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Humanitarian intervention in the long nineteenth century

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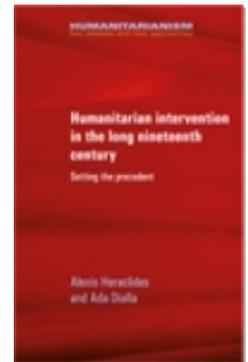
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The Bulgarian atrocities: a bird's eye view of intervention with emphasis on Britain, 1875–78

On intervention

The great power involvement triggered by the Bulgarian atrocities was part of a wider international reaction to uprisings in the Balkans known as the Great Eastern Crisis of 1875–78, which was to change the map of the Balkans. Events began with the Serbs of Herzegovina (July 1875), followed a little later by Bosnia, the Bulgarians (April–May 1876) and the war of the autonomous principalities of Serbia and Montenegro against the Ottoman Empire (June–July 1876).

By the mid-1870s the debate over humanitarian intervention was in full swing, with over forty publicists participating, among whom a two-thirds majority supported intervention. The 1850s and 1860s had seen some of the seminal advocacies of the new doctrine: those by Phillimore, Fiore and Bluntschli. In the 1870s (before and during the Balkan crisis) there followed those by Arntz, Rolin-Jaequemyns and Martens. The 1870s had also seen three of the main rejections, by Carnazza Amari, Bonfils and Renault (see [chapter 4](#)).

Advocates argued that intervention should preferably be collective and in instances of outrages against humanity; remaining an apathetic bystander was unacceptable. Opponents pointed that interventions when a state's proper interests were not at stake were unacceptable and would play havoc with state sovereignty and independence and were open to abuse.

Diplomatic initiatives, the Bulgarians and the Serbs

Great power diplomacy

The uprisings in Herzegovina and Bosnia against Ottoman rule were a source of major concern, especially for Vienna, which feared the creation of a large Slav state bordering Dalmatia and Croatia and thus toyed with the idea of annexing the region.¹ Russia called for three-state mediation in the crisis (Russia,

Austria–Hungary and Germany) within the confines of the *Dreikaiserbund* (the League of Three Emperors, created in 1873)² and for autonomy, making Gyula Andrassy, the Foreign Minister of Austria–Hungary, suspicious of the Russian motives. The British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli was incensed with the autonomy idea in a region whose majority were Muslims (that is, loyal to the Sultan) and likened the situation to Ireland.³ Andrassy came out with what is known as the Andrassy Note (December 1875), which called for modest reforms in Herzegovina and Bosnia.⁴

The Note was well received by the other powers, but Disraeli, who detested the *Dreikaiserbund* (he believed that it wanted to isolate Britain and resolve the Eastern Question in its favour) and suspected ulterior motives on the part of Andrassy, was not supportive. But when the Porte asked for British assent, Disraeli had no choice than to acquiesce (as he put it, ‘We can’t be more Turkish than the Sultan’⁵).⁶

The Andrassy Note bore no fruit, due to the Porte’s evasiveness. Thus Tsar Alexander II and Otto von Bismarck, the German Chancellor, took the initiative, although the latter was known for his lack of interest in the Balkans (as he had famously put it, it was not worth the bones of a Pomeranian grenadier⁷).⁸ Bismarck’s blunt *Realpolitik* approach was that a Balkan crisis could be forestalled provided there were territorial gains on the part of the great powers in the Ottoman Empire, but his scheme was not endorsed by the other powers.⁹

Bismarck, Andrassy and Alexander Mikhailovich Gorchakov, concurrently Foreign Minister and Chancellor of Russia, held a meeting in Berlin that produced the Berlin Memorandum (13 May 1876), mainly the work of Andrassy. The Porte was to accept a cease-fire, implement reforms, supply food for the refugees and rebuild houses and churches. The other powers were asked to be signatories to the Memorandum. Italy and France were forthcoming, but not Britain, which sent a squadron to Besika Bay on the mouth of the Dardanelles (sent there, as Disraeli put it, not to repeat the ‘bloody blunder’ of Navarino,¹⁰ but to support the Ottomans against the Russians). The stance of Britain emboldened the Porte not to accept the Memorandum and made a collective great power involvement impossible.¹¹

Lord Derby, the Foreign Secretary, told Pyotr Shuvalov, the Russian ambassador in London, that the Memorandum could exacerbate the situation by giving the impression to the rebels that they were backed by the great powers. Disraeli believed that behind the Memorandum was a masked conspiracy by Russia and Austria–Hungary to partition the Ottoman Empire.¹²

The rejection of the Berlin Memorandum was criticized in Britain by Odo Russell (the British ambassador in Berlin), Edmund Hammond (permanent under-secretary at the Foreign Office from 1854 to 1873) and the respected octogenarian Stratford Canning (now Stratford de Redcliffe). Even Queen Victoria was unhappy about this collusion with ‘Turkey’.¹³

The Bulgarian uprising

Meanwhile, an event unknown in Europe had taken place: an uprising by the Bulgarians in the Ottoman province of Rumelia, culminating in what came to be known as the ‘Bulgarian atrocities’.

Since the mid-nineteenth century, what is known as the ‘Bulgarian Revival’ (*vŭzrazhdane*)¹⁴ had taken place. The first major Bulgarian political revolutionary was Georgi Rakowski, who died of tuberculosis in 1867, but not before he put on course the idea of overthrowing Ottoman rule. He was followed by journalist Lyuben Karavelov, poet Christo Botev and the main organizer, Vasil Levski (the ‘Apostle of Freedom’).¹⁵

Karavelov, Botev and Levski, as expatriates in Bucharest, formed the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee (BRCK). Levski organized a network of committees in the Bulgarian-inhabited regions, but was arrested by the Ottomans and hanged in Sofia in 1873, a major blow to the Bulgarian cause. Following his death the BRCK was split, with Karavelov opposed to an uprising and Botev advocating it. New figures came to the fore, such as Georgi Benkovsky, Stefan Stambulov (a future Bulgarian Prime Minister and regent) and Zakhari Stoyanov (the later historian of the April Uprising). The BRCK felt that the Herzegovina and Bosnia uprisings provided a good opportunity and decided to take up arms in April or May 1876. The revolt commenced prematurely, on 20 April 1876, for fear that the Ottomans would get wind of it, but it was limited to a few mountain towns; it was headed by Stambulov, Benkovsky and Stoyanov. Botev crossed the border between the principalities and with a number of armed men, to join the rebels, but was killed in a skirmish.¹⁶

The April Uprising (*Aprilsko vastanie*), as it is known in the Bulgarian narrative, was badly organized and ended in disaster.¹⁷ The whole endeavour was bound to fail; indeed, it has been entertained by Bulgarian historians that it was deliberately staged that way to provoke Ottoman retaliations and bring about external intervention on their behalf by the powers, which raises the agonizing question of whether ‘the organizers consciously led the people into massacre’.¹⁸

