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Social Conflicts, Changing Identities and Everyday Strategies of Survival in Macedonia on the Eve of the Collapse of Ottoman Central Power (1903–12)

The present study aims to identify certain social dividing lines, fractures and motivations that accelerated the rise in political murders and everyday violence after the Ilinden Uprising. The contribution of foreign intervention (including both the attempts of the great powers to settle the question and the propagandistic activity of neighboring small states) and local traditions (customs) to the nature and extent of violence are also investigated. The authors will also consider the shift in the support policy of neighboring small states from construction to destruction—including the issues of economic benefit and local acceptance at a time when selection of an identity no longer entailed only advantages, but imposed threats as well. During this period the boundaries between the various types of violent action triggered either by religious and school conflict or customs gradually faded, while Chetas became highly organized and self-subsistent through cultivation and smuggling of opium and tobacco and expropriation of state and private property. In order to trace the territorial and cultural patterns of violence as well as specific and general motives, the authors conducted a statistical analysis of quantitative data regarding victims and perpetrators.

The study is based on the comparison of Austro–Hungarian and Bulgarian archival sources in order to check the reliability of data. The study area—the Sanjak of Skopje in Kosovo Vilayet—is suitable for examining problems related to the birth of modern nations: the ethnic and religious diversity of this sanjak makes it possible to investigate both the tensions that existed within and between the Eastern Orthodox and Muslim religious communities as well as the impact of small states with territorial pretensions on this region.

Keywords: everyday violence, Macedonia, IMRO, victims, perpetrators

Introduction

In the aftermath of the 1878 Great Eastern Crisis, the remainder of the Balkan Peninsula had irreversibly become a frontier zone[1] of the Ottoman Empire, a territory in which the collapsing central government was in direct contact with the rival great powers and the dynamically modernizing nation states nurturing

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1 The term is used here in the Turnerian sense.

expansive ambitions. This new situation sparked violence on the Ottoman side of the border, aggression that authorities either failed or did not even attempt to stop. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, Ottoman central power almost totally collapsed in the Kosovo Vilayet, leaving a vacuum for the propagandistic activity of small states. This manifested itself in the competition for souls, schools and religious posts between Serbians and Bulgarians proclaiming nationalistic views and aspirations abroad (a revival of ethnic mapping) and in the establishment of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) in 1893. This initial phase of the Macedonian question culminated in an attempt to relieve the oppressed peasantry in the course of the Ilinden Uprising in 1903 with the active contribution of 15,000 guerillas and the local population.[2] The subsequent plundering of 100 villages committed mainly by irregular Ottoman forces finally elicited the intervention of great powers to secure peace in the European Ottoman provinces. The suppression of the Ilinden Uprising and the cooperation of Macedonian nations provided a warning to Greece as well, prompting the vigorous awakening Greek propaganda.

The present study[3] focuses on the period after the Ilinden Uprising until the outbreak of the Balkan Wars, and aims to identify certain social dividing lines, fractures and motivations that accelerated the escalation of everyday violence. The authors will also investigate territorial and cultural patterns of violence, specific and general motives as well as the contribution of foreign intervention (including both the attempts of the great powers to settle the question and the propagandistic activity of neighboring small states) and local tradition (customs) to the nature and extent of violence. The authors have also examined changes in the support policy of neighboring small states, including the issues of economic benefit and local acceptance at a time when the selection of an identity no longer entailed only advantages, but imposed threats as well.

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2   The second phase is the intervention of the great powers in 1903–1908, the third is the revival of violence after the failure of these Powers to settle the questions.

The location to be investigated is the ethnically mixed Sanjak of Skopje in Kosovo Vilayet (organized in 1875–78) between the years 1903 and 1912 with a view toward the neighboring territories in order to assess the specific or general character of the evaluated events. The study area is suitable for analyzing problems related to the birth of modern nations: due to the ethnic and religious heterogeneity in the Sanjak of Skopje, tensions within and between its Eastern Orthodox and Muslim religious communities can be easily identified and demonstrated (Map 1, Table 1). Moreover, the sanjak was located close to the borders of small states with territorial pretensions toward this administrative unit of the Ottoman Empire, thereby adding an extra ingredient to the boiling pot.

In using the expression "everyday violence," the authors refer to those acts of violence which took place among the civil population on a daily basis and were not connected to the law-enforcement activity of the authorities (military reprisals, border clashes, etc.).[4] The theory of Georg Elwert provided an important methodological basis for the present work. He stresses that the weakening of the state creates a market and demand for violence in society (*Gewaltmärkte*), which is operated by communities organized for trading in violence and coercive measures as commodities (*Gewaltgemeinschaften*). These *Gewaltgemeinschaften* [vendors] are formed primarily for economic reasons, though economic factors are also abundant on the demand side as well (economic rivalry between groups over scarce resources usually appears under the guise of ideological conflict and

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4   The methodological approach and idea of this study to focus on everyday violence in the Sanjak of Skopje stems from Eva Anne Frantz, "Gewalt als Faktor der Desintegration im Osmanischen Reich – Formen von Alltagsgewalt im südwestlichen Kosovo in den Jahren 1870–1880 im Spiegel österreichisch–ungarischer Konsulatsberichte," *Südost-Forschungen* 68 (2009): 184–204, esp. 184–87. Different forms of coexistence including violence in the Vilayet of Kosovo is also the topic of Eva Anne Frantz, "Muslime und Christen im spätosmanischen Kosovo: Lebenswelten und soziale Kommunikation in den Anfängen eines ethnopolitischen Konflikts, 1870–1913" (PhD diss., University of Vienna, 2014). With regard to this question see also Eva Anne Frantz, "Religiös geprägte Lebenswelten im spätosmanischen Kosovo – Zur Bedeutung von religiösen Zugehörigkeiten, Eigen- und Fremdwahrnehmungen und Formen des Zusammenlebens bei albanischsprachigen Muslimen und Katholiken," in *Religion und Kultur im albanischsprachigen Südosteuropa,* ed. Oliver Jens Schmitt (Vienna: Lang, 2010), 127–50; and Eva Anne Frantz, "Violence and its Impact on Loyalty and Identity Formation in Late Ottoman Kosovo: Muslims and Christians in a Period of Reform and Transformation," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 29, no. 4 (2009): 455–68. A German research group investigating the comparative historical and sociological interpretations of the role of communities based on trading in violence also served as an inspiration to the authors. The logic and terminology of the present study are based on the questions, aspects investigated and frameworks defined by Forschergruppe "Gewaltgemeinschaften": Finanzierungsantrag und Forschungsprogramm 1. Juli 2009 bis 30. Juni 2012. November, 2008, Justus-Liebig-Universität-Giessen, 15–39.

in the form of prejudice against "the other"). These groups, which gradually take control over the monopoly over the use of force from the state, have their own dynamics, including operating conditions and laws.[5]

This phenomenon was examined primarily by sociologists and historians through case studies, concentrating on the reasons for violence and the formation of communities trading in violence. However, the internal cohesion and integrative power of these structures, as well as their regulative functions and social spheres of action are considered to be under-investigated. The uniqueness of this study is that it approaches the problem from economic aspects as well, stressing that special economic conditions triggered and accelerated the escalation, ethnicization and nationalization of violence in Macedonia. The authors would also like to draw attention to the practice (*Gewaltpraxis*) and yearly cycle of violence. Beyond the social life and background of *Gewaltgemeinschaften*, the victims of violence can also be examined at different levels.[6]

This investigation utilizes a special type of source—the observations of Austro–Hungarian consuls regarding everyday violence in comparison with contemporary Bulgarian consular reports. From a methodological point of view, a combination of Austro–Hungarian and Bulgarian archival sources (a comparison of data obtained from independent observers and participants in events) can be used in order to avoid partiality, since even the different terminology in Austrian and Bulgarian documents reflects differences in interpretation of the events.[7]

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5   Georg Elwert, "Gewaltmärkte, Beobachtungen zur Zweckrationalität der Gewalt," in *Soziologie der Gewalt.* Sonderheft der Cologneer Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie, ed. Trutz von Trotha (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1997), 86–101.

6   Winfried Speitkamp, "Einführung," in *Gewaltgemeinschaften. Von der Spätantike bis ins 20. Jahrhundert,* ed. Winfried Speitkamp (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2013), 8–12 and Hannes Grandits, Nathalie Clayer, and Robert Pichler, "Introduction," in *Conflicting Loyalties in the Balkans: The Great Powers, the Ottoman Empire and Nation-Building,* ed. Hannes Grandits et al. (London: Tauris, 2011), 3–5.

7   It is important to note that the word "Bulgarian" is not equivalent to "Exarchist" in Austro–Hungarian documents. Österreichisches Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv, Politisches Archiv (hereinafter ÖHHStA PA), VII/Fasz. 434, Rappaport to Pallavicini, March 21, 1907, No. 330, Beilage No. 26, 5. See also the Kral consul's map from 1903 in Nachlass Szapáry, ÖHHStA. Cited also by Толева, Теодора. *Влиянието на Австро-Унгария за създаването на албанска нация, 1896–1906* (Sofia: Ciela, 2012), 540–44 (maps). By contrast, in the reports of the Bulgarian consul in Skopje, the term "Bulgarian" is synonymous with Exarchist. The word "Bulgarian" instead of "Exarchist" often occurs even in Exarchist ecclesiastical documents. See: Централен Държавен Архив (Sofia, hereafter ЦДА), ф. 331k. оп. 1. а.е. 309. л. 31. In Bitola, for example, "Bulgarian school," "Bulgarian church" are used. There were even Patriarchist Bulgarian villages according to Bulgarian sources (some of them were converted as a result of Serbian propaganda, though some were not affected).

The re-interpretation of some sources using a comparative approach would also be worthwhile.

The limits of this study do not allow us to examine the origin of all fault lines and interactions: the authors therefore focus on the tensions between Muslims and Christians and the antagonism between Patriarchists and Exarchists.[8] This chapter applies a *statistical analysis* of quantitative data regarding victims and perpetrators, tracing patterns, differences and general features. Analysis of selected individual *case studies* and the role of *economic background* will be published elsewhere.

Nationality		Kaza									Total
		Skopje	Kumanovo	Kriva Palanka	Kratovo	Kočani	Maleš (Osmanie)	Radovište	Štip (Ištib)	Veles (Köprülü)	
Alba-nian	Muslim	21,387	5,595	–	–	7,800	–	–	–	1,500	36,282 (10%)
Slav	Exarchist (Bulgarian)	25,921	23,710	22,141	17,391	16,524	16,536	7,622	19,472	29,394	178,711 (50%)
	Patriarchist	4,406	8,358	108	954	1,090	288	–	–	4,130	19,334 (5.5%)
	Muslim (Pomak)	5,600	–	–	–	–	9,234	–	–	5,242	20,076 (5.5%)
Aromun		360	120	–	102	1,680		–	–	900	3,162 (1%)
Ottoman (Muslim)		9,949	6,765	1,929	3,815	11,600	425	10,464	25,764	12,512	83,223 (23%)
Gypsies		2,404	1,008	336	336	712	485	390	378	664	6,713 (2%)
Total		72,789	45,784	24,514	22,604	39,406	26,968	18,476	46,094	54 357	350,992

Table 1. Ethnic composition in the *kaza*s of the Sanjak of Skopje in 1903 based on Austro–Hungarian consular reports.[9] Minorities such as Greeks and Jews that composed under one percent of the population are omitted.

However, prior to the discussion of the social conflicts, it is necessary to make some general remarks in order to place the subject of our investigation in

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8   The debate between Muslim communities of different origin and identity is not investigated here.

