground was strewed with bones in every direction, where the dogs had carried them off to gnaw at their leisure.

The irregulars had seized young women and older girls at Batak, raped them repeatedly while their comrades were fighting the survivors in the village, and when the last few had died, they massacred these young women. The heap of bones which MacGahan and Schuyler had seen belonged to these young women. Their deaths were the result of heightened aggressive tendencies among these irregulars, who seem to have been vigilantes making an example for other Bulgarian villagers.

Several factors appear important in the provocation of such grisly massacres. The irregular troops possessed better weapons than most of the subjects in their districts. Government military colonies received Winchester rifles with repeating action, which were far better than any subject villager owned.⁴⁷ The vigilante felt threatened and insecure, therefore he needed to exaggerate his sense of power and control over others. This greed for power was the source of the looting and the killing, which were manifestations of the inner state of a search for power, proceeding from one who sensed his growing powerlessness. New and more advanced weapons gave the *bâshibozûks* greater feelings of power by which they could hold those who crossed their paths in the balance of life or death. For many of the govern-

⁴⁷ Jelaledin Pasha, *Mirat-i*, p. 295. Mahmud Jelaledin Pasha refers directly to the Ottoman sponsorship of irregulars by giving them Winchesters. He states: "Otuzdokuz bin adet 'Vincester' marka tüfek ile yirmi bir bin yabancanın da tamamen süvâri, nizâmiye, zaptiye ve muâvine askerlerinin elinde bulundugunu bildirdiler." [They were informed that thirty-nine thousand Winchester-brand guns

ment-backed vigilantes, survival mattered less than this passion for the ultimate power symbolized by their weapons of multiple death.

This admiration of the power to cause death originated in a traumatic episode of some sort, an incident or period of life which was more distant to these agents of death. Valentine Baker Pasha, a British officer who served as a general in the Ottoman army during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-8, gives some proof to the notion that irregulars committed atrocities because they had experienced trauma and desired the ultimate vengeance. "These men ('armed villagers' or '*mauvais sujets*') had in many cases seen their wives and families shamefully maltreated both by Bulgarians and Cossacks, and is it not to be wondered at if, in some instances, they were guilty of retaliation."⁴⁸ While Baker Pasha was generally very conservative in his discussion of the irregulars' atrocities, he does show that trauma produced a complete detachment from the Christian populations of the Ottoman Empire, whom they considered to be pro-Russian spies, and fit only for killing. Finding ready targets for the venting of their vengeful desires, they looted, raped, and killed to displace their aggressive tendencies upon individuals they considered to be representatives of the Russians. Mahmud Jeleleddin Pasha listed some of the *bâshibozûks*' atrocities. During the course of their raids [*talanlar*], the irregular bands sought plunder [*yagma*], committed violence [*gasp*], killed the village men [*adam öldürme*], and raped the women [*irza tecâvüze*]. The Ottoman government enacted laws [*kanun*] to punish their depredations, but the laws were never enforced, and the irregulars violated them with impunity.⁴⁹ The consequence of this impudent rejection of the law is that even Ottoman historians viewed these irregulars as vigilantes who took the law into their own hands, and refused to bow to Ottoman authorities. The situation which developed in the Russo-Turkish War continued into the twentieth century, with massacres becoming ever more frequent.⁵⁰

Recapitulation:

- a) trauma due to destruction of kinfolk and exile from homeland > detached feelings and dehumanization of the enemy and his surrogates
- b) insecurity due to a lawless environment
- c) traumas resulting from violent acts
- d) defenseless feeling leading to a desire for power

⁴⁸ Liet.-General Valentine Baker Pasha, *War in Bulgaria: A Narrative of Personal Experiences* (London, 1879) p. 96.

⁴⁹ Jeleleddin Pasha *Mirat-i* pp. 168-69

e) development of a vigilance and "cautiousness" for the sake of self-defense and a *defensible personal domain*

f) formation of an aggressive personality capable of violent acts

g) acts of violence committed against weak friends and foes alike [massacres of entire civilian populations, at first in isolated villages, but mounting in scope and intensity as the years passed]

h) desire to have the ultimate power of life and death over weak individuals symbolized by the cult of weapons [signifying death]

i) Conclusion: Extreme vigilantism, differentiated from the limited or moderate form by the greater intensity of the desire to destroy and kill.

Symbols of Aggressive Behavior

Significant signs of the irregulars' aggressive psychological state of mind included mutilation of dead [and sometimes live] enemies, obsession with weapons, and an active search for loot. Expressions of aggressive behavior appeared as a norm sanctioned by custom in an Ottoman society where the law did not regulate local feuds. This aggressive inclination had advanced to the form of vigilantism by the middle of the same century. Aggressiveness existed in a low degree as socially acceptable behavior in the social environment and the psychological attitudes of the people in most local communities of the Empire were influenced by the constancy of this aggressive norm.