The Ottomans, short of money and regular troops (they were preoccupied with Bosnia and Herzegovina), brought in irregular Bashibazouks and Circassians (refugees from Russia) to quell the uprising and terrorize the Bulgarian population into submission.¹⁹ The official Ottoman justification was that these were reprisals for the wanton attacks on Muslim civilians (apparently a few outrages had been committed by the Bulgarians²⁰). The onslaught of the irregulars was ghastly: a trail of mayhem with some sixty towns and villages in ashes and a staggering number of massacred women and children, which came to be known in Europe as the ‘Bulgarian atrocities’. Reasonable estimates of dead vary from 12,000 to 30,000. The first figure was suggested in the report by the British consul Walter Baring (who had been sent from Constantinople to assess the situation), who,

though pro-Ottoman, came out with a scathing indictment of the behaviour of the irregulars.²¹ US consul Eugene Schuyler and a compatriot, the noted war correspondent Januarius MacGahan, estimated the dead at 15,000 in a joint on-the-spot investigation. The Bulgarians have claimed 30,000 to as many as 100,000 dead, the Ottomans 2,000 to 3,000. The best-known instance of massacres was in the village of Batak, which was burned to the ground, with 5,000 people killed, including women and children.²²

The spread of the Balkan crisis

Meanwhile, the revolts in Bosnia and Herzegovina had not been quelled and now Serbia and Montenegro confronted the Porte. In June 1876 the two autonomous principalities of Serbia and Montenegro, under pressure from their respective publics, declared war, in search of independence and territorial gains.²³

The Serbian and Montenegrin uprisings produced a wave of support in Russian society, led by the Slavophiles. More than 500 soldiers and officers left the Russian army to come as volunteers to the assistance of the Serbs. Much to the dismay of the Tsar, the Serbian army was led by Victor Cherniaev, a former major general of the Tsarist army and hero of Russia's Asian wars. The Montenegrins 'marched from victory to victory', while the Serbs 'went from defeat to defeat',²⁴ failing miserably under their Russian general. Russia called for a cease-fire (threatening the severance of diplomatic relations if none was forthcoming) to save the Serbs and the Ottoman government agreed to a two-month cease-fire.²⁵

In the meantime, a preliminary secret agreement was reached at Reichstadt in Bohemia between Austria-Hungary and Russia, hammered out by Andrassy and the Russian ambassador in Vienna, Novikov (who, like Shuvalov in London, was anti-Pan-Slav), concluding with a more comprehensive agreement between Andrassy and Gorchakov (8 July 1876). In the event of a Russo-Ottoman war, Austria-Hungary would annex Bosnia and Herzegovina; Russia would annex Bessarabia, which it had lost with the 1856 Paris Treaty; Bulgaria, Rumelia and Albania were to become autonomous states; and Thessaly and Crete would be annexed by Greece. If the Ottoman Empire collapsed, Constantinople was to become a free city.²⁶

Disraeli, Gladstone and the British public

Apart from apprehension about Russia, another reason for Britain's aloofness was that Henry Elliot, the pro-Ottoman ambassador of Britain in Constantinople, had not drawn attention to the scale of the massacres, downplaying the scale of the massacres, claiming that they had been grossly exaggerated and that there were Bulgarian atrocities against innocent Muslims.²⁷ Reports in the British press were delayed by two months. But when the news did appear in Britain, especially in the

London *Daily News* (23 June 1876), in an article by Edwin Pears (who had visited the region) with gruesome details, it created a stir. In the following eighteen months no fewer than 3,000 articles appeared in Britain and elsewhere in Europe denouncing the atrocities.²⁸ Disraeli tried to convince Parliament and Queen Victoria (who was also disturbed by the reports) that the events were exaggerated by the press. Derby, however, instructed Elliot to tell the Ottomans that ‘any renewal of the outrages would be more fatal to the Porte than the loss of a battle’²⁹ and to demand that the crimes stop and the Ottomans rectify the damage.³⁰

On 26 June Disraeli dismissed, in Parliament, the *Daily News* story of atrocities and on 10 July denied that torture had been practised ‘on a great scale’. ‘Oriental people’, he added, ‘seldom, I believe, resort to torture, but generally terminate their connection with culprits in a more expeditious manner’³¹ (laughter was heard, much to Disraeli’s annoyance). It was then that his popularity fell and allusions were made to his Jewish origins, implying that this was the reason for his apparent callous indifference to the suffering Balkan Christians.³²

When William Gladstone (the greatest Liberal British politician of the nineteenth century) told the House that it had been unwise to reject the Berlin Memorandum, Disraeli retorted acidly that the British government could not accept ‘coffee-house babble brought by an anonymous Bulgarian to a consul’ (he meant Baring) – another phrase that stuck.³³ But Disraeli complained to Derby that he had not been given accurate information.³⁴

The person responsible for the lack of adequate information was Elliot, who believed that the insurgents themselves were guilty of ‘revolting barbarities’³⁵ and was convinced that all the insurgencies were Russian plots orchestrated by his arch-rival in Constantinople, the Russian ambassador Nikolay Ignatiev, a well known Pan-Slavist.³⁶

Derby, who, unlike Disraeli, was shocked by the atrocities, wrote to Elliot (22 August and 5 September 1876) to say that the sympathy felt in England for the Ottoman Empire ‘has been completely destroyed by the lamentable occurrences in Bulgaria’, that it had given rise to ‘indignation in all classes of English society’ and that, ‘in the extreme case of Russia declaring war against Turkey, Her Majesty’s Government would find it practically impossible to interfere in defence of the Ottoman Empire’.³⁷

For Disraeli, any move which could lead to the break-up the Ottoman Empire was to be curbed. Disraeli (as well as the Queen) believed that Russia’s aim was the destruction of the Ottoman Empire, and the seizure of the Straits and Constantinople and possibly even territory extending as far British India. Only a credible British threat to intervene on the side of the Ottomans could deter the Russians.³⁸

Shuvalov assured Disraeli and Derby that his government had no such outlandish agendas in mind.³⁹ But given the well known Pan-Slav current in Russia (see [chapter 9](#)), it was not totally unreasonable for Disraeli to have adopted

a worst-case analysis. Even though Shuvalov and Gorchakov were sincere (though it is not clear whether Disraeli was convinced of their sincerity), the Pan-Slav view could still prevail with the Tsar.⁴⁰ Moreover, Disraeli found the oppressors more agreeable than the oppressed Christians. An antipathy for the Balkan Christians and a fascination with the ‘Turks’ (as aristocrats and fellow conservatives, like the Tories)⁴¹ were ingrained in Disraeli’s thinking and originated in his grand tour of the East in 1830 (ironically inspired by Byron’s grand tour of 1809). As he had put it then: ‘I find the habits of this calm and luxurious people [the Ottomans] entirely agree with my own preconceived opinions of property and enjoyment, and detest the Greeks more than ever’.⁴²