9   ÖHHStA 19. Nachlässe, Nachlaß August Kral, Kt.2, "Statistische Tabelle der Nationalitäts- und Religions-Verhältnisse im Vilajet Kossovo (1903)."

its historical (and historiographical) context. In this article, the authors aimed to investigate whether analysis in earlier scholarly works regarding the main fault lines or the nature and forms of violence can be considered realistic and if this analysis can be validated using a larger database and numerous concrete examples or whether it should be revised.

First general remark. As a consequence of the Tanzimat reforms, the differences between Muslims and Christians had been gradually diminishing, which deeply frustrated the Muslim community that was in the process of losing its privileges. However, economic inequality did not decrease as the landlords were mainly Muslims, which frustrated the Christians, who remained economically subjugated to the landlords (half of Macedonian land was in large estates called *chiflik,* while one-third was in *waqf* [Islamic land endowment] and only the remaining one-sixth was in the hand of freeholders in 1910).[10] And since not all Muslims were rich, the abolition of their privileged position eliminated the last factor that differentiated them from the Christian *rayah*. These Muslim inhabitants of the central Balkans formed one of the most conservative religious groups in the empire, refusing to live within the framework of a modern state and harboring no desire to be treated equally to Christians. Therefore the reforms satisfied neither Muslims nor Christians, nor did they reinforce trust towards the viability of the state. The reforms had brought about confrontation between the Muslims and the central government, but the true victim of their anger and frustration was the local Christians, whom the state failed to protect. After 1878 the situation deteriorated further when 40,000 Muslim refugees from Bosnia and the Sanjak of Niš arrived to Kosovo Vilayet (constituting one-third of the population in Priština, a quarter of the population in both Vučitrn and Gilan and ten percent of the population of Skopje).[11] At the same time, vengeful neighboring small states were established. These *muhajir* families had lost everything they had during the war and the Ottoman government declined to provide them with support. Fleeing from the Austro–Hungarian occupation or from the Serbian army, the absence of state support and the pressing need to provide for their families prompted these refugees to take desperate measures. They expelled thousands of the local Slavic peasant families, mainly from eastern Kosovo, which then fled to Serbia (*Mala Seoba*). The Muslim refugees, however, assimilated with the local

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10   Adolf Strauss, *Großbulgarien* (Posen–Leipzig–Warsaw–Budapest: Mitteleuropäischer Buch- und Lehrmittelverlag, 1917), 52–60. There were 15,000 *chiflik* owners and only 10,000 freeholders in the region.
11   *Osmanli Arşiv Belgelerinde. Kosova vilayeti* (Istanbul: T.C. Başbakanlik. Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2007), BOA, Y. PRK. UM, 1/99. 332–34.

society over the long term, and thus formed a social stratum in the province that could be best characterized by its constant restlessness.[12]

Second general remark. By the final third of the nineteenth century, the social changes that had reached the Balkans had transformed or abolished the majority of the formerly existing identity patterns. This world was in transition in a religious, social and economic sense as well. The identity of the local, South Slavic-speaking Eastern Orthodox peasantry was also in crisis, though it was not the recognition of Christians as equal citizens that challenged this identity. This occurrence took place too late, as it almost coincided with the birth of modern nationalistic ideas in the neighboring small states—and as mentioned earlier, equal citizenship did not represent a real alternative, since neither Muslims nor Christians were satisfied with the reforms.[13] The arrival of nationalism created new fault lines within the population, such as religion had earlier, but without erasing the old differences. The several types and layers of identities were overlapping one another, creating chaos in minds, rivalry between the political ideologies (loyal-liberal and nationalistic-revolutionary) and an upsurge in social change, which was exploited by national movements. The latter current was more popular, partly because it offered a solution to social inequalities as demonstrated in IMRO's response to the land hunger of peasants. Furthermore, in the present case,[14] not only religious and nationalistic divisions tended to face one another *at*

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12   Konrad Clewing, "Mythen und Fakten zur Ethnostruktur in Kosovo – ein geschichtlicher Überblick," in *Der Kosovo-Konflikt. Ursachen-Akteure-Verlauf,* ed. Konrad Clewing and Edvin Pezo (Munich: Bayerische Landeszentrale für Politische Bildungsarbeit, 2000), 46–47; Karl Kaser, "Raum und Besiedlung" in *Südosteuropa. Ein Handbuch,* ed. Margaditsch Hatschikjan and Stefan Troebst (Munich: Beck, 1999), 53–72; and Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Kosovo. Kurze Geschichte einer zentralbalkanischen Landschaft* (Vienna–Cologne–Weimar: Böhlau, 2008), 79–84, 153–56.

13   In contrast to Bulgaria, where economic prosperity grew together with the replacement of Spahis (as layers that were not cost effective) and resulted in the economic emergence of the Bulgarian smallholder in the 1850s, in Macedonia the peasants remained economically deprived under Muslim landlords with no hope for prosperity after 1873–78, when U.S. and Russian crops invaded western markets, thereby decreasing prices. It was the crop boom of the 1840s (thus an external source) that prolonged the existence of the Ottoman Empire, not the reforms themselves. These reforms did not create economically favorable conditions (it was only a successful response to existing opportunities), but to the contrary: the tax reforms of Midhat Pasha providing a surplus for the central government could be carried out due to the favorable economic situation. This was absent in the 1870s, when the Empire continued its reforms and deeply contributed to the failure of social modernization. Gábor Demeter, *A Balkán és az Oszmán Birodalom I* (Budapest: MTA BTK TTI, 2014), 176–334.

14   The same thing had also taken place in France (1789–1815) and Central Europe (1848–49), leading to violence there as well.

the same time,[15] but in addition to the collision of competing internal ideologies, an external threat also manifested itself as a transmitter of the nationalistic idea, which offered a real alternative (a smallholder society with private property) for the oppressed.

While in the Ottoman Empire opportunity for an essentially sectarian identity to develop and transform into something new (the "Ottoman nation") arose at a rather slow pace, the numerous and elaborated national ideologies suddenly seemed to "flood" the local population. And soon enough, a violent rivalry broke out among the representatives of the different South Slav national creeds.[16] These ideologies were no longer (or not only) promoted or propagated by the *national church* subjected to/or allies of the Ottoman state, but by *patriot foreigners* from the nation states built on a secular society or by the *local intelligentsia,* resulting as well in a multiplication of agents and ideologies, which presented average people with a difficult choice.[17]

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15   In Europe the religious opposition preceded the occurrence of the latter by centuries and religious wars fought then were violent as well.

16   Schmitt, *Kosovo,* 160–67.

17   We use the model of Oliver Jens Schmitt, who drew a distinction between traditional and ethnicized identity patterns. The Macedonian case (the ethnicization of South Slavs) is similar to the Kosovo case. During the first phase the Orthodox millet undergoes a nationalization process, therefore a new "Slavic" identity is created to oppose the Greek Church. Within the Millet so-called "*Konfessionsnationen*"—confessional nations—were evolving. (After the abolition of the Patriarchate in Ipek [Peć], the goal of the Greek Patriarchate to uniformize the population failed with the exception of Vlachs mainly because this kind of assimilation could rely only on the urban Greek population, which simply did not exist in either Macedonia or Kosovo after the numerous Albanian raids in southern Macedonia in the 1820s that broke up the "Greek" Orthodox merchant communities.) The problem is that the fragmentation of the Christian Millet did not stop, because not only one center was created: the ethnicization/nationalization of religious identity took place not in contrast to the Muslim community, but within the Christian community. Based on its territorial autonomy, the Serbian identity was rather nationalized-secularized, while the Bulgarian identity (established in the Church) was national-religious. In the second stage, a civilian élite was formed that questioned the leadership of the priests, finally overthrowing the latter. Third stage: the neighboring Eastern Orthodox small states interfere in this process by sending teachers and priests to influence the target groups.

Although the religious identity was completely dissolved by the new, evolving ethnic identity, ethnicized identity patterns remained quite fluid among Eastern Orthodox South Slavs. Even in 1903 in the Sanjak of Prizren 17,000 Eastern Orthodox Exarchists (Bulgarians?) and 22,000 Patriarchists lived together: half of the Slavs in Kosovo were still not Serbian or Serbianized. Had Bulgaria started its nation-Church building 30 years earlier, the present Slavic population in Kosovo would be Bulgarian. According to Schmitt, this type of ethnicization reached only five percent of the population. In 1865, only 150 students studied Serbian in Peć: thus a narrow, but resolute and devoted national élite was formed. While the nationalization of this élite seems to be obvious, Schmitt did not find any evidence that the same process took place among the peasantry by the year 1900. Prior to the establishment of schools for the illiterate masses, the Church
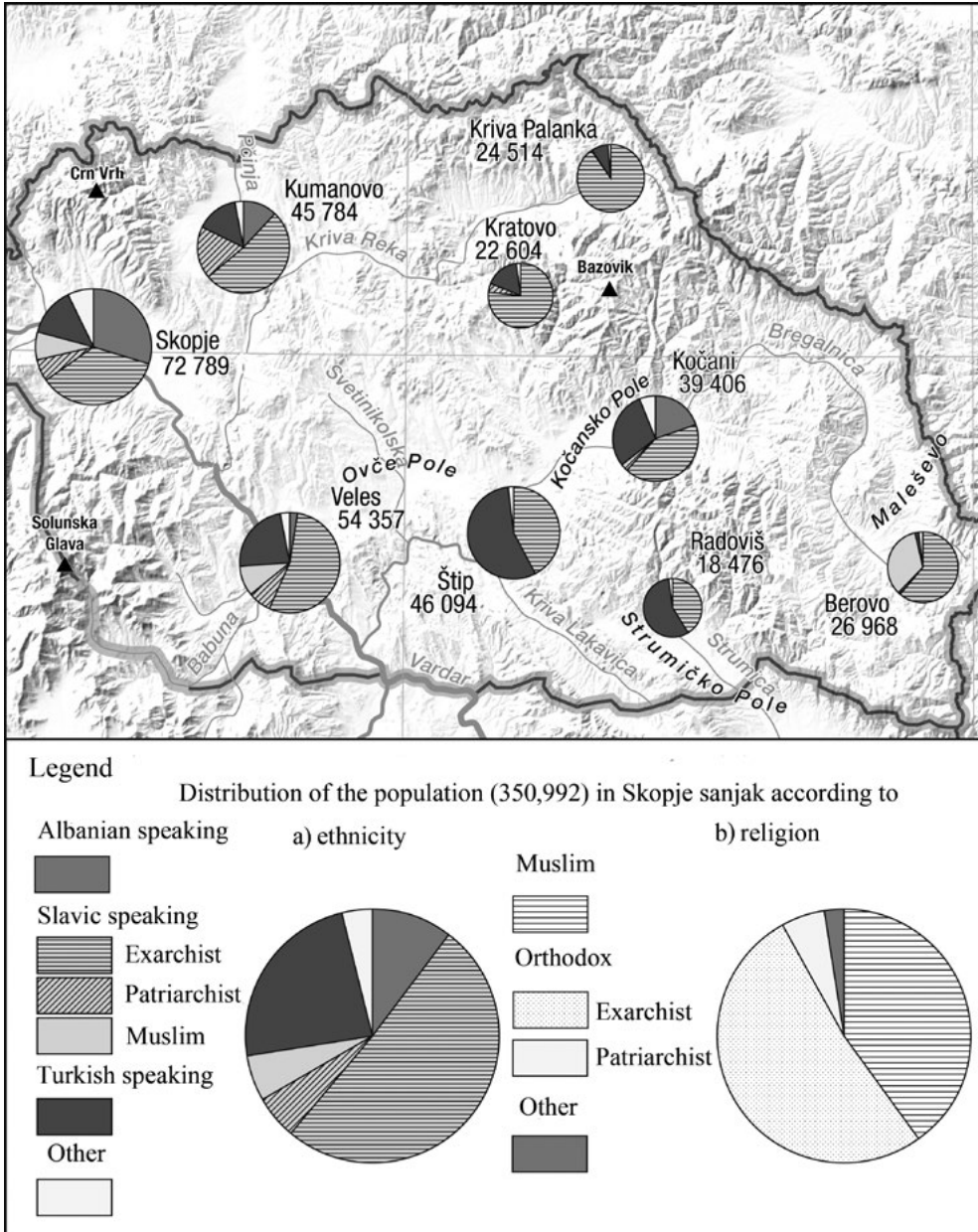
Map 1. *Kaza*-level religious and ethnic map of the Sanjak of Skopje by Zsolt Bottlik

was the only institution that could transmit national(istic) ideologies. Therefore the role of the school system and the verbal transmission of ideologies through the Church is evident, like the mobilizing effect of promising land to the landless. Schmitt, *Kosovo,* 159–72.

