



THE CAUSES HOLDING OF CONGRESS OF BERLIN FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE ANGLOPHONE HISTORIOGRAPHY

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Abstract: The Congress of Berlin is one of the most important diplomatic events that occurred in Europe and especially on the Balkans. Since it happened, it has been studied and analyzed until today. Its consequences are still fresh in this part of Europe. In this paper, we will see the causes that have occurred by the holding of this congress from the viewpoint of the Anglophone historiography. First, we will see the origin of the Eastern Question at the Anglophone historiography, what it means, when it started and how it is important to understand their approach to this issue from different viewpoints. Further on we will see the continuities of the Eastern Questions between them, especially between the Crimea War and the crisis of 1875-1878 and how this last one was a continuity of the Crimea crisis. Then we will see how this crisis went, the diplomatic developments for its solution until the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878 and its outcome – the Treaty of Saint Stefano. I have finished this paper by looking at the reaction of the Great Powers of this treaty and their agreement for its full review in a European congress.

Keywords: The Congress of Berlin, The Anglophone historiography, the Eastern Question, diplomacy movements.

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The Eastern Question

The Eastern Question is a historical question, which the Great Powers have been faced with for a long time. When the Great Powers such as Great Britain, The Russian Empire or The Habsburg Monarchy started to face the Eastern Question, there isn't a unified thought among the Anglophone historiography authors. The thought that dominates by the majority of them it started in the 18th Century, precisely after The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca of 1774. (Macfie, 1989: 3) However, some authors think that the beginning of the Eastern Question started earlier. Some of them consider the 14th Century as a starting point when the Turks first set foot on the Balkan Peninsula, (Agoston & Masters, 2009: 191). The others had gone deeper in history when they linked it since the ancient times until the Austro - Serbian conflict of 1914, which caused the World War I (Coolidge, 1917: 65). According to this author, we have the clash between Europe and Asia, which I think this opinion is far from the reality. Because of the huge historical, cultural and religious changes that had taken place from antiquity until modern times, it is very difficult to have this kind of continuity. Therefore, I think that the initial thought of the authors mentioned earlier is more accurate than the one mentioned by the others. Until this time, we can say that the Ottoman Empire was a Great Power, but after the Austrian Wars in 1699 and especially after the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, her position as a great power has been shifted, which means it started to gradually fall, and the Great Powers gradually started thinking and taking action of how to deal with the Eastern Question. There is no surprise that in this time, precisely in February 1852, the Russian Tsar Nicholas the First told the British Ambassador Hamilton Seymour at Petrograd: "I repeat to you that the sick man is dying, and we can never allow such an event to take us by surprise. We must come to some understanding". (Oakes et al., 1918: 162; Seton-Watson, 1917: 96-97) When talking about the anticipation of the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire by the Great Powers, it should be emphasized that this policy was not the innovation of the 19th Century the Great Powers had begun to anticipate the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire a century before the Great Eastern Crisis. Since the 18th Century, Paris, London, Vienna and St Petersburg maintained operational plans to deal with convulsions in the East. Prussia was the one power that showed little interest in the region throughout the 19th Century France and especially Britain were prepared to use diplomatic and military methods to keep the sick man alive. Russia and Austria-Hungary were open to the idea of dividing his Ottoman spoils. (Glenny, 2012: 127)



Anyway, here it is not the place to analyze this historiographic debate but it is a simple summarize regarding the Eastern Question's notion.

From my studies that I did of the Anglophone authors, I noticed two important elements when they talked about The Eastern Question.

First – there were more than few authors who referred to the Eastern Question with another name: the Near Eastern, regardless that it was in Europe, Asia or Africa. (Medlicott, 1963: 1; Langer, 1956: 59)

I think that this tells a lot because it means that when the Ottoman Empire was talked about, it has been seen as a whole, regardless that it was in the Balkans (Europe), Anatolia (Asia) or Egypt (Africa). In this sense, they saw it as a whole, regardless that geographically the Balkans is a part of Europe, instead in their view it was not considered as such. I think that this was “normal” for them because in the policy of the 19th Century, according to them the Balkans were not European. The Balkans it was seen differently because it has been distinguished from the culture and religious aspects (even though the majority of the Balkans were Christians). Enough argue for this is the contemptuous way of Bismarck talking for the Balkans and the Orient that: “for Germany the whole Eastern Question was not worth the bones of one Pomeranian grenadier”. (Coolidge, 1917: 112; Glenny, 2012: 143)

Second – the second element maybe more important than the first one is that, when they talk about the Eastern Question every time the Eastern Crisis occurred, the second element maybe more important than the first and that is that they saw them as a continuity with each other, regardless of space and time. Therefore, when a crisis has risen, the Eastern Question wouldn't addressed but only a solution for the crisis itself would be put in place, every time. As a result, those solutions have been short term and when the new crisis would occur, it would be a continuity of the preliminary crisis, the only difference was the time and place. For example, the Crimea War, which was finished by the Treaty of Paris (1856), all the authors has emphasized that it was a short time solution of that crisis, and was expected that the pretended peace will not be long term, and therefore, it did not take a long time until the next crisis between 1875-1878 which was crowned by the Congress of Berlin. (Taylor, 1954: 228; Rich, 1970: 51; Dawson, 1919: 119)

Before we begin to talk about the comparison between the Crimea (1856) and the Crisis of 1875-1878, while discussing the concept of the Eastern Question, I think that we should mention another important element.