In Britain the anti-Ottoman sentiment covered a wider spectrum of opinion than in the Greek case in the 1820s.⁴³ In those days, ‘Victorian religious and ethical sensibility was at its apogee’.⁴⁴ According to Richard Shannon, two aspects of Victorian moral sensibility contributed markedly to the domestic agitation over the Bulgarian atrocities: ‘the vision of progress and the veiling and exaltation of sexuality’.⁴⁵

The atrocities were seen as a flagrant anachronism. The politician and economist George Campbell (Duke of Argyle) was shocked at the spectacle of the horrors of ‘African warfare’ and the cruelties of Genghis Khan ‘in the days of Queen Victoria’.⁴⁶ Thomas Carlyle referred to the ‘unspeakable Turk’.⁴⁷ The historian Edward Augustus Freeman (a virulent anti-Turk), in his pamphlet ‘The Turks in Europe’, noted that progress had been achieved in the last twenty years – abolition of slavery, Italy and Germany united, France rid of Bonapartism, Hungary no longer oppressed, Irish no longer bondsmen on their own soil – but ‘Turkey remained the last great blot on the face of Europe, a persistent and outrageous challenge to all that nineteenth-century civilisation stood for’.⁴⁸

The dishonouring of chastity and the debauching of the conjugal union touched on the most sensitive of Victorian nerves.⁴⁹ William Stead, the famous journalist, editor of the daily *Northern Echo*, saw the outrages perpetrated against Bulgarian women as if they had been committed against his mother. Freeman referred to the Turkish reputation for pederasty.⁵⁰

Soon none other than Gladstone, the undisputed leader of British popular liberalism,⁵¹ chose to abandon his retirement and join the fray. He began with careful speeches in Parliament and upon receiving no satisfactory answers from Disraeli he decided to write a pamphlet. *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*, written within three days while he was in bed with lumbago, sold more than 200,000 copies within less than a month. This fiery pamphlet ‘did more than any other publication of the century to destroy pro-Turkish feeling in Britain’.⁵²

Curiously, Gladstone had not come on board from the beginning. As Shannon has put it, this was ‘far less a case of Gladstone exciting passion than of popular passion exciting Gladstone’.⁵³ Three fellow Oxonians played a considerable role in his conversion, all three his friends: Freeman, the theologian James Fraser, and

Henry Liddon, Professor of Theology at Oxford University. A fourth Oxonian should be mentioned who was close to Gladstone and was an authority on matters of international law, Robert Phillimore.⁵⁴ Stratford was the first to bring the atrocities to Gladstone's attention. Mention should also be made of a formidable Russian lady residing in London, Madame Olga Kireeva Novikova (see [chapter 9](#)), the Duke of Argyle, Stead, the Reverent William Denton and Canon Malcolm MacColl.⁵⁵

In retrospect, it is difficult to imagine Gladstone indifferent on a matter that 'ignited the moral passion of the great section of the British public on an issue which engaged every element of his politico-religious existence – his Catholic Christianity, his European sense, his Liberalism, his democratic sympathies'.⁵⁶

Gladstone in his pamphlet painted a bleak picture of the situation and of Ottoman culpability and added: 'I entreat my countrymen ... to require and to insist that our Government ... shall apply all its vigour to concur with the other States of Europe in obtaining the extinction of the Turkish executive power in Bulgaria'.⁵⁷ He famously continued:⁵⁸

Let the Turks now carry away their abuses in the only possible manner, namely by carrying off themselves. Their Zaptiehs and their Mudirs, their Bimbashis and their Yuzbashis, their Kaimakams and their Pashas, one and all, bag and baggage, shall, I hope, clear out of the province they have desolated and profaned.

The expression 'bag and baggage' was Stratford's from the 1820s and Gladstone did not mean that the Ottomans should leave Europe, but only Bulgaria.⁵⁹ In a previous passage (as well as in Parliament⁶⁰) he referred to upholding the 'territorial integrity of Turkey', though he added that there were 'higher objects of policy', such as 'humanity, rationally understood' and 'justice'.⁶¹

Disraeli was furious with the pamphlet and regarded it 'vindictive and ill-written', and 'of all the Bulgarian horrors the greatest'.⁶²

Three days later, at a rally in Blackheath (9 September 1876), 10,000 to 15,000 people, in pouring rain, listened enthralled to Gladstone's captivating speech. He repeated the argumentation of his pamphlet, accusing the Ottomans of misgovernment, repression and massacres, and pointed to the Tory government's complicity by withholding information from the British public and supporting the Sultan. His proposal, however, was moderate: Bulgarian autonomy under Ottoman suzerainty.⁶³

A national convention was organized by Stead and the Liberals, which took place at St James Hall in Piccadilly, London (8 December 1876), with the participation of a wide spectrum of leading personalities. Gladstone's speech at the meeting was a sensation. At the close of the meeting he offered his arm to Madame Novikova and escorted her from the platform to the door.⁶⁴

Gladstone's overall stance during this period had several effects, according to Gerald Clayton: it completed the estrangement between himself and Disraeli

(and the Queen); it made it impossible for Disraeli to resort to war on behalf of the Ottoman Empire; it introduced a note of bitterness into public life that divided the country; and it encouraged the consideration of moral values as an important aspect of foreign policy.⁶⁵

The Disraeli–Gladstone clash over the Bulgarian atrocities was also a discord between realism and idealistic liberalism in international politics. For Disraeli it was inconceivable that *Realpolitik* should give way to ‘a moral crusade’ and that the ‘interests of humanity’ should prevail over ‘the permanent and important interests of England’.⁶⁶ For Gladstone, the very opposite was the case: moral and humanitarian concerns had to override narrow national interests. As he put it: ‘What is to be the consequence to civilisation and humanity, to public order, if British interests are to be the rule for British agents all over the world, and are to be for them the measure of right or wrong?’⁶⁷ No doubt had Gladstone and not Disraeli been the Prime Minister, then British policy during the Balkan crisis would have been different. As Blake has put it: ‘That Disraeli of all people should have been Prime Minister at this particular moment seems indeed an irony of history’.⁶⁸

For the next two years the country was divided between ‘Turks’, Turcophiles, ‘home-Turks’ or Russophobes, and ‘Bulgarians’, ‘Russians’, Russophiles, Turcophobes or ‘Muscovites’.⁶⁹ The latter, the so-called ‘atrocitarians’, were in a great majority in the north of England, in the south-east and in Wales, but not in the rest of England and negligible in Scotland and Ireland, and generally among Catholics (probably due to the fact that the Bulgarians were Orthodox Christians). The Church of England was also for the most part anti-atrocitarian, as were the army, navy, high financial circles, top bankers and most of the nobility.⁷⁰