The Background of Tensions and the Social and Spatial Patterns of Violence

Nationality and denominational-sectarian conflicts claimed the most victims in Skopje Sanjak in the period from 1903 to 1908. The conflict can be classified into three major groups, two of which are under investigation in this study. The first type of religious conflict is represented by the rivalry between Patriarchists and Exarchists beginning in the 1870s.[18] Since the Skopje Sanjak was a collision zone of interests (*spornata zona, contested zone*) located between Serbia and Bulgaria, this phenomenon is not unique, although the proportion of Patriarchists did not exceed 10 percent compared to the 50 percent of Exarchists. However, these tensions were not limited to this region—the same phenomena occured in the Vilayet of Bitola (Monastir), Shkodra (Iškodra) and Saloniki (Selanik). This is demonstrated by the case of the Eastern Orthodox secondary grammar school in Prizren at the turn of the century; the Bogoslovie conflict that led to the cancellation of several school years as the result of constant fighting between pro-Bulgarian and pro-Serbian factions and during which the reciprocal murder of Serboman and Bulgarian Orthodox priests continued until the arrival of a "neutral" clergyman sympathizing with Austria–Hungary; as well as some cases in the series of Karadag incidents from 1907 (see below).[19] Atrocities over debated symbolic places usually dominated in the first phases of these conflicts, followed by struggles against symbolic personalities and culminating in the fight against the local population.

From a sectarian aspect, the Muslim–Christian conflicts (second type) proved to be the most serious among the peasantry in Kosovo Vilayet. A typical source of conflict was the Muslim raids on Christian churches, the perpetrators of which were hardly ever captured by Ottoman law-enforcement forces. The

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18   This conflict was not only religious in nature as the Exarchate served the nation-building aspirations of Bulgaria. The Exarchate was quite popular among the South Slav peasantry, partly due to the cheaper education system and partly due to the language of liturgy (which could serve nationalistic goals, i.e., mentioning the name of Bulgarian rulers during the liturgy instead of Serbians or Muslims, as was the case with regard to the Varnava affair late in 1913, when Tsar Ferdinand of Bulgaria was mentioned in a village under Serbian occupation). Compared to this, the Greek Patriarchate was more popular in urbanized areas and among literate communities, which tended to pay a higher price to acquire knowledge, thus promoting the emergence of their social class.

19   ÖHHStA PA, XXXVIII/ Kt. 399. Prizren (1899–1900). Accounts on similar conflicts can be read in the dissertation of Frantz, "Zwischen Gewalt," 161–78. and Bernard Lory, "Schools for the Destruction of Society: School Propaganda in Bitola, 1860–1912," in *Conflicting Loyalties in the Balkans,* 45–63. For the role of Church see Katrin Bozeva-Abazi, *The Shaping of Bulgarian and Serbian National Identities 1800–1900* (Skopje: Institute for National History, 2007), 143–92.

latter often encouraged such attacks in order to punish *Cheta* (četa) groups, but it had greater impact on the civilian population than on paramilitary groups. A good example of this type of attack is a February 12, 1907 Muslim Albanian raid in which Eastern Orthodox churches in the villages of Zubovce, Požaranje and Galata near Gostivar were ransacked and burned down. These villages were maintained jointly by the Serbian and Bulgarian religious communities of Gostivar, where the denominational identity was still stronger, than national identity. However, the delinquents were known to be Muslim Albanians originating from surrounding villages, the authorities did nothing in spite of the fact that even foreign consuls were voicing protest to the Grand Vizier.[20] We must also stress that this sectarian dividing line was not identical to dividing lines between nationalities: for example, in Shkodra Vilayet (today west Kosovo), the Muslim Albanians launched attacks on the shrines of the local Christian Albanians as well.[21]

The third type of religious conflict took place between Muslim communities (Bektaşi–Sunni; rural–urban; citizen–official). Our statistical analysis will stress that conflict of this type was not negligible in the Skopje Sanjak. The three types of conflict often appeared together in the same area: sometimes their motives can be traced back to sectarian differences, sometimes to customs law, though they can also be attributed to economic, social or personal antagonism and were often encouraged by foreign pressure.

The Skopska Crna Gora (Karadag) Mountains, located north of Skopje, represented one of the major hotspots of nationalistic tension beginning in 1907 (the same was true for the *kazas* of Kriva Palanka, Kočani and Radovište), as this was the zone in which Albanian, Serbian and Bulgarian interests collided and overlapped. (Serbian refugees from Stara Srbija had settled here in numerous villages between 1689 and 1739, and these refugees were not obedient to the Bulgarian Exarchate). Conflict broke out following a number of unrelated murders. One of the killing sprees was provoked by Serbians when they attacked an Albanian village led by Voivode Petko Ilić. Another incident took place in the village of Brodec: during a raid Bulgarian attackers killed two Serbian men and kidnapped seven more whom were never found. The motives remained unknown in both cases. In addition to the constant Bulgarian and Serbian

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20   ÖHHStA PA, VII/Fasz. 434, Rappaport to Pallavicini, February 12, 1907, no. 14/pol. (Beilage no. 131. res Rappaport to Oppenheimer, 8).

21   Ibid. For similar conflicts see: Natalie Clayer, "The Dimension of Confessionalization in the Ottoman Balkans at the time of Nationalisms," in *Conflicting Loyalties in the Balkans,* 89–109.

propaganda and the activity of infiltrating irregular foreign troops, the situation was exacerbated further by the fact that the peasants of Skopska Crna Gora lived in traditional communities in which unwritten customs of the family blood feud entailed obligations on family members. The two series of events infuriated the local communities, which wished to avenge the dead. A few months later everybody was fighting with one another. In this case, the local conflicts stemmed from the consequences of local customs over which state law had seemingly no authority whatsoever,[22] while the presence of foreign influence complicated the situation even further. Authorities did nothing, although the local people had asked not only them, but the consulates of the great powers to intervene as well. The subsequent peace negotiations were led by an Archimandrite from a local monastery named Sava, who unsuccessfully tried to make peace based on unwritten customs instead of official law. Although his efforts were thwarted by the local Albanians, who did not wish to give *besa* for the peace, his activity clearly illustrates that local people did not trust the official Ottoman administrators and that local customs were much more authoritative than imperial law.[23]

Problems occurred not only at the Ottoman–Serbian border, but by 1907 along the Bulgarian frontier zone as well. Here the local traditions were exacerbated by the propaganda and paramilitary activity of small states. The equality of citizens meant nothing in these periphery areas where local communities and identities were still stronger than the imperial identity that attempted to secure/impose civil rights. *These traditional communities became more susceptible to nationalism if it occurred together with the defense of local interests and traditions.* The Bulgarian consul in Skopje enumerated in a notebook more than 750 cases of violence committed by Serbs and Greek bands in 1906–07. The list starts with the activity of Georgi Kapitan, who crossed the border with his Serbian *Cheta* and captured six hostages in two raids, then returned to Skopska Crna Gora, which served as his hinterland.[24] It was a perfect base of operations: while promoting Serbian objectives, at the same time Kapitan could also avenge the previously cited atrocities committed against his host community. Local aspirations and state

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22   ÖHHStA PA, VII/Fasz. 434, Rappaport to Pallavicini, July 27, 1907, No. 55/pol, 17 and October 29, 1907, no. 71/pol, 14.

23   For information about the *Lebenswelt* of mountains and plains, including social norms corresponding to geographical attributes and constraints, see Frantz, "Zwischen Gewalt," 63–79. and Eva Anne Frantz, "Soziale Lebenswelten im spätosmanischen Kosovo, 1870–1913. Zur Bedeutung von Berg und Ebene, Ökologie und Klima," in *Studime për nder të Rexhep Ismajlit me rastin e 65-vjetorit të lindjes,* ed. Bardh Rugova (Prishtinë: KOHA, 2012), 261–73, esp. 262.

24   ЦДА, ф. 335k. оп. 1. а.е. 396.

priorities intertwined, and those taken captive could never be sure whether they were being held for ransom to promote the Serbian cause or would be victims of blood feud.

Even more interesting, two more Serbian *Chetas* were reported from the region of Kratovo and Štip in January 1907 in spite of the bad weather conditions and the fact that the location was far away from the Skopska Gora borderland. (The bands often operated far away from their hideouts in distant *kaza*s to hinder the activity of authorities). These attacks were of different character: in February, Ivan Stajkov kidnapped the *starešina*s (chiefs, elders) of Stariprad village and forced the village to declare its loyalty to Serbia by taking up Serbian identity.[25] These acts were definitely not connected to any vengeful act.

These changes in national consciousness were not permanent or irreversible: in many cases villages changed their identity quickly, if another *Cheta* appeared. Even religious and national categories were often mixed within a village. The intruders usually inquired about the nationality of residents (Serb, Bulgarian, Greek), though priests answered according to religious category (Exarchist, Patriachist), which did not satisfy the intruders.[26] The timing of the above-mentioned raids has more significance than the acts themselves: these events took place in winter, and cannot be explained by simple banditry, the goal of which was to collect food and other means of subsistence. Since the villagers stayed in their dwellings during winter, an attack on them was riskier during this period than during the summer, when potential victims were working in the fields. Therefore the previously mentioned *Cheta* groups can be regarded as well-trained, organized and determined units in comparison to a simple band of robbers without deep-rooted nationalistic commitments.[27]

Thus at least three different motives of *Cheta* activities can be discerned*: their aims* could be *social (local revenge), economic (self-sustainment or weakening the economic basis of the enemy) or political (promoting national propaganda). Political results*

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25   Ibid. The Bulgarian consul was not alone in his collecting of data. The lack of public security due to the significant decrease in Ottoman power by 1903 prompted Austro–Hungarian consuls to start keeping statistics on violent activities in their own districts as well.

26   See D. Stavropoulo Livanios, "Conquering the Souls: Nationalism and Greek Guerilla Warfare in Ottoman Macedonia 1904–1908," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 23 (1999): 204 and 210–11. See also Balogh Ádám, *A nacionalizmus szerepe a görög politikai gondolkodásban* [The Role of Nationalism in the Greek Political Thinking] (Szeged: SZTE, 2006).