By analyzing the viewpoints of the Anglophone historiography about the Eastern Question, what have they discussed, how they have treated, analyzed and studied this issue, we uncover their approach to this historical issue.

1) From what I have noticed from my studies, for this topic, is that the Anglophone historiography's authors approached from these viewpoints:

2) From the Ottoman Empire history viewpoint (Kinross, 1977; Quataert, 2005; Shaw, S., & Shaw, 1977; Miller, 1913)

3) From the Great Powers history viewpoint (Taylor, 1948; Clayton, 1971; LeDonne, 1997)

4) From the Balkans history viewpoint (Jelavich, 1995; Stavrianos, 1958; Glenny, 2012) and

From the political developments of the time viewpoint. (Taylor, 1954; Remak, 1967; Bridge & Bullen, 2005)

Someone may ask why is this important to emphasize?

It is important because precisely from the content or topics they have talked about in their studies, they gave their evaluation, conclusions, and results for the topic we are talking about. The question is - were the crisis and the results of the Eastern Question which all authors have discussed and evaluated in relation to the Ottoman Empire positive or negative? Whether or not they have impacted in solving the problem, we should see their results in their studies.

Also were the results which were determined by the discussion and the evaluation of the authors of the Great Powers viewpoint and given in the interest of the Great Powers, positive or negative?

The same we can say from the Balkans people history viewpoint, how they resulted in the relation with them.

Therefore, when we consider the Anglophone authors' discussions, studies and results, I think, we have a right, real and objective overview in relation with the Eastern Question.

Treaty of Paris (1856) and the Eastern Crisis (1875 – 1878)

As I mentioned above, the connectivity of the Eastern Question has an



important place amongst all authors regardless of time or geographical difference. Therefore, the Crimea Crisis concluded by the Treaty of Paris (1856) and the crisis of 1875-1878 which concluded by the Congress of Berlin (1878), are undivided continuity of the Eastern Question. But, which point according to the authors has made this connection?

As here is not the place to talk about the Crimea's War, its developments and results, which was the Peace Conference of Paris 1856 we will not go into details. However, at the Treaty of Paris, there is an article which the majority of authors that I have noticed in my studies, has concluded that the Eastern Question appears again. Which article was that?

The Treaty of Paris, was among the greatest victories of the Western Powers over Russia, a victory that brought her to her knees.

The Treaty that Russia was coerced to sign was based on the famous 'The Four Points of Vienna', which has been defined during the war.

What were those four points:

1) The Russian protectorate of the principalities were replaced by a European guarantee;

2) The navigation of the Danube were freed;

3) The Straits convention of 1841 were revised "in the interests of the Balance of Power in Europe"

4) The Russians abandoned their claim to a protectorate over the Christian subjects of Turkey and instead the five Great Powers obtained from the Turkish government security for the Christians. (Taylor, 1954: 65-66; Marriott, 1917: 241; Jelavich, 1964: 129-130; Albrecht-Carrié, 1958: 92)

It was these four points that formed the basis of signing 'The Treaty of Paris' March 30 1856, which says in the third article: "The Black Sea was neutralized, its waters and ports were to be open to the mercantile marine of every nation, but permanently 'interdicted to the flag of war', and there were to be no arsenals, either Russian or Turkish, on its coasts". (Marriott, 1917: 246)

The article that has brought Russia to her knees according to all the authors was about the demilitarization of the Russian marines on the Black Sea. (Palmer, 1994: 128; Jelavich, 1991: 138-140; Agoston & Masters, 2009: 497; Jelavich, 1964: 129-130; Albrecht-Carrié, 1958: 92) This was really bitterly and



harsh for the Russians, as we can clearly understand from the Gorchakov's words: "I am looking for a man who will annul the clauses of 'The Treaty of Paris', concerning the Black Sea question and the Bessarabian frontier; I am looking for him and I shall find him". (Taylor, 1954: 91)

This statement of Gorchakov was powerful, but as we will see later, he will find such a man.

