

**REPORT PRESENTED TO THE  
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION  
AT CONSTANTINOPLE AS TO THE  
STATE OF MACEDONIA SINCE  
THE TREATY OF BERLIN**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649308620

Report presented to the international commission at Constantinople as to the state of Macedonia since the treaty of Berlin by Various

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Cover @ 2017

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AS TO

THE STATE OF MACEDONIA

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London :

PRINTED BY GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, ST. JOHN'S SQUARE,  
CLERKENWELL ROAD.

1880.

24479 s. 15

24496.e.3

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE Massacres in Bulgaria, which took place in May 1876, created a profound astonishment and horror throughout Europe. The civilized West was not aware, or had forgotten, that there still existed a race in Europe, which, as Lord Beaconsfield said, was an oriental people, with historical traditions. The historical tradition in this particular case consisted in wholesale slaughter! The Conference which immediately preceded the massacres of May has never yet been sufficiently explained, nor is it our purpose to give a detailed explanation here. Speaking generally, it may be said that years of terrible misgovernment had, at length, aroused the spirit of insurrection among the Bulgarian race, which had become more difficult to keep down because of the spread of education among the people. The faint attempts at insurrection were immediately crushed out by letting loose Moslem fanaticism upon the disarmed and defenceless people. Since the treaty of Berlin, Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia have been taken from the direct rule of the Porte; but Macedonia still remains under Turkish government, and it is the object of the following pages to show to the

world, by the simple narration of facts, what this misgovernment means.

All the horrors that were perpetrated throughout Bulgaria, during the years immediately preceding the massacres, are repeated in Macedonia, and anarchy prevails everywhere. Government, in the strict sense of the word, there is none. In many cases the brigands are united with those who should be the preservers of order, and the oppressions and illegal acts are the works of the Government; in all cases the Christian population are under the continual despotism of the Moslem population.

The present statement of facts has been carefully collected together, chiefly by one person, throughout the journeys he has made in the interior; the greater portion, however, has not been published. Authorities have, as far as possible, been given for the statements which have been made; and, in any case, it would not be difficult to test the accuracy of what purport to be facts. As in the case of Bulgaria in the spring of 1876, and of Armenia during the last year, the Ottoman Government has shown a criminal recklessness of disorder, which would justify rebellion in any country. It can scarcely be said that it has made any attempt to repress the lawlessness of the Moslem part of the population; and the unfortunate Christians have had to bear not only the oppression of their Moslem neighbours, but of the hordes of Turkish refugees who had during the war to flee before the Russians, and who, for various reasons, have been unwilling or unable to return to

Bulgaria since the signature of the Treaty of Berlin.

During the last four or five months the Turkish Government has endeavoured to make capital out of certain incidents which have happened in Eastern Roumelia. It may be admitted at once that outrages have been committed on the Moslem population which are a disgrace upon those who have perpetrated them. But it must be remembered that these are very few in number ; that they are only what might have been reasonably expected to happen in a country under Turkish rule during four centuries, and in a country where the oppressed have only just got rid of their oppressors ; and, lastly, it must be remembered, that the Government of Eastern Roumelia has shown no disposition either to defend the perpetrators, or to conceal the facts. Let the Turks take what satisfaction they can out of the melancholy fact, that the people who had been under their rule have, in a few isolated instances, followed their evil example. But, on the other hand, Europe should know that these isolated cases which have happened in Eastern Roumelia only represent what has been the condition of things in Macedonia, both before, and since, the Treaty of Berlin. That such is the fact, the following narrative will show.



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ABUSES  
PERPETRATED BY THE  
MUSSULMANS IN MACEDONIA,  
AND ITS STATE SINCE THE BERLIN CONGRESS.

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THE Turkish population in Macedonia learning that, by the decision of the Berlin Congress, Macedonia was to remain in its former state, began to think that the Christian population was to continue in subjection. They hence began to pillage, kill and ravage, more cruelly than ever. The local authorities turned a deaf ear to all complaints, and openly said, "So many thousands of our men were killed on the battle-field;—what does it matter if a few of yours are killed also?"

In order to keep the Christian population in a complete state of slavery, the Turkish Government, in spite of the laws of the State, appointed, by special Bouyourouldis (orders) for every Christian village, a Turk under the name of Poljak (field-keeper). The candidate for this office must present to the Authorities a document bearing the seal of the village, attesting that the villagers wish to have him as Poljak; and as the seal is asked by two, or several, candidates at the same time, every year five or six Kodjabachis (headmen) are killed. The Kodjabashi is killed, in any case, by one or several of the candidates, as it is impossible to please them all at the same time.

The Poljak exercises in the village a supreme power over everything that the peasants possess—even their bodies. To begin with, they are obliged to build him a splendid house, to sow some of their own fields, and give him the produce. He tries the villagers, decides cases, imposes fines, imprisons and kills; he levies taxes for himself, gathers the tithes—in short, he takes whatever pleases him. By killing, or by heavy fines, which accumulate by high rates of interest, he gradually takes possession of the peasants' fields, brings his relations, and quarters them on the villagers. Thus, after a few years, the village be-

comes the Poljak's farm; whilst the villagers, owners of the fields, become his slaves, and work for him only to earn their daily bread. In the centre of every district the Beys and Aghas have a number of Poljaks as clients, and through them terrify the population; in fact, they can murder, outrage and ruin the people, every one according to his pleasure. The Poljaks execute the orders of their masters without fear, as they have their full protection and influence, which they can use with the local Authorities.

On Sundays and feast days (consecrated for rest) the Poljaks take the peasants—particularly the girls and prettiest women—and force them to work, without wages, for the Beys and Aghas. The men are condemned to hard work, without receiving anything to eat or drink, while the girls are often violated. Even on working days, when the Beys have any work to be done, the Poljaks force the peasants to abandon their own work to go and work gratuitously in the farms of the Beys and Aghas. The Poljaks decide also upon marriages. A stupid or deformed young man might buy from the Poljak, by giving him twenty-five Modjidichs, the prettiest girl in the village. The parents as well as the girl must submit to the Poljak's decision, without which they are sure to be murdered.

The abuses committed in gathering the taxes, tithes, and the illegal distribution of new taxes are another source of the oppression of the peasants.

The above-mentioned abuses, and various others which would occupy too much space to specify, were from time to time brought to the notice of the local authorities, and also to that of the Central Government, but without result, excepting that false accusations were brought against the complainants, who were very often killed, and this of course put an end to their pursuit. After each complaint the outrages were doubled, and the malefactors, instigated by the authorities, have destroyed entire families. On account of this the peasants remain dumb, and dare not complain. Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, during his Vezirate, abolished the Poljaks; he ordered that no Turk should be appointed Poljak in a Christian village, even if the villagers asked it, for he knew that these sort of requests were made forcibly. But after his fall the local authorities immediately sent Poljaks to all the villages, who proved to be worse than their predecessors.

From among the numerous misdeeds committed since the meeting of the Congress, we will mention only the following:—

On the 9th of June, some Turks of Prilep carried away Peter Kapka's son, and sent back to the father one of his fingers,