27   In winter the food supply was scarce, which may have encouraged bands to undertake risky operations, though finding shelter and covering up tracks was also harder. Simple banditry was more abundant during the summer.

could also be achieved through the former two motives. Very often *the frequency of the raids showed yearly fluctuation.* During spring, the exhausted raw core of *Chetas* gained strength and supplies in the villages of target areas, and by wandering from village to village (partly for security reasons, partly in order to gather men for their cause), increased their number to between 20 and 40 men. Todor Alexandrov commanded a band of this type in Kratovo *kaza* in 1910.[28] The peak of their activity was the late summer, when villagers collected the harvest far from their relatively secure dwellings. Winter attacks were quite rare: local people referred to snow as the "white police," which was more efficient than the Ottoman authorities or the international gendarmerie operated by the great powers between 1903–08.[29] *Increased winter activity can be regarded as a peculiarity of Chetas supported by small states, while their other feature is the relatively great number of Cheta-band members.* For example, the *Cheta* of Ivan Stajkov consisted of 30 men in February,[30] which means that it was more than the "bare core."

Based on the above mentioned, two general tendencies began to gain ground concerning the *organizational basis* of *Chetas* following the turn of the century. The first was that denominational (sectarian) and national categories were mixed and combined in all conceivable ways (similarly to the goals and motifs explained earlier). The second was that at the same time a new social stratum emerged in the vilayet: *being a Cheta member became a lifestyle.* Its members were destitute and therefore radical men (regardless of their religion or nationality) who simply tried to profit from the chaos.[31] Besides the irregular troops arriving from abroad, which were fighting to realize national ambitions, and local revolutionary forces (like IMRO), these mercenary bands[32] also created their own armed corps and under the banner of national goals they essentially lived off the terrorized population, as they could be hired to intimidate and assassinate local leaders. These

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28   ÖHHStA PA, VII/Fasz. 434, Heimroth to Eduard Otto, July 30, 1910, no. 56/pol., 8.

29   Ibid., Heimroth to Pallavicini, February 5, 1911, no. 6/pol., 12.

30   ЦДА, ф. 335к. оп. 1. а.е. 396.

31   The Greeks indeed organized their paramilitary units this way from 1904, hiring men (mercenaries in fact), often regardless of their nationality who were not devoted to the Greek national movement, but had knowledge of local conditions and therefore offered a higher rate of success or effectiveness.

32   Irregular troops were organized for a number of reasons. Troops fighting against Ottoman rule were the first to appear (up to the 1860s). They were followed by irregular armies organized on a sectarian basis: the Patriarchists and the Exarchists (1870s). After 1878, a third group emerged: they fought against the Ottoman Empire and for modern national goals, and in the Skopje Sanjak they were originally Serbs and Bulgarians. The latter split further after the 1890s, when war broke out between IMRO activists and Vrhovists in Macedonia. After 1878 "nationalist" Albanian paramilitary units also appeared in Kosovo Vilayet in addition to mercenary troops and *bashibazouks*.

groups were often balancing between banditry, freedom fighting, terrorism, and sometimes even functioned as auxiliary forces of Ottoman authorities (when maintaining public order or leading punitive actions). At any rate, this had a long tradition in Balkan countries.[33] Several photographs of these frequently multi-ethnic or religiously mixed bands can be found in the military archives of the great powers (*Photo 1*). These *Cheta* leaders could easily be convinced to change their allegiances. The same happened to Ivan/Jovan Babunski, former Bulgarian *Cheta* leader from village Martulica, considered to be a Serbian agent from 1907 on, who tried to intimidate the dwellers of Kriva-Kruša (Veles) as described in a letter captured by the Bulgarian Lieutenant Colonel Nedkov in Skopje.[34]

The social acceptance of the phenomenon (band activity) was not unequivocal. Balogh mentioned that by the end of the eighteenth century, ten percent of Christians (and one-third of young men) had been involved in such a movement at least once in their lifetime.[35] This proportion was even higher in Macedonia at the beginning of the twentieth century. IMRO had 35,000 supporters in 1906 in the Skopje Sanjak, constituting more than ten percent of the Ottoman administrative unit's population. Considering that IMRO was an organization that relied mostly on Exarchists (promoting Macedo-Bulgarian or Bulgarian interests),[36] one cannot avoid the assumption that all Exarchist households were conscripted as sympathizers of the IMRO (Table 2): this is the only reason that could explain the high ratio of supporters of IMRO compared to Exarchist families[37] (25 percent on average, each head of family). However, supporting the IMRO was still a better choice than to fall victim to a hired band (without genuine political commitment).

Nevertheless, this does not mean that these men were activists, able and willing to fight at any time, but rather that they were used as messengers or that their infrastructure (animals, storage places) was exploited by activists.

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33 The Hajdut and Klepht movement which has been active in the Balkans for centuries also had impact on the survival and persistence of these "traditional" forms of violent behavior. See Balogh, *A nacionalizmus,* 16.

34 ЦДА, ф. 335k. оп. 1. а.е. 259. л. 109–10.

35 See: Balogh, *A nacionalizmus,* 16.

36 The IMRO officially considered Macedonia to be an indivisible territory and claimed all of its inhabitants to be Macedonian regardless of their religion or ethnicity. In practice, most of their followers were Bulgarians. Basically it opposed foreign propaganda according to its statute of 1902 prior to Ilinden as well as after it in 1906. Cindy C. Combs and Martin W. Slann, *Encyclopedia of terrorism* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2009), 135.

37 Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey,* vol. 2, *Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey 1808–1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 209.

Furthermore, those who were conscripted (even if they remained passive toward the cause) had to pay the "revolutionary tax." This—in addition to the official tithe that at that time was around 12–15 percent—represented a further additional burden, paid willingly or under coercion.[38] This financial resource, though important, was not the sole source of income for the IMRO. Beyond this, foreign support and regular economic activities (see later) were regarded a major sources of revenue as well.

One must conclude that these people were considered primarily to be a taxable population rather than real fighters (and their willingness to fight may be also questioned), because according to a report from 1906, the 6,000 IMRO supporters in the Skopje *kaza* possessed only 250 rifles (including 190 old Berdans) with 17,000 cartridges and 85 revolvers with 1,550 bullets (Table 2).[39] Generally only one-tenth of the supporters had rifles, and the highest ratio was measured in Kočani and Štip (11–13 percent). Here the ammunition-to-weapon ratio was over 100 (explaining the escalation of violence in 1911–12) and the ratio of older weapons was extremely high. We may assume that older weapons from the Crimean War were stored at home by peasants due to the deterioration in public security,[40] while Mannlichers and revolvers had been distributed among active members through smuggling.

38 ÖHHStA, PA, XXXVIII. Konsulate (1848–1918), Kt. 430. Üsküb (1900), Nr. 212. Pára an Goluchowski, handgeschrieben, Üsküb, September 17, 1900, Statut und Reglement der bulgaro-macedonischen Comités (ins Deutsche übersetzt) (3+14. Beilage, getippt): *Cap. XI: Materielle Mittel der Comités* "Auferlegte Hilfsbeiträge werden zur Einschüchterung oder mit Gewalt von Personen *abverlangt, die wohl helfen können aber nicht wollen.*"
"Art. 47. Zur Deckung der nöthigen Comité-Auslagen, jedoch hauptsächlich zur Bewaffnung der Arbeiter erhalten die Comités die Mittel 1/ aus den monatlichen Beitragleistungen der Mitglieder, die ihnen im Verhältnisse zu ihrer materiellen Lage bemessen werden; 2/ aus Opfern, die entweder freiwillig oder auferlegt sind. Anmerkung: Freiwillig sind diejenigen Unterstützungen, die sowohl von den Mitgliedern als auch von Personen gegeben werden, die sich nicht entschlossen haben, Arbeiter zu werden, jedoch mit der 'Arbeit' sympathisieren, dieselbe zu fördern wünschen und zu diesem Zwecke gewisse Summe geben…"
39 Биярски, Цочо and Ива Бурилкова, eds., *Вътрешната македоно-одринска революционна организация. (1893–1919). Документи на централните ръководни органи,* vol. 1, Архивите говорят, 45. (Sofia: Universitetsko Izdatelstvo Sv. Kliment Ohridski, 2007), 608–09, Nr. 209.
40 Although the number of weapons stored at home was large, this does not indicate a greater probability of everyday violence. The number of violent acts committed by non-*Cheta* members was very low in Kočani, though high in Štip.

Photo 1. An example of hiring people of different ethnic background for the national cause: the ethnically and religiously mixed *Chetas* of the Serbian First Lieutenant Gutriković in Kaza Kumanovo 1908. Source and copyright: Kriegsarchiv (Vienna) AOK-Evidenzbureau, Kt. 3483.[41]

Kidnapping, ransom, mass theft of animals, blackmail, threatening letters, the disinterest of Ottoman authorities and bribery, as Ikonomov enumerated *the methods* in 1911, forced many villages to convert (often temporarily) to a new identity.[42] The village of Kanarevo (Kumanovo *kaza*) decided to become Serboman after the *starešina* was threatened and bribed.[43] Bulgarian priests were arrested in Krastev Dol and in Radibuš by Ottoman authorities, and soon Serbian priests arrived to replace them.[44] Ruginci, Orah and Podarži Kon became Serboman due to violence committed by Bulgarian *Chetas*.[45] In some cases the conversion of a village was not a sudden act—it took years and the two parties often continued to live together: this kind of coexistence happened

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[41]   Published by the permission of Kriegsarchiv of Vienna.

[42]   ЦДА, ф. 335k. оп. 1. а.е. 205. л. 112–25.

[43]   Ibid., а.е. 396. л. 5–7.

[44]   Ibid., а.е. 205. л. 112–25.

[45]   Ibid.

	Skopje	Ku-manovo	Egri Palanka	Kratovo	Kočani	Štip	Veles	Total
All members	6,000	3,448	5,280	5,536	4,640	5,028	5,200	35, 132
In Towns	2,500	0	210	156	320	2,381	0	5,567
IMRO Supporters as Percentage of Total Population	8.3%	7.6%	22%	25%	12%	11%	10%	12%
IMRO Supporters among Exarchists	25%	15%	25%	32%	25%	25%	18%	24%
Rifles (Mannlicher and Berdan, Gras)	250	140	311	208	300	345	440	1,994
Old Rifles from the Crimean War	9	28	0	107	200	293	20	657
Pistols	85	40	37	26	42	44	35	309
Bullets	17,300	4,570	22,660	45,000	56,000	55, 000	48,650	249,180
Bullets	1,550	313	1,710	800	1,700	1,760	1,050	8,883
Bullet / Weapon	67	27	73	143	112	86	106	94
Weapons to Supporters in Percentage	4.32	4.87	5.89	5.69	10.78	12.69	8.85	7.55
Bombs, Dynamite	122	15	60	125	58	36	0	416
Bulgarian Villages	no data	1	no data	63	56	50	50	over 220
Serbian Villages	11	23	8	1	0	0	8	51
Turkish Villages	20	54	0	2	16	70	40	202
Mixed	S-4, T-9	0	S-3	T-5		T-7	S-2	S-9, T-21
Ethnic Character	Bulgarian-Muslim	Turkish-Serbian	Bulgarian	Bulgarian	Bulgarian-Turkish	Turkish-Bulgarian	Bulgarian-Muslim	
Dominant Character of Violence in 1905	Muslim against Christian	Muslim against Christian	Low Case Number	Christian against Christian	Unknown	Muslim—Christian	Muslim against Muslim; Muslim against Christian	
Income	500	436	250	574	500	770	1,500	4,530

Table 2. The forces of IMRO and the ethnic distribution of the population in 1906. Data calculated from: Биярски, Цочо and Ива Бурилкова, eds., *Вътрешната македоно-одринска революционна организация. (1893–1919). Документи на централните ръководни органи,* vol. 1, Архивите говорят, 45 (Sofia: Universitetsko Izdatelstvo Sv. Kliment Ohridski, 2007), 608–09. Nr. 209.

in the case of Stačna, Teovo, Oreše, etc. (Very often social or economic tensions within the community were the explanation for the situation). Nevertheless this phenomenon could also serve as a source of recurrent violence. In other cases, settlements changed sides many times: this happened with particular frequency after 1908, the reestablishment of the constitution and the disarmament of *Chetas:* see the case of Oreše, Izvor, Rankovski, etc., which became Bulgarian settlements after Serbia temporarily lost Ottoman support, then changed sides again by 1910, when Serbian propaganda became revitalized again (Table 3a).[46]

The instruments cited above served not only to promote forced Serbianzation or Bulgarization of the villages, but provided food and income for the Cheta as well to sustain their activity as these units were often operating far away from their hinterland. The identification of Serboman villages in *kaza*s distant from the Serbian border may indicate areas of local support for Serbian *Chetas* (Table 3b).