Mutilation of Dead [and Sometimes Alive] Enemies

Beheading of a dead enemy was an old practice in Persian and Ottoman armies. Soldiers often cut off the head of an enemy to give proof that an enemy soldier or a rebel was truly dead, and the head was often put on a pike to demonstrate to those who might admire such an enemy that he was fallible and defeated. Soldiers also decapitated the defeated as a means of shaming them. Medieval belief understood the soul to reside in the head, and thus decapitation would entrap the dead combatant's soul upon the earth. For this reason, Solomon ben Joseph Ha-Kohen [fl. 470/1077], writing of Turkmen military practices, stated that after an engagement, the enemy troops were defeated, "and their heads were cut off, and their souls fled away."⁵¹ Ha-Kohen was following the general belief that decapitation would release the dead man's soul into the atmosphere, and like a *jinn*, his soul would float in the earthly zone without returning to heaven or entering hell. The killer thus obtained a double vengeance, because the soul was forced to exist in a state of vicissitude and tortuous uncertainty. The psy-

chological roots of the practice originated with the belief that the head was the most sacred part of the human anatomy, being the place where the soul resided.⁵² The soldier who decapitated a man held the soul captive on the earth, condemning it to a life in the physical zone, where it would suffer tremendously from shame and anxiety. The body was not only destroyed, but the soul was taken captive by the enemy, which may have been the origin of bringing the head to the ruler, who had the head placed upon a pike before his city or fort gate.

The archaic symbolism of the act is represented in a variety of sources. The epic poet Firdausî [fl. 400/1010] associated the act of beheading with honor and shame. While the hero Rustam slept, Turkish horsemen stole his magic horse Rakhsh. He made his way to the city of Semengân, but he felt great shame [*nang*]. At the city, he confronted the rulers of the place, and demanded they help him find Rakhsh. His favor for them would be great:⁵³

If you search for him
I would be thankful, and bestow a good reward.
If it remains in the same manner and it is not apparent to me
An abundance of [your] heads must be severed.

The hero Rustam would have committed these terrible acts to restore the circumstance of honor, and to banish the pall of shame. The Turkish epic *Dede Korkut Kitabî* [fifteenth to seventeenth centuries] also shows that the warrior who has cut off heads and spilt blood achieved a degree of status in the chieftain's assembly. The young Egrek went into the assembly and pushed begs and warriors aside, even though he was inexperienced in the warrior's craft. Ters Uzamîsh said to him:⁵⁴

Mere Ushun Qojâ oghlî bu oturan bigler her biri oturdughî yiri
qîlij-y-ile etmegi-y-ile alupdur, mere sen bash mî kesdüng qân
mî tökdüng âch mî toyurdung yalînchaq mî tonatdung didi. Egrek
aydur: Mere Ters Uzamîsh bash kesüp qân tökmek hüner midür
didi. Aydur: Beli hünerdür ya? Ters Uzamîshung sözi Egrege
kâr eyledi.

⁵² Manfred Ullman, *Islamic Medicine*, (Edinburgh, 1978) pp. 61-63, 72-85

⁵³ Firdausi, *The Tragedy of Sohrab and Rostam, from the Persian National Epic, The Shahname of Abol-Qasem Ferdowsi*, Jerome W. Clinton (ed. & trans.), (Seattle, 1987) p. 10, lines 47-48

"Oh! son of Ushun Qojâ, each one of these seated begs has won the place where he is sitting with his sword and with his bread. Have you cut off heads [*bash mî kesdüng*]? Have you shed blood? Have you fed the hungry? Have you clothed the naked?" Egrek said: "Ters Uzamîsh, is there prowess [*hüner*] in cutting off heads and shedding blood?" He said, "Yes, of course there is prowess!" The words of Ters Uzamîsh had an impact on Egrek."

Status achieved through the prowess of waging war was symbolized by the severing of heads in this medieval epic. Status also had much to do with honor in the establishment of a place accepted by others who themselves were deemed to have honor and position.

Decapitation originated in sword combat in which the vanquished man was killed and beheaded. Islamic law permitted the beheading of killed enemies, even though such practices were considered reprehensible.

Carrying the heads of the defeated enemies in Moslem territory or shooting them with catapults into the besieged fortress is considered reprehensible (and even forbidden by the Malikites), unless the Moslems may derive some profit from it, e. g., because it vexes the enemy or reassures the Moslem civilians.⁵⁵

The suggestion generally was not heeded by Ottoman and Muslim troops. In the Khotin War of 1621, Ottoman troops severed the heads of many *haiduks*, in an initial engagement, and after being pushed back again, they returned below the Polish/Cossack earthwork, removed their dead, cut off the heads of the dead Poles [*evet bashlaryn k'esip*], and threw them into the enemy's earthworks.⁵⁶ Persian chronicles show the practice was widespread from the medieval period into the Safavid era.⁵⁷ Ottoman chroni-

⁵⁵ Rudolph Peters, *Islam and Colonialism: The Doctrine of Jihad in Modern History*, (The Hague, 1979) p. 21.