In addition to an array of prominent Liberal politicians, such as Lord John Russell, William Harcourt, the Duke of Argyll and John Bright, an impressive number of thinkers and academics, the ‘high Victorian intelligentsia’, condemned the atrocities and called for British involvement on behalf of the Bulgarians. They were personalities of different ideological hues, who on other matters were at loggerheads. Apart from Freeman and Liddon, they included Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer and Thomas Carlyle, philosophers Henry Sidgwick and Thomas Hill Green, the blind economist Henry Fawcett, the Oxford jurist and Liberal politician James Bryce, political theorist William Lecky, historian and social critic Goldwin Smith, art critic and polymath John Ruskin, poet Robert Browning, artist and writer William Morris, and novelists Antony Trollope, James Anthony Froude and Thomas Hughes. The intellectuals against were fewer but included an equally odd assortment, such as theologian Benjamin Jowett, judge Fitzjames Stephen, essayist Walter Bagehot, socialist writer Henry Hyndman, the exiled Karl Marx⁷¹ and poets Matthew Arnold, Lord Tennyson and Algernon Charles Swinburne (who pointed out that the ‘Turks’ were no worse than the British and other oppressors across the world).⁷²

The Balkan crisis gave rise to another intriguing phenomenon, British humanitarian aid, which went both ways, including wounded Ottomans during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877–78, which is quite striking, given the well known European bias against ‘the Turks’ (see [chapter 3](#)). The bulk of assistance was provided by trained medical personnel, that is, nurses, medical doctors and surgeons, but there were also some former military supporting the Serbs.

There were three variants of humanitarianism by voluntary groups. There were those supporting the Balkan nationalist struggles that assisted the sick and wounded Balkan Slavs. The main spokespersons of this trend were Freeman, Lindon, James Lewis Farley and the medical doctor Humphrey Sandwith, based in Belgrade. In this context we see the activities of the League in Aid of the Christian *Rayahs* in Turkey, the Bulgarian Peasants Relief Fund and the Sick and Wounded Russian Soldiers’ Relief Fund. There were those who wanted to remain equidistant (along the standards set by International Commission of the Red Cross) and were thus prepared to assist all victims of the wars. They were headed by Lady Strangford, Vincent Barrington-Kennett and Colonel Robert Loyd Lindsay, and this line was obvious in the activity of the Eastern War Sick and Wounded Fund, the National Aid Society and the Red Cross Society. There was also a smaller group providing humanitarian aid to the wounded Ottoman soldiers in both the Balkan and Caucasus war theatres. The main figures in this endeavour were Lady Burdett-Coutts and the Duke of Sutherland (Lady Strangford and Barrington-Kennett also contributed), and its main organizations were the Turkish Compassionate Fund and in particular the Stanford House Committee.⁷³

The Conference of Constantinople and the prelude to war

Derby, upon the suggestion of Gorchakov, called (on 4 November) for a conference to be held in Constantinople to settle the Balkan crisis, but a few days later Disraeli delivered a bellicose veiled anti-Russian speech at a dinner at Guildhall, London (see [chapter 9](#)). The powers agreed to take part in the conference, as did a reluctant Porte. Derby urged that, in the conference, no power was to gain territorial advantages and called for autonomy for Bosnia and Herzegovina, status quo in generous terms for Serbia and Montenegro and nothing for the Bulgarians.⁷⁴

Lord Salisbury (the Minister for India) was appointed by Disraeli to head the British delegation. In his visits before the conference, to Paris, Berlin (Bismarck), Vienna (Andrassy) and Rome, he got the impression that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire could not be upheld.⁷⁵ As he reported to Derby, ‘In the course of my travels I have not succeeded in finding the friend of the Turk. He does not exist. Most believe his hour has come.’⁷⁶ Bismarck tried to dispel British suspicions of Russia and Salisbury found him indifferent to the possibility of a Russo-Ottoman war, but ready to do everything possible to avert an Austro-Russian or Anglo-Russian clash.⁷⁷

In the Constantinople Conference (11 December 1876–20 January 1897) the main figures were Salisbury and Ignatiev, the latter chairing the conference. The most fruitful period of the deliberations was the preliminary phase, in December, in which the Porte was not allowed to participate. The humanitarian aspect loomed large in the discussions. According to the minutes of the first meeting of the conference (11 December) they were dealing with a collective, European question ‘which does not interest Russia alone, but the whole of Europe, the general prosperity, humanity, and Christian civilization. May the peace of Europe and the well-being of the Christian populations of Turkey serve as a recompense for the troubles and difficulties connected with the undertaking [of the conference]’.⁷⁸

Surprisingly, confidence developed between Salisbury and Ignatiev. Their ability to work closely was due – apart from Ignatiev’s adroitness and charm – to the fact that Salisbury, unlike Elliot (who participated in the conference), had no illusions about the Ottoman Empire; he accepted the idea of eventual independence of the Balkan peoples and was not obsessed by the Russian bogey. Ignatiev and Salisbury agreed to the formation of two autonomous Bulgarian entities (see [chapter 9](#)). Ignatiev favoured a short-term European collective humanitarian intervention⁷⁹ and Salisbury was not completely averse to some kind of short-term military occupation. The powers agreed that some coercive measure would be indispensable to enforce the reforms and to ensure that such massacres were not repeated. Serbia was to retain the status quo, Montenegro was to gain an outlet to the sea, Bulgaria was to be divided into two parts and Bosnia and Herzegovina were to be united.⁸⁰

When the Ottoman representative, Erdem Pasha, was admitted to the conference (24 December), he referred to Ottoman sovereign rights and told the representatives that a modern Constitution was to be adopted, a two-chamber Parliament was to be elected and substantial reforms were to be made by the Ottoman state anyway, and thus the proposals of the conference were redundant and overtaken by events.⁸¹

Indeed, a Constitution was promulgated, elections were duly held (January–March 1877) and the first Ottoman Parliament emerged, with all major communities represented, making the measures suggested by the powers seemingly irrelevant. But when the conference ended its work inconclusively (20 January 1877), the new Sultan, Abdulhamid II, sacked Grand Vizier Midhat Pasha (5 February), the main initiator of the liberalization process, though the Parliament was allowed to function for some ten months.⁸²

The conference’s failure was ostensibly due to the Ottoman posture. But it has been argued that the failure of the conference was due to Britain, because it spoke with two voices, with Elliot, at daggers drawn with Ignatiev, regarded – not least by the Ottomans – to be the true representative of the British Prime Minister.⁸³ Characteristically, Derby wired Salisbury on 22 December asking him to tell the Porte ‘that England will not assent to, or assist in, coercive measures, military

or naval, against the Porte'.⁸⁴ In April 1877 (on the eve of the Russo-Ottoman War) Elliot was replaced by Austen Henry Layard (a former archaeologist of Mesopotamia), who was pro-Ottoman, like Elliot, and a close friend of Disraeli, a clear sign that the British favourable stance towards the Porte had not changed.⁸⁵