Beyond taxation, pillaging and "requisition," another source of income came from state subsidies: the Bulgarian consulate in Skopje warned the government that Serbian agents received 300,000 dinars for the Serbianization of the vicinity of Kratovo (this amount is equal to the annual salary of 350 teachers or 150 military lieutenants). These agents had bought weapons (one witness, a major of the international gendarmerie, mentions 200 rapid-fire guns) instead of creating schools, buying land or bribing local leaders, and only a small sum was spent on securing the loyalty of local people.[47] The small states with claims to this territory recognized quite quickly that *the destruction of existing (infra)structures was more cost-effective and its effect was more permanent than establishing churches, schools and buying land*; therefore beginning in 1908 (following the withdrawal of the great powers and their failure to stabilize the situation and after the radicalization of Young Turks) *there was a radical shift from soft methods to hard methods*.[48] This transformation clearly indicates the beginning of the third phase of the Macedonian question, which was characterized by nearly unlimited violence and coercion.

The violent activity of infiltrating irregular foreign troops increased the high mortality rate (caused by local tradition) even further. Due to the escalation

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46   Ibid.

47   Ibid., a.e. 396. л. 5–7.

48   By the end of 1908, the Greek *Cheta* organizer, Colonel Danglis, acquired 10,000 guns with one million rounds of ammunition, and more than 50 Greek military officers worked legally in Macedonia after relinquishing their ranks, while the Bulgarians had already distributed more than 30,000 weapons. See, Balogh, *A nacionalizmus,* 88.

	Never Exarchist	Became Serboman between 1889–1903	Became Serboman between 1903–1908	Became Bulgarian again after 1908
Skopska Kaza	Banjani,* Gornjani,* Čučer,* Brovec,* Kučevišta,* Kučkovo*	Raženičino, Pakoshevo, Novo Selo, Gorno Orizari, Vizbegovo, Vučedol, Dolno Slivari	Tavor (12), Pobože (15+60)	
Veleška Kaza		Rudnik (45+10**), Bašino selo (34+150), Bogomila, Orahovdol (32+58), Kapinovo (14), Mokreni (64), Nežilovo (30+38), Teovo (50+60), Gabrovnik (12+19), Omorani (96+17), Lisiče (19+58)	Vladilovci (75+2), Smilovci (36), Oreše (73+29), Pomenovo (45), Starigrad (43), Novoselo (28+15), Izvor (44+16), Martinci (39), Stepanci (60), Nikoladin (46+83),	Oreše, Izvor, Nežilovo, Novoselo, Smilovci, Pomenovo, Vladilovci, Orahovdol
Kratovska Kaza		Šalkovica (13), Šopsko Rudari (20+75), Kratovo town (340+550 Muslim)	?	
Kumanovska Kaza	Staro Nagoričino* (130 was never exarchist of the 145),	Dumanovci (34+6), Četirci (62)	Karlovci (15), Koinci (25), Vragoturci (42), Maložino (60), Ramno (67), Arbanaško (42), Dlbočina (40), Dejlovci (62), Žegnjane (50), Stepanci (45), Kokino (50), Bajlovci (114), Osiče (15), Ženovino (33), Alinci (48), Breško (12), Svilanci (24), Kanarevo (46), Drenak (82), Orah (85), Ruginci (65), Bukovljani (24), Čelopek (62+15), Dobrača (12+6), Strezovci (40+13), Janinci*, Pelinci*, Beljakovci (52+21), Kučkarevo (10)	

	Never Exarchist	Became Serboman between 1889–1903	Became Serboman between 1903–1908	Became Bulgarian again after 1908
Palanečka Kaza		Stačna (20+12)	Carcorija (75), Dobrovnica (55), Lukje (140), Ogut (125), Podarži kon (116), Metirevo (55), Osiče (50), Baštevo (33), Gaber (102), Dlbočnica (69), Petrilica (305), Ljubinci (24), Radibuš (127), Stećna (32), Gulinci (45), Opošnica (90), Krivi kamen (27), Rankovci (135), Vražogranci (15), Ginovci (75), Milutinci (72)	Ginovci, Radibuš, Milutinci, Osiče, Krastov dol, Lukje (100+40), Ogut, Baštevo***, Carcarija***, Dobrovnica***, Dlbočnica***, Gaber (14+88), Rankovci
Tetovska Kaza	Brezno, Rogačevo, Staro Selo, Vratnica		?	Dolna Lešnica
Gostivarsko Kaza		Zubovci (50+50),	Balil dol (30+50 Muslim), Dobreše (40+110 Muslim), Vrutok (24+45), Pečkovo (17+15), Leunovo (79+38+16 Muslim), Mavrovo (121+31), Nikiforovo (77), Železni Rečani	
Kočanska Kaza			Nivičane (60+8), Gradče (32), Leški (21), Pašadžik (12), Pantalej (14+28)	Nivičina, Gradče, Leški, Pašadžik

Table 3a. Settlements accepting the authority of Patriarchate between 1889–1908

* Never Exarchist, mostly refugees from Stara Srbija between 1689–1739 in the so-called Skopska Crnagora.

** The first number in brackets represents Patriarchist households, the second Exarchist. Muslims are usually indicated.

*** Patriarchist Bulgarian villages.

ЦДА, ф. 335к. оп. 1. а.е. 205. л. 112–25.

Skopska Černogoria	Nikola Janković, Angelko Slavković +10 men
Veles	Ivan Martulčanec (Azot) + 10 men, Dušan (Orahovdol) + 10 men
Egri Palanka	Georgi Skopjanče(to) (Kozjak Mts.) + 10 men, Spas Garda (Petralica)
Kumanovo	Jovo Kapitan, Denko Genin, Pop Dičo vojvoda
Kočana	Turkish-Serbian mixed Cheta led by the Serbian teacher from Kočani with the approval of the *kaymakam*
Skopje	Petko Kapitan (Staro Nagoričano)
Porečie, Kičevo, Azot	Grigor from Nebregovo with 30 men, Stefan with 10 men, Ivan Dolgač(ot) with 15 men, Pavle from Bač (Albania) with 7-8 men around Dibra
Prilep	Ivan/Jovan Babunski and 15 men, Boško vojvoda from Vir with 10 men

Table 3b. Location of Serbian *Cheta* leaders in 1907 (approximately 170 men). Стайко Трифонов, Величко Георгиев, eds., *История на българите в документи,* vol. 1 of 2. 1878–1912 (Sofia: Просвета, 1996), 290–91.

of violence, both the IMRO and former Vrhovists[49] organized meetings where they—at least verbally—pointed out that peasants should be kept away from the violence and should not be considered as target groups. These agreements were not only driven by social sensitivity, but by economic rationale as well. Since land revenue constituted a significant proportion of the income of IMRO, it was in the fundamental interest of the organization to secure the safety of peasants living in areas under its control to promote the cultivation of lands. Through the use of its armed forces, IMRO compelled peasants to work the land and often prescribed what to grow on the fields. Surprisingly, this coercive agriculture was economically rational in a certain sense as the IMRO favored crops with greater added value than that of the wheat traditionally grown in the region. One hectare of land sown with poppy seed resulted between 10 and 15 kilograms of opium (if the plantation was not set on fire by rivals) with an average price of 25 to 30 francs per kilogram, thus producing total revenue of between 300 and 450 francs per hectare. This significantly exceeded the revenue derived from other crops (one ton of wheat was about 130-150 francs and the average yield did not exceed one ton per hectare, while the ratio of harvested wheat was

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49 The left wing of IMRO officially supported autonomy, while the right wing (Vrhovists) fought for the unification of Macedonia with Bulgaria.

only 5 to 1).[50] By monopolizing trade in opium and tobacco, IMRO was able to create self-sustaining *Chetas* that were wedged between peasant and trader expropriating the profits. Since this was a risky enterprise as both adversaries and the government tried to hinder this activity, the mobility of *Chetas* decreased when they had to defend the harvest. Economic oppression and permanent migration generated by political tension led to desertion of arable lands. By 1912 only 400,000 hectares of land was under cultivation in Kosovo Vilayet out of the total 3.2 million acres as a result of the growing violence.[51]

Although an armistice between the two organizations (IMRO and Vrhovists) was desirable, efforts to conclude such a truce were more or less futile,[52] partly as a result of the growing activity of Muslim bands prior to 1908. The latter attacked not only local peasantry, but also launched attacks against the gendarmerie led by international officers. This special form of violence was carried out not against the officers themselves, but against local Christians serving as privates in the gendarmerie in order to discourage them from participation in police forces.[53] Nevertheless, this category is not included in the term "everyday violence" used by the authors.

Not only the armed corps, but the propaganda and ideologies promoted by the neighboring states also battled with one another in the region even during the relatively peaceful period prior to the Ilinden Uprising.[54] The target groups (and propagators) of these ideologies were primarily Eastern Orthodox priests and village teachers,[55] who—based on their functions within the community—were able to disseminate this message most efficiently. The peasantry was targeted directly to a lesser extent owing to its illiteracy. The greatest influence shaping the identity of villagers was undoubtedly exercised by the priest and the teacher:

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50   The total opium harvest in Skopje Sanjak reached 100,000 kgs, generating revenue of up to 2.5-3.0 million francs, which of course stemmed not entirely from fields controlled by bands. Strauss, *Großbulgarien,* 52–60.

51   Strauss, *Großbulgarien,* 52–60.

52   ÖHHStA PA, VII/Fasz. 434, Rappaport to Calice, August 12, 1906, no.75/pol., 4. (Komitadschis Congress in Küstendil) and Rappaport to Pallavicini, November 28, 1906, no. 94/pol., 8.

53   ÖHHStA PA, VII/Fasz. 434, Pára to Calice, August 15, 1902, no. 92/res, 3.

54   One of the methods included ethnic mapping by Belić, Gopčević and Cvijić on the Serbian side. By this time ethnic mapping had definitely become a political instrument that was often very distant from reality.