⁵⁶ E. Schutz (ed. & tr.), *An Armeno-Kipchak Chronicle on the Polish-Turkish Wars in 1620-1621*, Bibliotheca Orientalis Hungarica 11, (Budapest, 1968) pp. 56-59.

⁵⁷ Abû Sa'îd 'Abd al-Hayy b. al-Zahhak b. Mahmûd Gardîzî, *Zayn al-Akhhâr*, Tehran: Matba'a-i Itihâdîya, 1350 shamsî, p. 85 [Ghaznavîd]; Aksaraylî Mehmed oğlu Kerimüddin Mahmûd [1276-1325], *Müsamerât ül-Ahbâr* (Ankara, 1944) p. 102 [Oarâmânîd troops in Anatolia]; Abû Bakr-i Tehrânî, *Kitâb-i Dîyârbakrîyya*, N. Lugal, F. Sumer (eds.) (Ankara, 1962) 1, pp. 81-82 [Aq Quyûnlü, 883/1478] Iskandar Beg-i Munshî, *Târîkhi 'âlam ârâ-yi 'abbâsî*, Iraj Afshâr (ed.), Tehran: Amir Kabir, 1350/1971, 1, p. 514 [Safavid, Hamza of the Chapak clan in Gilân was beheaded after he was defeated by Safavid troops in 1594-5]; Jalâl-i Munajjim [d. 1620?], *Târîkhi-i 'Abbâsî*, S. Vahidniya (ed.) (Tihran, 1366/1987) p. 432 [Safavid, Kurdish chief beheaded after his defeat]; Malik Shâh Husain-i Sîstânî, *Ihyâ' al-*

clers also documented instances of beheading during or after battles.⁵⁸

Some, even much, of the archaic meaning may have survived in the intentions of nineteenth century soldiers who followed the practice of decapitation. M. E. Durham, who visited Albania and Montenegro at the beginning of the twentieth century, tried to find a relationship between the head-hunter, whom he identified as a "primitive savage," and Montenegrin veterans of the Russo-Turkish War. He could not find the "savage" after he spoke with them. He asked them why they beheaded their enemies, and they replied with such answers as "to show how brave you are," or "to shame the enemy," or "because it is our old custom."⁵⁹ Each of the answers illustrated some aspect of the practice, and, to a degree, the distance of the practitioners from medieval beliefs. The veteran who had wanted to shame the enemy said nothing about that enemy's soul, but otherwise, he acted in accordance with the code of honor and shame cited above. Likewise, the former soldier who wished to demonstrate his bravery appealed to the code of honor in war. Only the soldier who referred to custom implied that he idealized his cultural tradition, but he did not necessarily understand the nature of the custom, and could not explain why he needed to follow that custom the way his two compatriots had done. None of the answers, however, recalled the metaphysical ideal of the soul which would have given a rational support for the act of beheading. The survival of a cult of honor and military virtue from medieval times was apparent in their answers, but the realities of nineteenth century war had put an end to the circumstances which produced that cult. Nonetheless, such a strong attachment to the ideal recalled, however faintly, the metaphysical reason for the deed, and the soldier intended to do harm to his enemy beyond physical existence and in the metaphysical realm for the sake of honor, and to shame the enemy for his cowardice or lack of prowess. While not strictly medieval, the later ideals still carried the lethal intent into the afterlife. Their answers

⁵⁸ Konstantin Mihailovic, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, Benjamin Stolz (tr.), (Ann Arbor, 1975), pp. 45, 47; Fethullah 'arif Chelebî "arifi", *Süleymânname*, Volume 5, *Shâhnâme-i al-i Osmân*, Topkapî Palace Museum, Hazine 1517, Istanbul, Ramazan 965/June-July 1558, folios 170b [Mehmed Bey defeated and killed the rebel governor of Egypt, and beheaded him: *ki dâ'im-i sar-i khasm dar pâ-yi shâh/chinîn bi û uftâda bar khâk-i râh*; "That the head of the adversary at the foot of the shah (i. e. emperor) / did he drop in this manner on the road"], 212a, 422a; in Esin Atil (ed.), *Süleymanname: The Illustrated History of Suleyman the Magnificent*, (Washington, D. C.-New York, 1986) pp. 124-25, 132-33, 182-83; Ibrahim Peçevi, *Peçevi Tarihi*, Murat Uraz, ed., (Istanbul, 1968) 1, p. 193 [citing epic poems about

were more or less representative of other eighteenth and nineteenth century soldiers and irregulars who had decapitated their enemies.