In the meantime, exploratory talks had commenced in secrecy from November 1876 onwards between Russia and Austria–Hungary, and secret agreements were signed (15 January and 18 March 1877) that in the event of a Russo-Ottoman war, Vienna would adopt a benevolent neutrality and 'occupy' (and not 'annex', as the Austrians wanted) Bosnia and Herzegovina. If the Ottoman Empire collapsed, Constantinople was to become a free city, no great Slav state was to be created in the Balkans and the two parties were to lend each other assistance at the diplomatic level in reaching a final settlement that would be favourable to both of them.⁸⁶

Following the failure of the Constantinople Conference, Gorchakov sent Ignatiev to the European courts in a last-ditch attempt to establish a united front. An ambassadors' conference was held in London, which adopted the London Protocol (31 March 1877), a watered-down version of what Ignatiev had proposed, mainly the work of Derby and Shuvalov. The Protocol called upon the Ottomans to demobilize and introduce reforms. Were such reforms to fail, the powers reserved the right to consider what common measures to adopt.⁸⁷

Gorchakov was unhappy with the Protocol and it remains unclear whether the Russians desired it, for if accepted by the Porte it would have tied their hands. The Tsar was initially against resorting to war but told the British, via Shuvalov, that he desired peace, although not at any price.⁸⁸

Abdulhamid made the fatal mistake of rejecting even this mild Protocol, on the grounds that it violated the 1856 Treaty of Paris (which guaranteed Ottoman territorial integrity)⁸⁹ and that it amounted to 'humiliating tutelage by Europe';⁹⁰ his rejection permitted Russia to take matters into its own hands, and it declared war (24 April 1877). Russia justified its aggression by its traditional role as protector of the Christians of the Ottoman Empire and on humanitarian grounds (see [chapter 9](#)).

Given how things had transpired, with the Porte the obstructing party, the other parties (bar Britain) were hardly at odds with Russia's resort to war. Russia entered the war in favourable international circumstances, having an arrangement with Austria–Hungary and having been assured of benevolent neutrality on the part of Germany, France and Italy. As for Britain, it could scarcely act without at least one ally, and no such ally was forthcoming.⁹¹

The British divided over the war

The Russian forces advanced on two fronts against the Ottomans, in the Balkans directed towards the Bulgarian regions and in the southern Caucasus towards the Armenian-inhabited regions. Upon the start of the war Derby sent a note to

Russia through Shuvalov (6 May 1877) referring to the danger to British interests in Suez, Egypt, the Persian Gulf and Constantinople.⁹² The reply was that Russia would not touch Suez and Egypt, and as for Constantinople, Gorchakov could give only one assurance: that there would be no annexation, specifying that a pledge against temporary occupation would, if it became known, only encourage the 'Turks' in their obstinacy. Shuvalov told Derby that once the British realized that Russia did not want Constantinople they could put pressure on the Porte and save them from the need to occupy the city. Derby believed that the Russians were sincere but Disraeli was convinced that the Russians sought to take over Constantinople and dictate their terms to Europe on that basis.⁹³

At this juncture Gorchakov wrote to Shuvalov: *'The English find it hard to understand a war of religious and national sentiment, and being incapable of one themselves, they consequently look for arrières pensées'*.⁹⁴

Throughout the hostilities and its aftermath, the British were bitterly divided as supporters or foes of Russia as never before on a matter of foreign policy, or at least since the French Revolution.⁹⁵ The issue was so acute that personal relationships were severed, families clashed, and Tories and Liberals were divided even among themselves. As for the animosity between the two great statesmen, Disraeli (since June 1876 Earl of Beaconsfield, a gift of the Queen) and Gladstone, it now reached its peak.⁹⁶ As Harcourt put it to Charles Dilke: 'Gladstone and Dizzy [Disraeli] seem to cap one another in folly and imprudence, and I do not know which has made the greatest ass of himself'.⁹⁷ Gladstone became very unpopular in fashionable circles, was hissed in public, hooted at the lobby of the House of Commons and had the windows of his house smashed (he was derided by the Tory press as a Russian agent, especially in view of the Novikova connection⁹⁸). Gladstone was deeply hurt but told the House (on 14 May 1877) that if the Russians, who were 'capable of noble spirits as any people in Europe', succeeded in the war, 'as an Englishman I shall hide my head, but as a man I shall rejoice'.⁹⁹

The mood grasped the public as well. According to a popular music hall song:¹⁰⁰ 'We don't want to fight but by Jingo if we do / We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too / We've fought the Bear before, and while we're Britons true / The Russians shall not have Constantinople'. It was from this mention of 'Jingo' (apparently meant as a minced oath, to avoid saying Jesus) that the contemporary radical thinker George Holyoake coined the term 'jingoism'¹⁰¹ to mean extreme and aggressive nationalism.¹⁰²

The Queen in jingoist pitch sent an avalanche of letters and telegrams to Disraeli. As he put it: 'The Faery [Victoria] writes every day and telegrams every hour: this is almost literally the case' and a little later he added, 'it rains telegrams morn, noon and night'.¹⁰³ She wrote that if the Russians reached Constantinople 'the Queen would be so humiliated that she thinks that she will abdicate at once'.¹⁰⁴ In January 1878, when the Russians had won the war, she was beside herself with rage, writing to Disraeli that '[s]he feels she cannot ...

remain the sovereign of a country that is letting itself down to kiss the feet of the great barbarians, the retarders of all liberty and civilization that exists'. And added: 'Oh, if the Queen were a man, she would like to go and give those Russians, whose word one cannot believe, such a beating! We shall never be friends again till we have it out'.¹⁰⁵

The cabinet remained divided between those espousing a vigorous response, headed by Disraeli, and those calling for restraint and the avoidance of war, headed by Derby, Carnarvon, the Colonial Secretary, and Salisbury, 'the three Lords' as they were known.¹⁰⁶ Derby in his attempt to avoid a war with Russia went as far as revealing to Shuvalov – directly or through his wife, Lady Derby, who was on close terms with the Russian ambassador¹⁰⁷ – the lack of unity in the cabinet for going to war. Derby was convinced that the Russians meant what they said, that they sought reforms in the Balkans and not Constantinople, and he feared that war could come about as a result of the bellicosity of Disraeli, which could provoke the Tsar to do exactly what Britain did not want him to do.¹⁰⁸

In spite of the differences in the British government, Disraeli was able to extract a unanimous decision from the cabinet to declare war if Russia occupied Constantinople without arranging for the immediate retirement from the city, and the British fleet under Admiral Hornby was sent to the Dardanelles.¹⁰⁹

From San Stefano to Berlin

The Russian army, after initial success, faced tough resistance from the modernized Ottoman army, notably in the fortress of Plevna in northern Bulgaria. The war on two fronts dragged on for ten months and the previously confident Russians had to ask for the military assistance of Serbia, Montenegro and Romania, as well as Greece (the first three entered the war). Finally the Russians took Plevna (11 December), and then entered Sofia (in 4 January 1878) and Adrianople (20 January 1878).