55   When conquering Macedonia in 1913, Serbs imprisoned nine out of ten teachers. *История на македонскиот народ,* vol. 4 (Skopje: INI, 2000), 73.

the village usually followed the national identity pattern(s) that they represented or were forced to represent.[56]

The fight for supremacy evidently required organizational infrastructure beyond human capital: apart from schools and churches that were considered outposts of the state, which were immobile, though able to control the "Raum und Boden" and were thus most exposed to physical attacks, a network of background institutions responsible for securing optimal conditions was also created.[57] The Bulgarian state refrained from directly imposing its own agents on Macedonian Bulgars: the influence of the Bulgarian state over school affairs prior to the Ilinden Uprising was realized through Macedonian-born Slavic teachers educated in Bulgaria (who were influenced by Bulgarian propaganda). This strategy could enhance confidence of local society towards the Bulgarian state, while the Bulgarophile Macedonians were able to (re)create their own intelligentsia. Out of a total of 1,239 professors and teachers in the Bulgarian schools of Macedonia in 1902, 1,220 were native Macedonians and, in addition to the 15 Bulgarian-born Bulgars teaching in Macedonia, there were 450 Macedonian Bulgars teaching in the schools of liberated Bulgaria.[58] The numbers also reflect the great role of the Macedonian-born population in Bulgarian political life.[59]

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56   Bozeva-Abazi, *The Shaping of Bulgarian and Serbian National Identities,* 41–88 and 120–23.

57   The involvement of the state in these affairs progressed through several stages as Schmitt demonstrated using the example of Serbian activity in Kosovo Vilayet. Two basic conditions had to be fulfilled to reach success: a strong middle class, craftsmen and merchants serving as donators for the new ideology, and the institutionalization of ideology through the contribution of the state. Apart from schools—the first Serbian school was established in Prizren in 1836 to challenge Greek cultural domination—this included: the establishment of the Serb cultural commission in Belgrade in 1868 in order to hinder the Islamization of Eastern Orthodox people; availability of state stipends in Serbia; the foundation of Družstvo Svetog Save in 1886 to coordinate cultural activities that could not be undertaken by the Church; the foundation of seminary for priests in Prizren in 1871, thus the state took over tasks from the Church. The Serbian state opened the consulate in Prishtina by 1889. The main goal of this consulate was to spread national propaganda; another aim was to disseminate unfavorable stereotypes about Albanians in order to inhibit rapprochement between local Slav and Albanian communities. Although Serbian scholars had already written their idealistic-ideological works and disseminated them both locally and in the West by the time Bulgaria became independent, these works focused mainly on Bosnia-Herzegovina, thus the redirection of aims and instruments toward Macedonia required time. Schmitt, *Kosovo,* 160–65.

58   Radoslav Andrea Tsanoff, "Bulgaria's case," Reprinted from *The Journal of Race Development* 8, no. 3 (1918): 296–317.

59   A Macedonian, General Bojadzhiev, was Bulgarian Minister of War during the campaign of 1915, while Nikola Genadiev, who was a minister in the Radoslavov cabinet in 1913, was also of Macedonian origin and Andrey Lyapchev, who served as minister several times prior to 1914 and a prime minister after 1918, was also born in Macedonia.

The dynamic increase of Serbian schools between 1896 and 1901 is the product of the following factors: despite the existence of the supporting organizational background, the Serbian presence was relatively insignificant in Macedonia prior to 1903; however, Serbian propaganda was increasing (with support from Ottoman authorities) compared to Bulgarian propaganda. This phenomenon provided a warning to the Bulgarians, and between 1901 and 1910 the number of teachers in Bulgarian schools almost doubled, which also reflects changes in the support policy in comparison to that previously mentioned.

	Schools	Teachers	Students
Bulgarian	843 / 785 / 1359	1,306 / 1,220 / 2,203	43,432 / 40,000 / 78,519
Serbian	77 / 178 /	118 / 321/	2,873 / 7,200 /
Greek	/ 924/	/ 1,400 /	/ 57,500 /

Table 4. The result of "peaceful" propaganda: schools in Macedonia in 1896 /1901/1910. Jacob Gould Schurman, *The Balkan Wars: 1912–1913* (London: Humphrey Milford, 1914), accessed September 16, 2014, http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/11676/pg11676.html and D. Misheff, *The truth about Macedonia* (Berne: Pochon-Jent, 1917).

Even after the involvement of the Great Powers, the provinces were still crying for relief.[60] Between May 1904 and May 1905, 111 violent cases *committed by Chetas* were reported within the boundaries of Macedonia by a Bulgarian source, including those targeting authorities (these should not be included in the term "everyday violence," but can be compared to them). This means that these atrocities claimed an average of seven victims. This high number reveals that these incidents and conflicts were not accidental or of personal character, but were planned in advance as a part of a campaign of intimidation and revenge symbolizing a special type of warfare. This source does not reveal whether the proximity to borders or distance from central administration had an effect on the escalation of violence (while in the case of Austro–Hungarian consular reports, such an investigation could be carried out), nor does it provide an account of the interethnic character of conflict, contrary to the Austro–Hungarian consular reports.

Based on the above mentioned report of Shopov, most of those arrested in Macedonia were Bulgarians (80 percent, a result of either the activity of Bulgarians or the prejudice of authorities, because their ratio within the population did

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60   Frantz, "Zwischen Gewalt," 134–60.

not exceed 60%), though almost two-thirds of them were found not guilty. Among those who were convicted, Bulgarians were not overrepresented: 20 percent of arrested Bulgarians were sentenced to several years in prison: this represents 79 percent of all imprisoned, while Bulgarians constituted 80 percent of those arrested. The ratio of imprisoned Serbs was also around 20 percent in comparison to the number of Serbs arrested. Among the acquitted, Serbs were overrepresented (80 percent of arrested Serbs were freed), while the investigation process was the longest in case of Greeks due to the fact that they were often not Ottoman but Greek citizens,[61] contrary to Bulgar(ian)s, who were mainly recruited from the territory of Macedonia and not from Bulgaria.

According to the data collected by Shopov, Greek Chetas preferred to capture people alive and hold them for ransom, which means that the Greek struggle for Macedonia was in its initial phase: 70 percent of captured were held by Greeks, while the proportion of atrocities committed by Greek forces was only 27 percent. This practice was quite rare in case of Serb and Bulgar offenders: 66 percent of those who died were killed by Bulgarian Chetas, although the latter were involved "only" in 50 percent of encounters. The ratio of murders committed by Serbs/Bulgars was 80 percent among the victims of Serbian/Bulgarian violence. Compared to this, murders constituted only 33 percent of Greek violence. The proportion of the victims of Ottoman authorities constituted "only" 17 to 20 percent of all victims and those who died among them were underrepresented (Table 5).

But the most convincing evidence of the failure of the Ottoman authorities and the international intervention to maintain public order and of the increasing anarchy that ensued after the turn of the century are the detailed statistics compiled by Austro–Hungarian consuls listing the victims of the social conflicts. These are conflicts (contrary to those discussed above) that *cannot be tied unambiguously to the activity of Chetas or authorities, thus falling under the category of "everyday violence."* A typical example of consular reports is the document written in Skopje in 1905 enumerating all acts of *everyday violence* that occurred in the sanjak between *May 11 and September 13* of that year.[62]

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61 87 out of the 255 known Greek Chetniks were Greek subjects, while another 21 arrived from Crete in 1905. ЦДА, ф. 332k. оп. 1. а.е. 17. л. 544–55.

62 ÖHHStA PA, VII/Fasz. 434, Pára to Calice, September 16, 1905., no. 86/pol., 12. Sicherheits-verhältnisse im Amtsbezirke in der Zeit von 11. Mai bis 13. September (mit Beilag). All other statistics presented below are based on this material.

Arrested	Convicted	Acquitted	Still under Investigation	Ethnic Group
1,607 (80%)	313 (20%)	993 (62%)	301 (18%)	Bulgarian
349 (17%)	79 (22%)	99 (28%)	171 (50%)	Greek
52 (3%)	4 (8%)	41 (80%)	7 (13%)	Serb
2,008 (100%)	396 (20%)	1,133 (55%)	479 (25%)	Total
Confrontations	Wounded	Killed	Captured Alive	Adversary
68 (61%)	6	320 (81%)	65 (16%)	Bulgarian Chetas (total cases: 391)
30 (27%)	12	93 (33%)	165 (61%)	Greek Chetas (total cases: 270)
13 (12%)	2	96 (86%)	13 (11%)	Serbian Chetas (total cases: 111)
111 (average of seven people per confrontation)	20	509 (66%)	243 (31%)	Total: 772
?	122	86	–	Related to Turkish Authorities

Table 5. Distribution of violent acts between ethnic groups in 1905 thoughout Macedonia according to Shopov. ЦДА, ф. 332k. оп. 1. а.e. 17. л. 544–55.

11. Mai	Fatima und Tochter Zarifa aus Treskavec	Getötet, Täter unbekannt
27. Mai	Koce aus Podoreš	Vermißt
16. Juni	Demendezi aus Jargerica	getötet, Täter angeblich Comité-Rache
17. Juni	Stojan aus Jargerica	getötet, Täter angeblich Comité-Rache
19. Juni	Avram Jane dessen Frau und Tochter aus Rozbunar	verwundet, Täter 3 unbekannte Mohammedaner
20. Juni	Risto Konstantin aus Radovište	verwundet, dtto
20. Juni	Traman Dimitrija aus Delina	schwer verwundet, Täter angeblich Türken
28. Juni	Kristo Ile aus Vratica	der Tatverdächtig der Mohammedaner Damjan [sic!]
12. Juli	Jovan Velko aus Šipkovica	Vermißt
16. Juli	Angelko Trajan, Jordan Postol, Mike Lazar, Mike, Petre Stojan, Tase Gjorgje: Hirten aus Radoviste	von einer mohammedanischen Bande gefesselt und durch Messerstiche getötet
17. Juli	Stojan Niko u. Gam: dtto	dtto.
19. Juli	Trajce Zafir aus Kance	getötet, Täter Rara Ahmed
12. August	Dane Jane und Sohn David, Koce Ilia aus Vrahovica	getötet, Täter mohammed. Comités

18. August	Tašo Georgiev aus Radovište	getötet, Täter unbekannte Comités
21. August	Ilija und Arif aus Vrahovica	getötet, Täter 3 Mohammedaner
25. August	1 unbekanntes Comité-Mitglied bei Gmerdeš	Getötet
3. September	File Risto aus Jargaica	getötet, Täter unbekannt
3. September	Todor Spasov aus Kanče	getötet, Täter Türken aus Promet
3. September	Panče Ilo aus Skoruša	getötet, Täter Türken aus Promet

Table 6. List of violent activities in Radovište *kaza* (cited in the original language): officially five political murders were recorded among the 20 cases, but only one victim was a committee member.[63]
In Kaza Radovište: Getötet 23, Verwundet 4, vermißt 2.

Dated from 1905 this list enumerating 285 victims in a period of four months from a smaller area looks to be more detailed compared to the report of Shopov containing 772 victims in a period of one year throughout Macedonia. Cases were reported for each *kaza* giving the name and religion of perpetrators and victims (see Table 6), which makes the list more valuable and informative than Shopov's report. Note that the cases enumerated here took place after the intervention of the great powers (Mürzsteg, 1903), therefore it also demonstrates the powerlessness of the recently organized international gendarmerie. This list provides the possibility of tracing certain phenomena and to observe certain tendencies (the spatial pattern of violence, the role of border areas, the correlation between the ethnicity and religion of perpetrators and victims, etc.), though the cause of conflicts still remain obscure. Although the names of the victims and the perpetrators do not provide unquestionable evidence of their nationality, the sectarian composition may be more or less precisely reconstructed, thus permitting an investigation of religious or ethnic tensions.[64]

But this did not represent the peak of violence by any means. After the failure of international intervention, the number of people killed increased quickly: in 1908 a total of 1,080 *"political murders"* were committed throughout Macedonia (while in 1905, the number of all victims of *Chetas*—including *all types:* dead, injured and missing—was only 772), claiming among its victims 649 Bulgarians, 185 Greeks, 130 Muslims, 39 Serbs, 36 Vlachs and 40 soldiers according to the report of the Englishman Harry Lamb.[65] Compared to their proportion of the entire

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63   Ibid.
64   Ibid.
65   Balogh, *A nacionalizmus,* 87. This work cites *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898–1914,* vol. 5, *The near East: The Macedonian problem and the annexation of Bosnia 1903–9,* ed. George Peabody Gooch and Harold Temperley (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1926), 246, 289 and 293.

population, Muslim victims seem to be underrepresented and Bulgarian victims a bit overrepresented. The reinstatement of the constitution in 1908 proved to be more effective than any other earlier measures: over the last five months of that very year, only 71 political murders took place, constituting seven percent of all murders, while during the first four months of the year it almost reached 50 percent.[66] One cannot avoid the assumption that the armistice among bands in 1908–1909 as a consequence of the rise to power of the Young Turks contributed to the stabilization of the situation to a greater degree than the constitution and the parliamentary elections, events that rarely entail immediate results.