Decapitation appears frequently in eighteenth and nineteenth century descriptions of combats or battles. In Greece, and among Greek populations under Ottoman rule, beheading appears commonly in Demotic songs.⁶⁰ The following Demotic song illustrates the post-medieval, traditional concept of beheading well.⁶¹

Πανω στην ακρη του γιαλου, στην ακρη το ποταμι,
Βρισκω λημερια κλεφτικα, ολου χορταιασμενα,
Βρισκω του Νασσιου τα μαλλια, του Νασσιου το κεφαλι.
με πηρε το παραπονο και καθομαι και κλαιω,
εκατσα και τα ξεταζα, κατσα και τα ξεταζω:
-Κεφαλι, που-ναι το κορμι, κορμι που-ναι τα χερια;
-Το πηρανε και το θαψαν σε χερισο ξωραφι,
τ-αλετρι βγαζει κοκαλα και το γυνι κεφαλι.

I stroll to the edge of the shore, to the bank of the river
I find a klepht camp all covered with weeds
I find the hair of Nasos, the head of Nasos.
The [sorrowful] plaint overtook me and I sit and weep,
I sat and looked it over, I sat and looked it over:
"Head, where is [your] body, body where are [your] hands?"-
-"They took it and buried it in an uncultivated field,
The time came for work to be done on the uncultivated field,
The plough unearthed the bones and the ploughshare⁶² [the] head."

The fact that the passerby spoke to the decapitated head [kefali], and received an answer from it, demonstrates that the head was understood as the housing for the intellect [and the soul]. The passerby's lamentation for the dead *klepht* centered upon his belief that the *klepht's* soul dwelt in a

⁶⁰ Alexis Polites, *Τό Δημοτικό Τραγοῦδι, Κλέφτικα, Νέα Ἑλληνική Βιβλιοθήκη*, pp. 17, 29, 37, 71, 73.

⁶¹ Ibid. p. 71. This song dates from the period between 1807 {the death of Athanasios Kompopoulos, the Nasos of the song} and 1866, when the song was published by Chasiotes.

⁶² The term γυνί was difficult to translate because it did not exist in any of the dictionaries. Γυνί is derived from ancient Greek το ὕνιον, Τό ἀνασκάπτον τήν

disturbed state, notably because his head had been removed from the torso. Time did not ease the head's traumatic condition, and, it is suggested that the spirit it symbolized had existed long in a state of anxiety. The supernatural world fell into disarray through decapitation because the dead man's soul dwelt for an eternity in the world's atmosphere, and had no hope of rejoining its eternal spiritual source. This talking skull represented a medieval survival in its fullest intensity in Demotic song, and in the beliefs of those who heard the song chanted. It was for this reason, perhaps, that Theodoros Kolokotronis found it difficult to forget the heads of his relatives taken by the "Turks" which he never recovered.

Instances of beheading appear relatively commonly in numerous sources of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Theodoros Kolokotronis recalled with deep regret the many instances when his relatives were beheaded after a battle in which they were killed. The Turks and Albanians who defeated them carried away their heads.⁶³ Is it any wonder that rebellious subjects adopted the aggressor symbol of the ruling elite? Thus, armed Greek bands which were victorious over the "Turks" beheaded the enemy and built towers of their heads as in the case claimed for Kostantes Kolokotronis in 1779, who was said to have defeated and slain 12,000 Albanians and to have erected a tower of their skulls at Tripolitsa. The fate of the Albanian survivors in this battle suggests clearly one psychological reaction to the military domination of a state which extended little or no mercy to its subjects. These survivors asked Kolokotronis for mercy [nisafi < Turkish < Arabic *insâf* = a doing justice to, showing pity to],⁶⁴

Κολοκοτρώνη, δέν κάνεις νισάφι! Τί νισάφι νά σās κάμω
ὅπου ἦλθατε καί χαλάσατε τήν πατρίδα μου, μās πήρατε
σκλάβους καί μās ἐκαμάτε τόσα κακά. Τοῦ ἀποκρίθηκαν
Ἐφέτο, δικό μας, τοῦ χρόνου, δικό σου. Τά κεφάλια τῶν
Ἀλβανῶν ἔφτιασαν πύργον εἰς τήν Τριπολιτσά.