An armistice was concluded on very severe Russian terms (27 January 1878), a development that, incidentally, gave Abdulhamid the excuse to dissolve Parliament (14 February) and assert his own brand of reactionary despotism and Muslim conservatism.¹¹⁰

Ignatiev and the Ottoman Foreign Minister signed the Treaty of San Stefano (3 March 1878), which provided for a large autonomous Bulgaria, from the Aegean Sea to the Danube, far larger than present-day Bulgaria, with a considerable Aegean coastline, covering even areas in which Bulgarians were not the majority population (Skopje, Prizren, Monastir, the lakes of Prespa and Ohrid) – areas that could have gone, on the basis of ethnic composition (if the Muslims were not taken into consideration), to Serbia, Greece or a future Albania.¹¹¹

San Stefano was obviously a major mistake on the part of Russia, however, for it upset the power balance in the Balkans and showed no consideration for the

interests of other states, especially Austria–Hungary, disregarding the two secret agreements with Andrassy.¹¹²

The terms of San Stefano brought Britain and Austria–Hungary ‘to the verge of open rupture’ with Russia.¹¹³ London and Vienna called for a fundamental revision of San Stefano and threatened war.¹¹⁴ From February 1878 onwards, and for some ten weeks, an Anglo-Russian war seemed likely.¹¹⁵ As Disraeli put it, ‘We are drifting into war’, but he added ‘If we are bold and determined we shall secure peace, and dictate its conditions to Europe’.¹¹⁶ Clearly, war was not what he really wanted but his threat at this stage was no bluff. Russia seemed impressed by British stance and, with its forces depleted by battle and disease and with its finances strained, was keen to avoid a war with Britain.¹¹⁷

Derby resigned as Foreign Secretary, to be replaced by Salisbury, who presented the British views for a settlement in a letter he sent to the other great powers, known as the ‘Salisbury circular’. Shuvalov, after some initial hesitation, was able to meet Salisbury eye to eye, when the latter made it clear that the views of the two governments were not far apart; that the main aim of Britain was a much smaller Bulgaria; and that, for its part, Britain wanted to acquire an outpost that would safeguard its Asiatic interests (Cyprus was to be that outpost, though it was not mentioned). A secret protocol between Salisbury and Shuvalov was signed (30 May), whose terms included drastic modification of the Bulgarian boundaries, no Bulgarian opening to the Aegean Sea, Ottoman troops not to be allowed in the Bulgarian province (a Russian *sine qua non*), Greece to have a voice in the future of Thessaly and Epirus (a British desire), Bessarabia to revert to Russia and Batoum, Ardahan and Kars to be annexed by Russia.¹¹⁸

The Congress of Berlin was held at the highest level, with the participation of Bismarck and Bülow (the German Foreign Minister), Disraeli and Salisbury, Gorchakov and Shuvalov, and Andrassy as the main protagonists, with Italy under Corti and France under Waddington in the background. Ironically, the Ottoman Empire was represented by two non-ethnic Turks, the Ottoman Greek Karatheodori Pasha (the Foreign Minister) and Mehmed Ali Pasha, a renegade Prussian, both of whom were snubbed and side-lined, not least by Bismarck. Bismarck was made president of the Congress and proved a very effective one at that. Yet even though previous understandings had been reached as to the general outline of the forthcoming treaty, there was considerable wrangling, especially over the limits of Bulgaria, with Disraeli threatening to leave the conference and Shuvalov being as accommodating as possible.¹¹⁹

According to the Treaty of Berlin, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, with some additions to their territories, were to become fully independent states. The Bulgarian-inhabited region was split into two: a vassal state of Bulgaria with Sofia as its capital; and a semi-autonomous Eastern Rumelia. Russia acquired Bessarabia and Kars, Ardahan and Batoum from the Ottoman Empire, Britain got Cyprus (under Ottoman suzerainty) and Austria–Hungary was to occupy

Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the Sanjak of Novipazar. The Berlin Treaty also referred to the treatment and protection of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and to the well-being of the Christians.¹²⁰

The Berlin Treaty holds a special place in the history of humanitarian intervention. It was agreed that ‘intervention for humanity becomes a basis of a special public law in the relations between Europe and the Porte’, whereby the Porte was henceforth ‘under the permanent control of the Concert of Europe regarding internal administrative acts’.¹²¹ The Treaty allowed for a right of intervention on the part of the signatory states ‘in all the cases in order to guarantee a minimum of rights of the inhabitants of Turkey in Europe and in particular to assure religious liberty’.¹²²

Assessment

A basic characteristic of this case was the unprecedented role played by public opinion,¹²³ especially in Russia (see [chapter 9](#)) and Britain. The 1877 war was at the time not regarded as humanitarian by European policy-makers,¹²⁴ the obvious exception being Russian policy-makers and commentators (see [chapter 9](#)). However, it was not seen unsympathetically. According to the authoritative Bluntschli for instance (writing in 1879), Russia was motivated by its honour and ‘sentiments of sympathy for the oppressed Christians’, which led it ‘to force Turkey to abide by its duties’.¹²⁵

More generally, according to Rodogno the European powers regarded intervention against massacre in the Ottoman Empire conceivable but in the end their security priorities prevailed, which did not make a collective humanitarian intervention possible. For Britain in particular ‘humanity’ was given up in the name of ‘balance of power’ interests.¹²⁶ Rodogno argues that this was a case of ‘non-intervention’ on humanitarian grounds, though the plan of the Constantinople Conference of 1876 ‘was quite close to a humanitarian intervention for it encompassed coercive measures to enforce the reforms aimed at avoiding the repetition of massacre in the future’.¹²⁷

But, over time, an increasing number of scholars have come to regard it as a case of collective humanitarian involvement, which, in view of the Ottoman intransigence, led to Russian military intervention, amounting to a full-scale war within a humanitarian rationale, as seen by the stance of publicists such as Rougier¹²⁸ and Stowell,¹²⁹ apart from Russian publicists such as Martens¹³⁰ and Mandelstam.¹³¹ More recently, a number of international lawyers have regarded it as a case of military humanitarian intervention by Russia with the support of the other powers bar Britain. They include Ganji,¹³² Fonteyne,¹³³ Behuniak,¹³⁴ Bazylar,¹³⁵ Abiew¹³⁶ and Grewe,¹³⁷ and, more circumspectly, Fenwick,¹³⁸ and among international relations scholars dealing with humanitarian intervention, Finnemore,¹³⁹ Bass¹⁴⁰ and Knudsen.¹⁴¹