Comparing the Bulgarian and the Austro–Hungarian sources one may arrive to the following conclusions: first, that violent acts committed by *Chetas* became more frequent between 1905 and 1908 in Macedonia (772 killed and injured compared to 1,080 killed); second, that Austro–Hungarian documents are more detailed and therefore more suitable for conducting further analysis; and three, that everyday violence (or acts not reported as political murders) was apparently as frequent as political violence. (Just to compare the two types of violence: during the first four months of 1908, 450 people were *killed by Chetas* throughout Macedonia, while in the first four months of 1905, 197 people were *killed in everyday violence* within the much smaller area of the examined sanjak).

In some places of the Sanjak of Skopje in 1905, the average number of victims per attack exceeded four or five (like in the Bulgarian statistics with *Cheta* involvement, where seven victims per attack were counted), which makes it evident that in these cases not simply personal antagonism or economic conflict, but rather ideological or intergroup tensions represented the source of violence. The names and occupations in Table 6 reveal that many of the victims (especially the four women) can hardly be identified as members of paramilitary units (their activity may have been confined to providing information or supplying troops) and that in many cases they were victims of blood feuds motivated by rivalry between communities or were victims of punitive actions or intimation on the part of *Chetas*. Based on the high average number of victims per attack, the Bulgarian source focuses much more on the activity of *Chetas*, emphasizing the paramilitary-revolutionary character of the violent acts, while the Austro–Hungarian report enumerates single cases as well, when perpetrators were not *Cheta* members, though their actions fit into the category of everyday violence.[67]

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66   Balogh, *A nacionalizmus,* 87.

67   Austro–Hungarian documents clearly indicated if the victim was a *Cheta* member, though of course could not accurately detail the background of all victims. Furthermore, *Cheta* activities can be revenged

The fearless early usage of coercion and violence against civilians and activists as well is clearly confirmed by a document called "Reglement für die Bulgarisch-Adrianopeler Revolutionären Comités"[68] dating from the year 1900. These revolutionary committees had their internal secret police as well, which was divided into two branches. The duty of the first branch, the investigative police, was not only to observe foreigners, non-*Cheta* members and government officials, but to examine the deeds and actions of *Cheta* members as well. The second branch was called the executive secret service, the task of which was not only to support the leaders in case of internal crisis, but also to punish activities reported by the observers. The revolvers mentioned in the document summarizing the resources of the IMRO from 1906 were used by this branch of secret police. In addition to the spies and Ottoman bureaucrats who impeded the activity of revolutionaries, not only activists, but even members of the civil population were allowed to kill regardless of their ethnicity if they threatened the goals of the committees and disregarded the first warnings and fines. This punishment was extended to Bulgarians living either in Bulgaria or abroad if they engaged in activity serving to exacerbate discontent among revolutionaries. Even those were sanctioned who had acted under pressure, were forced to commit violence or were tortured by enemies of the committee. Mentioning the name of a committee member to the authorities or in public for the second time also entailed a death sentence.[69] These punitive measures could also have been in the background of the escalation of everyday violence, as very often the community did not know of killings or did not dare inform authorities of them. (It is also not surprising that communist activists and ideologists visiting the Balkans and well acquainted with the Macedonian cause, like Trotsky, implemented these methods effectively in organizing secret police in their homeland. Even the terms used, such as *"Arbeit",* reappear in these documents).

Neither the high concentration of IMRO weapons nor the ethnic heterogeneity of districts always resulted in the escalation of violent activities. *The activity of IMRO cannot alone explain all forms of "everyday violence:"* in Kočani, which was well-supplied with ammunition, everyday violence was rare, although

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on peaceful population as well by *Cheta* perpetrators, thus the classification of these acts as "everyday violence" is not unequivocal. In many cases the low clearance rate hindered the objective judgment of the situation. Outsiders may describe an event as "everyday violence" that had at least indirect relations with revolutionary activity.

68   ÖHHStA, PA, XXXVIII. Konsulate (1848–1918)**.** Kt. 430. Üsküb (1900), Nr. 212. Pára an Goluchowski, handgeschrieben, Üsküb, September 17, 1900, Statut und Reglement der bulgaro-macedonischen Comités.
69   Ibid.

here Albanians and Muslims also lived together with Bulgarians. The extent of violence was also relatively low in Veles, although IMRO had plenty of bullets and weapons and half of the district was Turkish. In Kriva Palanka and in Kratovo, the high ratio of victims measured to the total population (Table 7) at first glance seems to be due to the fact that an extremely high 22 percent of the population supported the IMRO (*Table 2*). However, the percentage of sympathizers supplied with weapons was quite low here (five percent). Furthermore, both territories were mainly Exarchist in character, therefore neither interethnic tensions nor the clashes with the Turkish authorities can explain the spread of violence here (these conflict types are excluded from the term "everyday violence.")[70]

Kaza	Attacks	Killed	Injured	Missing	Christian victims	Muslim victims	Unknown	Total	Victims per 1,000 Inhabitants
Skopje	8 (average of 5 killed)	41	8	2	30 (2 f)	19 (4 f, 1 c)	3 (1 f)	52 (7 f, 1 c)	0.71
Kumanovo	9	36	9	4	21 (1 f)	12	16	49 (1 f)	1.07
Kriva Palanka	24	24	9	5	15 (4 f)	–	24	38	1.55
Kratovo	13	13	5	4	9	3	10	22	0.97
Kočani	3	3	1	1	4	1	–	5	0.13
Maleš	3	3	5	2	3	2	5	10	0.37
Radovište	23	23	4	2	25 (2 f)	3 (2 f)	1	29	1.57
Štip	11 (average of 4 killed)	42	11	10	44	13 (1 f)	6	63	1.37
Veles	12	12	1	5	8	5	5	18	0.33
Total	106	197	53	35	159 (9 f)	58 (7 f, 1 c)	70 (1 f)	287 (17 f 1 c)	0.82

Table 7. Types of violent activity and the territorial and religious distribution of victims in Skopje Sanjak between May 11 and September 13, 1905[71] f = females; c = children

70   The high number of weapons can be explained by the infiltration of Serbian irregulars into these borderland districts from neighboring Serbia. Since the clearance rate was quite low in borderland areas, perpetrators could be foreigners serving in irregular units. Clearance rate was the lowest in peripheral areas, where the violence seemed to be the worst (Kriva Palanka, Kratovo).

71   ÖHHStA PA, VII/Fasz. 434, Pára to Calice, September 16, 1905, no. 86/pol., 12.

Kaza	Christians		Christians Altogether	Muslims		Muslims Altogether	Unknown Cases	Total
	Against Christians	Against Muslims		Against Christians	Against Muslims			
Skopje	5	3	8	8	3	11	26	45
Kumanovo	3	2	5	10	3	13	12	30
Kriva Palanka	2	–	2	1	–	1	7	10
Kratovo	4	–	4	–	–	1	9 + 1[*]	14
Radovište	2	1	3	9	1	10	6	19
Štip	6	1	7	13	1	14	29	50
Veles	2	1	3	2	3	5	3	11
Total	27 (14%)	7 (4%)	34	43 (22%)	11 (6%)	55	101 53%)	189

Table 8. The religious and territorial distribution of perpetrators committing crime between
May 11 and September 13, 1905 (only known perpetrators included) [72]

[*] Muslim attackers and one unknown victim.

As the authors pointed out earlier, the Austrian source offers possibilities for deeper investigation (cases committed by soldiers or police are not included!). Most of the victims (including deaths, injuries and missing) were Christian (55 percent) (Tables 7–8). The proportion of Muslims was 20 percent, while 25 percent remained unknown. Compared to their proportion of the entire population of the sanjak (40 percent), Muslim victims were somewhat underrepresented (Table 1). With regard to the perpetrators, these ratios are not more than estimates, as more than 50 percent of cases remained unresolved. This demonstrates the low effectiveness of imperial and international authorities. Based on known cases, Muslims mainly attacked Christians (22 percent of the total, four times more frequent than Muslim attacks on Muslims), while the proportion of Christian perpetrators committing violent crime against Muslims was only four percent of the total (Table 8). Attacks within the Muslim community ranged up to six percent of the total, while violence between Christians constituted more than 14 percent of the total in Skopje Sanjak (this was a greater percentage value than that of Christian crimes against Muslims!). One may arrive to the conclusion that the *Exarchist-Patriarchist rivalry was more important here* (compared to the relatively small ratio of Patriarchists in the territory) *than the hostility of Christians towards*

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72   Ibid.

Muslims and that violence within the Muslim community was more frequent than violence toward other communities.

The spatial pattern of violence can be investigated too: in Štip *kaza* Christians primarily attacked Christians, while Muslims in Štip, Kumanovo and in Radovište mainly attacked Christians. These phenomena were not connected to ethnic predominance: in Kumanovo, Muslims composed only 30 percent of the population, while in Štip they constituted the majority. In the vicinity of Kriva Palanka and Kratovo,[73] *all known* Christian attacks were targeted against other Christian communities. This may be explained by the fact that though these *kaza*s were ethnically homogenous, the national conflict between Bulgars and Serboman troops was fierce (one should not forget that 50 percent of cases were unresolved, therefore the numbers have limited statistical relevance). The spatial distribution of *victims* and *perpetrators* (Table 9–10) shows that the largest *absolute numbers* of victims were located in Skopje, Štip and Kumanovo *kaza*s. Nevertheless, these absolute numbers are not representative, as these *kaza*s had larger populations. The *proportion of victims measured against the total population* is more representative. With this in mind, victims of violent activities were overrepresented in Kumanovo, Kriva Palanka, Kratovo, and especially in Radovište and Štip *kaza*s. These territorial units were located in the mountainous periphery far away from the administrative center and from the Vardar-axis (which was serving as the main connection route to adjacent areas).

Percent	Skopje	Kumanovo	Kriva Palanka	Kratovo	Radovište	Štip (Ištib)	Veles (Köprülü)
Population	21	13	7	6	5	13	15
Victims	18	17	13	8	10	22	6
Perpetrators	24	16	5	7	10	26	6

Table 9. The proportion of perpetrators and victims compared to the population in the sanjak (considered as 100 percent) in 1905 (in order to examine underrepresentation and overrepresentation).[74] Kočani and Maleš were omitted due to small case number.

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73   The majority of the populations in Kriva Palanka and Kratovo were Christian (81.6–90.7 percent), although these *kaza*s were small in terms of their total populations.