⁶³ Kolokotronis, *Diegesis*, pp. 115, 116 [K. states of his uncle Anagnostos Kolokotronis after he was killed και του επηραν το κεφαλι (Χερι κομμενο εις την νεοτητα του) The last comment suggests he had been treated as a thief by a Muslim court in his youth, an appropriate fate for a klepht in the eyes of the Islamic law], 118-119 [The local Ottoman government obtained a *firmân* [fermani] which called for the heads of Kolokotronis and Petmeza. "Ἐσκοτωσαν τοτε τον Πετιμερῆ εἰς τὰ Καλάβρυτα. καί ἔστειλαν τό κεφάλι του εἰς τήν

[While fighting, the Albanians cried out for mercy]:

"Kolokotronis, do you not give any quarter?" - 'What quarter should I give to you,' he replied, 'you who have come here and despoiled my country and made slaves of us, and done us every evil which it was possible to do?' - 'It is your turn now,' they replied: ours to come.'...They built up a tower at Tripolitsa with the heads of these Albanians....⁶⁵

This combat did not represent the feud or the vendetta strictly speaking. The battle occurred between two forces which were enemies only in a general sense of two armies facing one another on the battlefield. Centuries of perceived merciless treatment was reciprocated with a similar ruthlessness. Kostantes identified with the enemy's methods when giving back to them what his people had received from them. Decapitation of the dead enemy was a similar action taken to return to the enemy what had been given to the people of Kolokotronis' *patrida*, or homeland.

Another instance of identification with the enemy appears on a different plane of action. Kolokotronis states:⁶⁶

Ὅταν εἰς τόν Πόλεμον ἐλαβόνετο κανέννας βαρέως καί
δέν ἠμποροῦσαν νά τόν πάρουν, τόν ἐφιλοῦσαν καί ἔπειτα
τοῦ ἔκοφταν τό κεφάλι, τό εἶχαν ἀτιμίαν ὅπου οἱ Τούρκοι
νά πάρουν τό κεφάλι του.

When any of us was seriously wounded in battle and could not be carried away, we all kissed him and then cut off his head. It was thought a great dishonour [atimia] to have the Turks bear away one's head.⁶⁷

This action, even more than the decapitation of the Albanians, demonstrates that the practice followed by the Greek klephts was one in which the klephts identified with the enemy, but only by force of circumstances. The enemy was deprived of a trophy, while the klephts retained their honor and preserved the honor of the dead man as well. This form of decapitation, however, indicated sympathy with the dead man was a most important factor in the beheading. His soul was not released by hostile forces into a hostile psychic world. The soul could be saved even if the body could not be spared. The syndrome thus illustrated by these two actions could be summarized as follows:

- a) trauma (enslavement of one's people, or the wounding of a comrade)
- b) anxiety (Kolokotronés states to Albanians that Turks and Albanians committed every evil act possible in his homeland, the wounded klepht's comrades all displayed their grief by kissing him farewell)
- c) aggression (merciless beheading of Albanian combatants, beheading of one's comrade to avoid dishonor)
- d) identification with the aggressor (doing what the aggressor would do to prevent the aggressor from doing the same thing - inflicting dishonor upon the protagonist, and perpetrating deep psychic harm)

Returning to Alexander and Slesnick, the statement regarding psychic magical processes becomes clearly a factor here as well. Two orientations which appear similar affect one another through their similarity because they exist in fundamental sympathy with each other.⁶⁸ Violence symbolized by the decapitation of dead enemies evolved through a common psychological state imposed first by the Turkish conquerors, but adopted by all their subjects during an era of revolution and civil war in which vigilantism dominated as the chief means of local control. The universal response to trauma or the threat of traumatic episodes created a well-defined psychological response. The only defense against violence was new violence undertaken to prevent the infliction of dishonor. To the credit of Greek sources, it must be noted that a powerful awareness of this inclination among Greeks existed in the Tourkokratia, and that Greeks were generally able to reflect upon this tradition of violence, whereas Turkish sources of the same period show a lack of reflective analysis about this history.

The universality of the practice is attested in a variety of nineteenth century sources where head-severing appeared in a number of instances. Severed heads are commonly found in nineteenth century Serbian ballads.⁶⁹ Makrygiannes recorded that he and his comrades made a sortie into enemy lines to obtain the head of an Ottoman bey killed by Gogos, a leader of the Greek insurrectionaries.⁷⁰ The Vicomte de Noë witnessed *bâshibozûk* troops engage in the same practice after the skirmish at the village of Perikleia on July 28, 1854. *Bâshibozûks* scattered over the battlefield breaking formation to sever the heads of dead and wounded Cossacks. De Noë observed: "*Ils ne revinrent qu'a contre-coeur, quelques-un rapportant des têtes coupées qu'ils crurent devoir mettre aux pieds de leur pacha...*"⁷¹ ["They only returned unwillingly, some of them carrying severed heads which they be-

⁶⁸ See above, p. 22.