Concluding remarks

In the Bulgarian case one sees a similar pattern with the previous two cases (saving Christians, great power consultations, conferences in Constantinople and London, agreements and so on). The main new features in dealing with humanitarian plight are the following: final whole-sale military intervention (war), unilateral this time, but with benevolent neutrality by the other great powers, save Britain; the far greater role of the press and public opinion, especially in Britain and Russia, in the former case putting a lid on the British government's pro-Ottoman behaviour and in the latter spurring intervention; and a final high-level peace conference, the Congress of Berlin, which drastically altered the situation in the Balkans (new borders, three new independent states and two tributary states) and also addressed the well-being of religious minorities in the Ottoman Empire. On the downside there were four problems: (1) deviation from previous agreements by one great power (Russia in San Stefano), (2) a real danger of war between great powers (in this case Russia and Britain), (3) bitter internal split in one of the great powers, Britain, over the question; and (4) the aggressive stance of many influential Russians based on pan-nationalist grounds, namely Pan-Slavism, triggered by the humanitarian plight.

Notes

- 1 R. Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History of Europe Since the Congress of Vienna* (London: Methuen, 1958), 168; R. Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question 1875–1878* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 31; A. L. Macfie, *The Eastern Question, 1774–1923* (London: Longman, 1996) [1989], 36; M. Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 97–8.
- 2 For the League of Three Emperors see R. B. Mowat, *The Concert of Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1930), 48–9.
- 3 Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 91–2.
- 4 B. H. Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans, 1870–1880* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), 152–3; R. W. Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question* (London: Frank Cass, 1962) [1935], 27–8; M. D. Stojanovic, *The Great Powers and the Balkans, 1875–1878* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939), 22–5, 28–43–4; Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 97–101.
- 5 Quoted in R. B. Mowat, *A History of European Diplomacy, 1815–1914* (London: Edward Arnold, 1922), 224.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 224; Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 84–5, 99–101; G. D. Clayton, *Britain and the Eastern Question: Missolonghi to Gallipoli* (London: Lion Library, 1971), 127, 132; Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History of Europe Since the Congress of Vienna*, 169; Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 28–9; Stojanovic, *The Great Powers and the Balkans*, 48–9.
- 7 Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History of Europe Since the Congress of Vienna*, 167.
- 8 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 32; Mowat, *A History of European Diplomacy*, 224.

- 9 Stojanovic, *The Great Powers and the Balkans*, 44–5, 61; L. S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans Since 1453* (London: Hurst, 2000) [1958], 407.
- 10 Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 112.
- 11 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 32–5; Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 161–5; Stavrianos, *The Balkans*, 400–1; M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774–1923: A Study in International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1966), 183; B. Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1964), 177; Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 87–9; D. Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Intervention in the Ottoman Empire, 1815–1914. The Emergence of a European Concept and International Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 145–6.
- 12 Macfie, *The Eastern Question*, 37–8; Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 38–9; Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 107–12; R. Blake, *Disraeli* (London: Methuen, 1966), 588.
- 13 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 34; Clayton, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 152; Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 95.
- 14 R. Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation in the Balkans: Historiography of the Bulgarian Revival* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), 1.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 176–90; see also M. Glenny, *The Balkans 1804–1999: Nationalism, War and the Great Powers* (London: Granta Books, 1999), 119–20.
- 16 R. J. Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, 2nd edition) [1997], 78; H. Temperley, ‘The Bulgarian and Other Atrocities, 1875–8, in the Light of Historical Criticism’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 17 (1931), 8, 11; D. Harris, *Britain and the Bulgarian Horrors of 1876* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 9–18; Stavrianos, *The Balkans*, 378–9; B. Jelavich, *History of the Balkans: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 346–7.
- 17 Jelavich, *History of the Balkans*, 347; Stavrianos, *The Balkans*, 379–80; Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, 80; Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation in the Balkans*, 199, 201; Glenny, *The Balkans*, 107–8.
- 18 Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation in the Balkans*, 195, 197, 199, 201.
- 19 Clayton, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 135; Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, 80; S. K. Pavlowitch, *A History of the Balkans, 1804–1945* (London: Longman, 1999), 109.
- 20 Temperley, ‘The Bulgarian and Other Atrocities’, 92; R. J. Crampton, *Bulgaria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 92; Stavrianos, *The Balkans*, 379; Glenny, *The Balkans*, 107–110; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 147.
- 21 Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 148–9.
- 22 Temperley, ‘The Bulgarian and Other Atrocities’, 21–5; Harris, *Britain and the Bulgarian Horrors*, 20–3; Pavlowitch, *A History of the Balkans*, 109–10; Stavrianos, *The Balkans*, 380; Glenny, *The Balkans*, 108–10; G. J. Bass, *Freedom’s Battle: The Origins of Humanitarian Intervention* (New York: Vintage Books, 2009), 235–7, 256–7.
- 23 Stavrianos, *The Balkans*, 401–2; D. MacKenzie, *Imperial Dreams, Harsh Realities: Tsarist Russian Foreign Policy, 1815–1917* (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1994), 74; Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy*, 178.
- 24 Temperley, ‘The Bulgarian and Other Atrocities’, 8.
- 25 Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 166.
- 26 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 46–8; Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 173–6; Stojanovic, *The Great Powers and the Balkans*, 74–7; Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy*, 179; Macfie, *The Eastern Question*, 38–9.