74   Based on ÖHHStA PA, VII/Fasz. 434, Pára to Calice, September 16, 1905., no. 86/pol., 12.

Kaza	Christian Victims/ Christian Population	Muslim Victims/ Muslim Population	Christian Perpetrators/ Christian Population	Muslim Perpetrators/ Muslim Population	Distance from Center[*]	Distance from State Border
Skopje	**1.35**	0.69	0.41	0.46	1	2
Kumanovo	0.61	0.89	0.24	**1.58**	2	2
Radovište	**2.09**	0.18	0.38	0.93	4	3
Štip	**1.65**	0.37	0.33	0.50	3	4
Veles	0.70	0.78	0.43	**1.28**	2	5

Table 10. Spatial and religious differences of violence in 1905 based on the comparison of victims and perpetrators. Values over 1 indicate overrepresentation.
Kriva Palanka and Kratovo was omitted due to the large proportion of unknown delinquents, Kočani and Maleš was omitted due to small case numbers
* Distance from the center or from the border was measured using graph theory based on the number of nodes (local centers) that had to be passed in order to reach the territory in question.

The same conclusions can be made with regard to the data on *perpetrators*. Measured against the entire population, perpetrators were overrepresented in Skopje, Radovište and Štip, nearly the same *kaza*s in which the ratio of victims compared to population was the largest. In the latter two *kaza*s, the proportion of perpetrators and victims was twice as high as the proportion of the population of the *kaza* compared to the total population of Skopje Sanjak (Table 9). This is not surprising, since based on the conscription of 1903 the proportion of Muslims was quite high in these places (see the map of Kančov or the map published in Carnegie Report).[75] Based on the absolute numbers of perpetrators and victims, these attacks were the bloodiest, reaching an average of between four and five deaths per attack. Christian victims measured against Christian population were overrepresented in Skopje, Radovište and Štip *kaza*s, but it did not mean that Christian victims[76] were killed solely by Muslims (see Tables 8 and 10), while Muslim perpetrators compared to Muslim population were overrepresented in Kumanovo, Radovište and Veles. Muslim victims and Christian perpetrators were not overrepresented anywhere.

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75   Among the interior *kaza*s Skopje, Radovište and Štip had Muslim majorities (52.8–56.6 percent), while in Kumanovo and Veles Christians constituted the majority (63.4–70.3 percent).

76   Most of the victims here were also Christians.

Proportion of Christians vs. Proportion of Christian Victims*	−0.75	Proportion of Muslim Perpetrators vs. Distance from Administrative Center	−0.47
Proportion of Christians vs. Proportion of Christian Perpetrators*	0.41	Percentage of Unknown Cases vs. Distance from Administrative Center	0.36
Proportion of Christians vs. Proportion of Muslim Victims*	−0.42	Percentage of Unknown Cases vs. Distance from Border	−0.55
Proportion of Christians vs. Proportion of Muslim Criminals*	−0.31	Proportion of Muslim Criminals vs. Distance from Borders	0.55
Percentage of Christian Victims vs. Percentage of Christian Perpetrators	−0.78	Proportion of Muslim Victims vs. Distance from Borders	0.40
Proportion of Muslim Victims vs. Proportion of Muslim Perpetrators	0.33	Percentage of Muslim Victims vs. Distance from Center	−0.76
Percentage of Christian Victims vs Proportion of Muslim Perpetrators	0.29	Percentage of Muslim Perpetrators vs. Percentage of Christian Perpetrators	0.19

Table 11. Correlation table between variables related to violence in 1905 (only those who are known to have committed crimes are included)

* Substituting Christians with Muslims, the strength of correlation does not change.

Contrary to some well–distinguished territorial patterns, *violence* in the sanjak (as a total) was *characterized mainly by weak correlations, thus general features are overshadowed by local patterns.* Although significant, but reversed correlation was measured between the proportion of Christian victims and the proportion of Christian perpetrators (k=−0,78),[77] other relations did not show such strong correlation due to the previously mentioned ethnic heterogeneity and due to the diversity of conflict types enumerated earlier (Table 11).[78]

Since perpetrators were mainly Muslims both in *kaza*s with a Muslim majority (Štip) and with a Muslim minority (Veles), while victims were Christians, the *pattern of violence at the kaza level was not determined solely by the religious character of the population, but by other factors (distance from borders, violence among those of the same religion).* Violence in central territories was relatively rare (even despite the higher population density), while it was more frequent in peripheral *kaza*s along the Bulgarian and Serbian borders. We may assume that Christian perpetrators were

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77 Meaning that if the proportion of Christian perpertrators is great, the proportion of Christian victims is low, and where the proportion of Christian victims is great, the proportion of Christian perpetrators is low.

78 The correlation coefficient between the Christian population (percentage) and Christian perpetrators is also high, though remained under 0.5. Clashes between Christians elevated this number, while Christian–Muslim clashes tended to decrease it. The value of the coefficient demonstrates that conflict of both types was abundant in the area. There is no close relation between the proportion of Muslim victims and Christian perpetrators or between Muslim victims and Muslim perpetrators on sanjak-level as a result of the same factors, since conflicts may occur in the Muslim–Muslim relation as well as the Muslim–Christian relation.

overrepresented along the Bulgarian border and in Slavic-speaking territories, while Muslim perpetrators were more frequent in the Kumanovo, Veles and Radovište *kaza*s along the Muslim-dominated Vardar-axis. As the distance measured from the centers grew, the proportion of Muslim perpetrators decreased (r=–0.8). The clearance rate also draws attention: a general tendency is that police were the most inefficient along the easily penetrable Bulgarian border. Unresolved cases ranged from 60 percent (Maleš) up to 100 percent (Kočani!) in the peripheries.[79] Spatial differences regarding violence and driving factors were collected to summarize our analysis in Table 12.

	Skopje	Kumanovo	Kriva Palanka	Kratovo	Kočani	Maleš (Osmanie)	Radovište	Štip	Veles
Distant from Center (x), Near Borders (y)		y	xy	xy	xy	xy	x	x	
Proportion of Unresolved Cases is Significant	x		x	x	x	x		x	
Proportion of Muslim Population is Significant	xx				xx	x	xx	xx	x
Proportion of Victims Compared to Population is Significant		x	x				x	x	
Proportion of Perpetrators Compared to Population is Significant	x						x	x	
Muslim–Christian Conflict	x	x					x	x	
Christian–Christian Conflict	x	x		x				x	
Muslim–Muslim Conflict	x	x							x
Majority of Known Perpetrators is Muslim		x					x	x	x
Majority of Known Perpetrators is Christian				x					
Christian Victims Are Overrepresented	x						x	x	
Muslim Victims Are Overrepresented		x							

Table 12. Summary table: characteristics of wave of violence in 1905, Sanjak of Skopje (May 11–September 13, 1905)

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79 While in the case of Kumanovo, Radovište and Veles this was only between 27.2–40.1 percent.
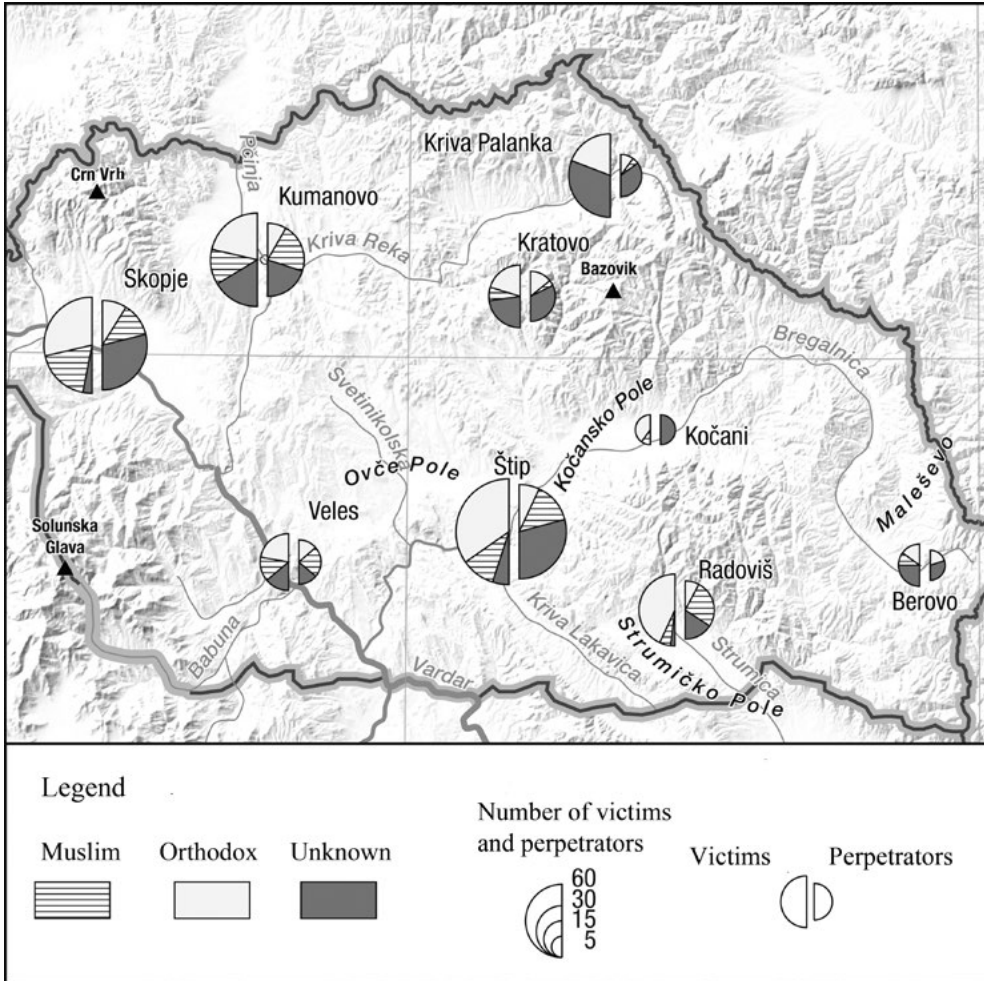
Map 2. Kaza level map of the religious distribution of victims and perpetrators in the Sanjak of Skopje by Zsolt Bottlik

Conclusions

Summarizing that mentioned above we can draw the following conclusions:
the borders between the different types of violent actions triggered either by sectarian and school conflicts or by customs law gradually faded;
the supporting policy of small states shifted irreversibly from construction to destruction;
the activity of the irregular troops was limited only by the change of seasons (neither Ottoman authorities nor the withdrawal of support could stop them any longer);

Chetas became highly organized and self-subsistent groups through involvement in agriculture (opium, tobacco, smuggling) or expropriation of state and private properties;

loyalty to the state also faded: in addition to troops pursuing nationalist ideas, ethnically and religiously mixed mercenary bands also existed and were hired;

the representatives of the state did not even attempt to address the economic and political problems. Their violent and intolerant interference, despite the temporary successes, hastened the escalation of conflict into anarchy;

the "usual" social conflicts (between public officers and citizens, security forces and inhabitants, etc.) also became uncontrollable,[80] and became overshadowed by the new types of conflict; the practices of *Chetas* were adopted by other violent (state and guerilla) organizations;

the nationalistic movements declared total warfare in which, compared to the years prior to 1903, not only were the Ottoman administration or military forces and the active members of the movements (ideologists, like teachers and priests) regarded as targets, but the passive masses as well, as they could provide shelter, information, ammunition and an economic base for rivals;

the economy had collapsed by 1912, fields remained uncultivated due to the wave of violence, which triggered emigration.

On the eve of the First Balkan War there was no functioning state administration and economy in the Sanjak of Skopje, which had turned into a frontier zone.

Archival Sources

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