⁶⁹ Durham, *Some Tribal Origins*, pp. 175-77.

lieved to be their obligation to put before the feet of their pasha (in this case, the French Algerian General Yûsuf)"] . Algerian irregulars and enemies of the French followed the same practice, so that Yûsuf was accustomed to the practice, and did not find it shocking. Humphry Sandwith, doctor of the Ottoman garrison at Kars in 1854-1855, documented the practice as well. Early in 1854, an Ottoman officer named Mehmed Pasha authorized a raid by irregulars, and one of the incentives he offered was a bounty for each Christian or pro-Russian head brought to him.⁷² This bounty far exceeded the traditional practices of taking heads after a battle, and definitely went beyond the limitations imposed by the vendetta. Raiders were tempted to kill everyone they could find, including innocent civilians. Destruction of the enemy at all levels reflected more the vigilante mentality expressed in the form of a total war goal. Merciless annihilation of entire populations was encouraged at a level far beyond that envisaged by soldiers fighting in the previous wars through the Greek Revolution.⁷³

Psychologically-speaking, mutilation of a dead or wounded enemy on or off the battlefield signified a traumatic experience at the deepest psychic level. The soldier who perpetrated the act intended to carry aggression even beyond the grave in an ultimate effort to dishonor his foe. This psychological environment dominated all cultures within the zone controlled by the Ottoman Empire. Violent death obsessed both aggressor and defender, and both antagonist and protagonist made every effort to ensure that violence was not carried beyond life into the grave. If nineteenth century soldiers did not connect the deed with powerful metaphysical notions of the soul, they did attribute psychological ramifications to the act in the whole concept of honor/dishonor or honor/shame. The victor preserved his honor, while the vanquished was dishonored unless his head could be carried away by sympathetic comrades. In any case, the act signified both a response to trauma and the infliction of trauma upon an enemy. The close relationship between victim and victimizer in this act indicates that the perpetrator identified clearly with the aggressive orientation. The only honorable position was to defend the victim or to be the victimizer. The victim whose head remained in enemy hands represented a powerful shame or dishonor for his family.

Other mutilations of the dead enemy were also common, and included emasculation, severing of an ear, impalement of pregnant women, and other

⁷² Humphry Sandwith, *Narrative of the Siege of Kars* (London, 1856), p. 129.

⁷³ Representative examples of beheading from later periods may be found in: Rev. Henry Fanshawe Tozer, *Researches in the Highlands of Turkey* (London,

acts. Space does not permit a full discussion of these acts, but they generally symbolize the same aggressive orientation and the desire to inflict psychic harm beyond the grave. Emasculation of men and the impalement of pregnant women represented a genocidal orientation in which the perpetrator intended to convey the notion of destroying the entire race of the dead person, including their descendants. The other forms of mutilation signified assaults upon the dead persons' honor and may be linked to medieval metaphysical ideals as well. Mutilation further symbolized the dead person's trauma and the perpetrator's fear of a similar trauma. The mutilating was an act of ritual magic by which the perpetrator called shame and destruction down upon the spirit of the dead enemy, provoked shame for the dead man's surviving relatives and allies, and formed a magical barrier around himself to prevent psychic damage done to him by an enemy. The psychological urgency of preserving honor served as a potent stimulus in provoking increased aggressiveness and violence.

Active Search for Loot

The most common aggressive inclination among irregulars in the nineteenth century was the search for loot. Numerous writers recorded myriads of pillaging incidents, especially in accounts of wars. Looting serves as an indicator of an army's ability to control its troops in the field, and a government's capacity to restrain the violent tendencies of its local and irregular police/garrison forces. Looting was accompanied by murder, rape, and other forms of violence, but, in and of itself, acts as an indicator of lawlessness among the irregulars or any community engaging in such activities. Ottoman irregular troops were practically given a license to plunder by the Ottoman government and high command, which gave no wage to auxiliary soldiers, and even openly stated that such soldiers must obtain their own living by seeking plunder. Ottoman irregular troops made every effort to ensure that they were "well paid" for their services.

Yayas, müsellems, delis, and other irregular troops from the earliest periods of Ottoman history plundered the enemy in lieu of government payment, and the rules of *jihâd* even sanctioned the looting of enemies who resisted. The present discussion will focus upon incidents from the Crimean War onward. The Vicomte de Noë thought the *bâshibozûks* "were the premier looters of the world." When he saw irregulars during an inspection tour of General Yûsuf, de Noë took the grim expression in their faces to be "thirst for pillage." His description of them showed them to be looting machines prepared to steal and carry away anything of use or value.

Ce qui est certain, c'est que ces hommes passaient a juste titre pour les premiers pillards du monde, et la ceinture qu'ils avaient roulée autour du corps paraissait largement garnie de bien illicite. Quand le choléra en eut dévoré une partie dans la Dobrutcha, beaucoup de morts avaient sur eux de 7 a 8,000 fr. en or.⁷⁴

"That which is certain, is that these men are justly given the title of the first looters in the world. The waistband rolled around the body appears to be filled mainly with ill-gotten goods. When the cholera had devoured a portion [of the irregulars] in the Dobruja, many of the dead men had 7-8,000 francs in gold on them."