- 27 Harris, *Britain and the Bulgarian Horrors*, 27–32. However, Rodogno claims that Elliot had duly reported the disturbance to his government but that Lord Tenterden, the permanent under-secretary at the Foreign Office, had censored the documents in question. Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 147.
- 28 Glenny, *The Balkans*, 109.
- 29 Quote in Macfie, *The Eastern Question*, 38.
- 30 Anderson, *The Eastern Question*, 184; Blake, *Disraeli*, 592; Bass, *Freedom's Battle*, 258–79; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 147–51.
- 31 Quoted in Harris, *Britain and the Bulgarian Horrors*, 53; Blake, *Disraeli*, 593.
- 32 Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 130, 147–8.
- 33 Blake, *Disraeli*, 593, 593.
- 34 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 54–5; Blake, *Disraeli*, 593; Clayton, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 154; Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 130–1.
- 35 Temperley, 'The Bulgarian and Other Atrocities', 9; Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 125–6.
- 36 Harris, *Britain and the Bulgarian Horrors*, 26–7, 29, 31; Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 64–7.
- 37 Quoted in Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 62.
- 38 Blake, *Disraeli*, 571, 578, 608.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 577.
- 40 *Ibid.*, 610.
- 41 Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 25.
- 42 Quoted *ibid.*, 23. For details of his grand tour and identification with the Ottomans, see *ibid.*, 9–28.
- 43 R. Shannon, *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation 1876* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1963); Harris, *Britain and the Bulgarian Horrors*, 61–253.
- 44 Blake, *Disraeli*, 600.
- 45 Shannon, *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation*, 30.
- 46 Quoted *ibid.*, 31.
- 47 Quoted in Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 156.
- 48 Quoted in Shannon, *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation*, 31.
- 49 *Ibid.*, 33.
- 50 *Ibid.*, 34.
- 51 For British popular liberalism and Gladstone, see E. F. Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform: Popular Liberalism in the Age of Gladstone, 1860–1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
- 52 Anderson, *The Eastern Question*, 184.
- 53 Shannon, *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation*, 110.
- 54 See C. Sylvest, 'International Law in Nineteenth Century Britain', *British Year Book of International Law*, 75 (2004), 27 and 27 n.87.
- 55 Shannon, *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation*, 49, 93, 99; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 153, 157.
- 56 Shannon, *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation*, 89.
- 57 Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P., *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East* (London: John Murray, 1876), 61.
- 58 *Ibid.*, 61–2.
- 59 Clayton, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 155. Gladstone in a letter to *The Times* stated

- that he meant the Ottomans leaving Bulgaria and not the Balkans. See Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 155.
- 60 Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 134–5.
- 61 Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*, 50.
- 62 Quoted in Blake, *Disraeli*, 602.
- 63 Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform*, 388; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 155.
- 64 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 110–12; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 156.
- 65 Clayton, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 153–4, 155.
- 66 Blake, *Disraeli*, 605.
- 67 Quoted in Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 69.
- 68 Blake, *Disraeli*, 600.
- 69 D. Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers* (London: Hutchinson, 1968), 5–6; Blake, *Disraeli*, 603–4.
- 70 Shannon, *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation*, 150–61.
- 71 Marx detested imperial Russia and hoped that the ‘gallant Turks’ would defeat the Russians and provoke a revolution in Russia. See *ibid.*, 237.
- 72 See for the motives and rationale of each one of them, *ibid.*, 203–38. See also V. Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 31, 36–41; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 156–7.
- 73 Anderson, *The Balkan Volunteers*. For an account of the activities of the Stanford House Committee, see *Report and Record of the Relief and Sick and Wounded Turkish Soldiers (Chairman the Duke of Sutherland), Russo-Turkish War, 1877–78* (London: Spottiswoode, 1879). See also R. Gill, *Calculating Compassion: Humanitarianism and Relief in War, Britain 1870–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 96–123.
- 74 Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 232–3; Blake, *Disraeli*, 611; Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 195; Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 168–70.
- 75 Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 237.
- 76 Quoted in Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 108.
- 77 *Ibid.*, 107–8.
- 78 Quoted in Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 161.
- 79 Bluntschli, ‘Le Congrès de Berlin et sa portée au point de vue du droit international’, *Revue de droit international et de législation comparée*, 11 (1879), 18.
- 80 Clayton, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 137; Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 121, 127, 137; Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 177–8; Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 162, 169. See also Bluntschli, ‘Le Congrès de Berlin et sa portée au point de vue du droit international’, 18.
- 81 Mowat, *The Concert of Europe*, 51; Stavrianos, *The Balkans*, 405.
- 82 For developments in the Ottoman Empire in 1877 see B. Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968) [1961], 160–74.
- 83 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 135; Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 236.
- 84 Quoted in Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 135.
- 85 Layard had direct personal correspondence with the British Prime Minister and was able to influence his decisions. See Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 204.
- 86 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 142–4; Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 274–98; Mowat, *The Concert of Europe*, 50; Stavrianos, *The Balkans*, 406; Macfie, *The Eastern Question*, 40; Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy*, 180.

- 87 Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 260–7; Anderson, *The Eastern Question*, 193–4; Bass, *Freedom's Battle*, 295–6.
- 88 Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 260–3, 266.
- 89 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 406.
- 90 A. Mandelstam, 'La protection des minorités', *Recueil des Cours de l'Académie de droit international*, 1 (1923), 376. See also M. Ganji, *International Protection of Human Rights* (Geneva: Librairie E. Droz, 1962), 32.
- 91 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 170; Stavrianos, *The Balkans*, 406.
- 92 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 173.
- 93 *Ibid.*, 193; Mowat, *A History of European Diplomacy*, 229; Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 210–12.
- 94 Quoted in Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 194 (original emphasis).
- 95 P. Magnus, *Gladstone: A Biography* (London: John Murray, 1954), 246.
- 96 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 175.
- 97 Quoted *ibid.*, 176.
- 98 See J. O. Baylen, 'Madame Olga Novikov, Propagandist', *American Slavic and East European Review*, 10:4 (1951), 261–2, 264–70.
- 99 Quoted in Magnus, *Gladstone*, 248.
- 100 The song was written by G. W. Hunt and sung by the popular singer G. H. Macdermott.
- 101 The term was coined by Holyoake in the *Daily News* (13 March 1878). See M. Ceadel, *Semi-Detached Idealists: The British Peace Movement and International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 105.
- 102 In 1901 John A. Hobson defined jingoism as 'inverted patriotism whereby the love of one's nation is transformed into the hatred of another nation and the fierce craving to destroy the individual members of that other nation'. See J. A. Hobson, *The Psychology of Jingoism* (London: G. Richards, 1901), 1.
- 103 Quoted in Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 198.
- 104 Quoted *ibid.*, 198.
- 105 Quoted *ibid.*, 267 (original emphasis).
- 106 Macfie, *The Eastern Question*, 41; Clayton, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 141; Blake, *Disraeli*, 622–3. According to Disraeli in an entertaining note he sent to the Queen (3 November 1877) the cabinet was split into some seven groups. See Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 236.
- 107 Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 10–11, 211, 213; Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 203.
- 108 Blake, *Disraeli*, 623, 625.
- 109 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 217, 229–30.
- 110 On Abdulhamid's regime, which lasted until 1908, see E. J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1993), 80–90; M. Ş. Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 123–49.
- 111 Mowat, *The Concert of Europe*, 54–5; Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History of Europe Since the Congress of Vienna*, 172; Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 334, 408–9.
- 112 Mowat, *The Concert of Europe*, 54–5; Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History of Europe Since the Congress of Vienna*, 172; Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy*, 182.
- 113 Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 419.

- 114 *Ibid.*, 460; Clayton, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 144; Macfie, *The Eastern Question*, 42.
- 115 Blake, *Disraeli*, 639; Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 242–6.
- 116 Quoted in Mowat, *A History of European Diplomacy*, 231.
- 117 *Ibid.*, 231–2.
- 118 Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question*, 379–81, 408–19; Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 473–96; Clayton, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 144–5; Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question*, 258–9, 262–6.
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