The irregular cavalry in Yûsuf's and de Noë's command plundered the route of their march thoroughly on all sides as they proceeded into the Dobruja. Such an action was most common. The connection between looting and violence was well demonstrated by Beatson's *bâshibozûks* in the Winter of 1854-1855. These idle irregulars roamed over the Anatolian side of the Dardanelles, and stole from the shop-keepers in village *bâzârs*. "They would go into the bazaars at the Dardanelles, where they were first stationed, and take what they wanted without paying for it. Remonstrances on the part of the shopmen would only give rise to abuse and violence."⁷⁵ Other incidents of plundering in the Crimean War were numerous, and all demonstrate the proclivity for violent behavior.⁷⁶

The association between violence and looting became stronger in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, when Ottoman rule in the Balkans was disintegrating, and Russian inroads into eastern Anatolia caused extreme disorder and panic. Valentine Baker Pasha, an Ottoman general, saw the irregular troopers of the Ottoman army as a motley group of men from all corners of the Empire "who followed the army in the hope of plunder."⁷⁷ Baker commented that the Circassians in particular craved plunder, and

⁷⁴ Vicomte de Noë, *Les Bachi-Bozüks*, p.31.

⁷⁵ James Henry Skene, *With Lord Stratford in the Crimean War* (London, 1883) pp. 48-49.

⁷⁶ William Howard Russell, *The War, From the Landing at Gallipoli to the death of Lord Raglan*, (London, 1856) pp. 113-14; NSK, p. 264; Lawrence Oliphant, *The Trans-Caucasian Campaign of the Turkish Army under Omer Pasha, A Personal Narrative* (Edinburgh and London, 1856) pp. 152-53; S. J. G.-C. Calthorpe, *Letters from Headquarters, or, the Realities of the War in the Crimea* (London, 1857) 2nd ed., 2. pp. 43-44; S. Jocelyn, *With the Guards We Shall Go*, Mabell

would induce a panic among the Ottoman villagers (Muslim or Christian) causing them to flee their homes in fear. In their "thirst for plunder, which seems inherent in their natures, they purposely endeavored to produce a panic in order to induce the villagers to desert their homes, and thus give an opportunity of robbing the household effects which were left behind in the flight."⁷⁸ Charles Williams traveled around the war zone in eastern Anatolia, sometimes without a *zaptiye* guard. On one occasion, he saw two peasants stopped by Circassian irregulars, and, in order to avoid attack they paid "backshish"⁷⁹ to be left alone. Williams himself was almost seized on one occasion. When the Circassian marauders stopped him, he attempted to deal with them, "but when the exhibition of *laissez passer* did not satisfy them, and one of them wanted to know more about me and to seize my bridle, I presented him another passport in the shape of a revolver, and these three gallant creatures promptly took flight, watching my progress afterwards from a safe distance until I reached Hassan Kaleh. I must confess that the road is rather unsafe, but its safety is certainly not enhanced by the protection of these long-coated Tcherkess."⁸⁰ Even regular troops pillaged and "requisitioned" supplies from villagers during the war of 1877. Poor government planning and the corruption of the high command ensured that Ottoman soldiers were chronically lacking in supplies, if not totally impoverished. As a result, "requisitions must be largely resorted to; and more than once I have heard peasants murmur as loud as they dared about the pressure thus brought to bear on them."⁸¹ Plundering acted as the root cause of much violent behavior among the irregulars. Resistance to looters, even in gesture, was enough to cause death and destruction.

Obsession with weapons is much more difficult to document and only a couple of examples can be given here. A soldier's weapon could give him a sense of intense power, especially if he considered it to be a newer model weapon capable of killing or wounding more than the weapons of his enemy could do. A gun could, in short, impart a sense of power to its bearer.⁸²

⁷⁸ Ibid. 2, p. 10. Other references to looting in Baker: 1, pp. 238, 306-07; 2, p. 114.

⁷⁹ Charles Williams, *The Armenian Campaign: A Diary of the Campaign of 1877, in Armenia and Koordistan* (London, 1878) pp. 77-78.

⁸⁰ Ibid. pp. 77-78.

⁸¹ Statement of a British war correspondent in: Archibald Forbes, J. A. MacGahan, et. al., *The War Correspondence of the "Daily News" 1877* (London, 1878) p. 104.

⁸² See above, pp. 25-26.

The basic psychological mind set of soldiers in a war situation depended on morale. Baker Pasha noticed with an acute sense of observation that troops who witnessed one victory after another achieved a sense of power and invincibility. A small Ottoman force had resisted repeated Russian attacks at the battle of Verboka, and had fought with ferocity. "The small numbers that were engaged had rather proved their own power, and they felt sure that it was want of support alone that had prevented their efforts from being crowned with success. This mood [of anger] is not uncommon in armies when a slight reverse succeeds a career of victory, and it is by no means a bad mood to prevail previous to a fight, as those who have long commanded troops in the field well know."⁸³ Victory created a sense of power in the soldier which enabled him to see himself as the master of all that he controlled. The same feelings of power presumably existed in soldiers who were the masters of a weaker subject population whom they had reason to suspect would side with an enemy. Ottoman irregulars armed with Winchester repeating rifles took advantage of their superior fire power to attack and wipe out villages.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to consider the dual problems of social and psychological changes in Ottoman and post-Ottoman societies in the nineteenth century. These factors have been explained only in a preliminary analysis in an on-going research project which will no doubt unearth new information as time passes. The benefits of examining these issues are numerous. Turkish historiography has totally ignored these problems, and has produced an unrealistically optimistic assessment of the nineteenth century based mainly upon the analysis of reform and reformers. No one in Turkish studies has studied the truly burning issues of imperial collapse. The nature and the problems of the Ottoman Empire's demise have been studied in a diverse and uneven way by many other historians, usually with an eye to a given culture, political orientation, or the needs of a given philosophy. Greek studies have been among the most advanced in confronting the social ills which afflicted Greece and Greeks during and after Ottoman rule. The scholars in the other Balkan areas have taken a significant place as well, though much of their data has been subject to the rigidity of Socialist Realism as a critical factor. Almost none of the studies dealing with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire has attempted to deal with psychological factors, and this study seeks to take an initial step in that direction. This study has also attempted to introduce some new social categories such as

vigilantism which are important for developing an understanding of the social condition which produced certain psychological orientations.

The study of psychological aspects has emphasized personal and existential perspectives within a historical context with little effort to establish a clinical test. Clinical testing is impossible under the current circumstances of research. History rather than psychology is the aim of this paper, though psychological resources have been developed in order to better understand historical events which no longer exist. The need to explain psychological developments during a period of extreme social disarray will long continue to be an important issue because explanations using only economic or social criteria are limited in their value in many cases.

Social history has maintained a much stronger position over the past decades, and will continue to do so in one form or another. This paper has dealt with a social problem which is mostly ignored and misunderstood. Many have maintained that the Ottoman Empire made a secure environment for its subject to live and work in, however true this condition may have been in the sixteenth and much of the seventeenth centuries, it was not true in the nineteenth century. Any student of empires in the state of collapse must acknowledge the conditions of civil war, war with external enemies, and social disarray accompanied by the collapse of authority and functioning institutions that most imperial societies endure as a result of changes. This article has thus endeavored to examine a set of social conditions created by the eruption of wars and the rebellions of populations. Much attention has been paid to categories of violent offenders as a special focus for this study. It is acknowledged that efforts must be made to examine the peace-time situations of communities existing in this period of decline, revolt, and warfare because war does not exist as an isolated phenomenon, but as part of a war-peace continuum. Being a preliminary study limited by space, this article has thus emphasized the active conflict phase of the social process just mentioned. Too many analysts now study social communities in an ideal peace setting without attempting to understand the problems which accompany a war sequence in any given set of communities. Subsequent work will attempt to consider the war-peace continuum as a significant variable in examining the issues discussed above.

Greek Officers in the Eighteenth Century Venetian Army

DIONYSIOS HATZOPOULOS

The capture of Constantinople by the knights of the Fourth Crusade, in April 1204, was followed by the Venetian occupation of large areas of Greek maritime territories, including islands and continental coastal regions. While Venice was eventually deprived of its area holdings by the advance of the Ottomans into the Greek maritime space, the Serenissima was able to prolong control, over parts of it until the modern period. Thus, while Crete was lost to the Ottomans in 1669, following the fall of its capital Candia, it was not until 1797 that the Republic lost the Ionian Islands, its last Greek possessions to Napoleon.

Venetian presence in Crete covered a long period, from 1204 until 1669. Lying on the sea-lanes from Venice to Constantinople and from Venice to Alexandria, the great island, covered at that time by cypress trees, produced wheat and fine wines and was a strategically located base not only for Levantine commerce, but also for military operations in the Aegean sea. Crete was destined to become the most precious territorial possession of the Republic, and after 1571, when Cyprus was lost to the Ottomans, it became the last possession, left to Venice, east of the Ionian islands.

Venetian hold on the island was not easy. Trouble with the local population began almost immediately. Later, after a long string of bloody revolts and also after the disappearance of the Greek political center, at Constantinople, in 1453, the Greek aristocracy of the island, and the new middle class in the cities, reached a *modus vivendi* with the Venetian rulers. However, such was not the case with the peasantry. Exploitation and serfdom persisted; revolts, banditry, mutual savagery and oppression by the authorities were perpetuated until the end of Venetian rule.

The collapse of Venetian administration, during the sixteenth century, on the Greek mainland's coastal areas, especially in the Peloponnesos, in-