The Black Sea's clause was unprecedented and was (as Gladstone actually considered it at the time) a deliberate and perhaps unwise humiliation of Russia. (Clayton, 1971: 114)

However, not all the authors has considered it a victory of the Westerns over Russia, more precisely, has considered the Paris's articles over Russia as a clever action, but also as unwise:

" The Paris settlement was a great geopolitical victory, but it was also unwise because it humiliated a greater power, and a great power always possesses the potential to take its revenge ". (LeDonne, 1997: 321)

Judging from the above-mentioned the Gorchakov's statement and the developments that occurred after, we cannot say an unfair conclusion of the author LeDonne.

Looking from these developments, according to the Anglophone authors, what was the result of the Crimea War and "The Treaty of Paris" for Russia:

"For Russia the war had been a decisive defeat, and the congress was a setback without parallel. Therefore Russian policy after the congress of Paris had a singleness of purpose lacking in that of other Powers; it was an attempt on the revision of the treaty of Paris to the exclusion of all others. Before 1854, Russia had perhaps neglected her national interests for the sake of general European concerns now, as for fifteen years, she neglected everything in Europe for the sake of her national interests, or rather for the sake of her national honour. In the 18th Century, and even in the early 19th Century, the Black Sea and the Near East had been the decisive sphere of Russia's imperial ambitions, but they were ceasing to be so. Russia's imperial future lay in Asia and her only concern in the Black Sea was its defence. The Balkans offered trivial prizes compared to those of central Asia and the Far East." (Taylor, 1954: 90-91)



This treaty too, has caused three negative elements for Russia according to the famous researcher Barbara Jelavich:

First – the demilitarization of the Black Sea, which means that Russia could not put or send warships into the Black Sea and therefore cannot control not only over its Black Sea coast, but also over the Caucasian, and indirectly, the Central Asian lands.

Second – its relationship with the Port because it could no longer use the threat of a land invasion or a naval operation directed against Constantinople.

Third – the relationship with the Balkan Christians was even more deeply affected. The treaty specifically transferred the former Russian rights of protection in the Principalities and Serbia to the Great Powers, collectively; the claims for a special relationship with the Orthodox were blocked by the section of the agreement concerning outside interference in the relations between the sultan and his subjects. Nicholas the First had feared the possibility that Britain would take from him the role of the champion of the Balkan nationalities. (Jelavich, 1991: 140-141)

This goal of Britain (the nullification of the demilitarization's article) had been put in action with all her arsenals, especially after the point of Gorchakov as Foreign Minister in May 1856. As we mentioned above, he did everything to find his man who will achieve his diplomatic aim, and finally he found him.

The new developments after the Treaty of Paris, in general view, were in the line with the Russian diplomatic aim. The coming wars that occurred in Europe after the Crimea War and the most important Franco- Prussian war of 1870, were a glorious opportunity for the Russian diplomacy. The victory of Prussia gave the convenience when on the 30th of October 1870 Gorchakov denounced the Black Sea provisions in a circular note to the powers. Britain as her biggest enemy was unable to oppose it, because her allies from Crimea were not in the same line. France has been defeated and was not able to help her in any eventual action, as it did in Crimea. On the other side, Prussia now - United Germany with chancellor Bismarck, did not hesitate to support Gorchakov's request and further saw it as a compensation for Russia's help of neutrality in her wars against Austria and France. This neutrality was crucial for Bismarck's victories, So that he does not oppose his counterpart's unilateral action. Therefore, Britain was left alone, and in the Conference of London in January 1871, the Great Powers had approved the



Russian's unilateral action for denunciation of the clauses of the Paris Treaty of 1856. (Oakes et al., 1918: 312-313; Jelavich, 1995: 352; Jelavich, 1964: 129-130 & 157; Albrecht-Carrié, 1958: 140)

It was a huge diplomatic win of Gorchakov, but once again, it did not solve the Eastern Question. The Eastern Question remained open again and the outbreak of a new crisis will be unavoidable.

Another important article of the Paris Treaty was the article seven by which the Sublime Porte has been admitted as membership in the Concert of Europe. This was done with the only aim - that by recognizing Porte as Concert's member, it will respect the independence and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and it will cut off the Russian's possibility for causing new conflicts, especially in the Balkans, even though this Concert admission has been viewed as a dubious privilege of membership. (Oakes et al., 1918: 163; Jelavich, C., & Jelavich, 2000: 107-108; Jelavich, 1991: 138-140; Stavrianos, 1958: 393-394; Glenny, 2012: 84; Albrecht-Carrié, 1958: 93)

The Treaty of Paris was done with one simple aim in mind - stopping and holding back of Russia in the Black Sea zone, even losing its privileges that it had over the Principalities and Slave places in the Balkans, which eventually led to the loss of all her privileges that had gained earlier during the Ottoman Empire. It should also be emphasized that the Crimea War according to the Anglophone authors, caused more deaths itself than any other conflict between 1815 and 1914. The war was costly for the Great Powers, especially for Britain and Russia, but as Lord Aberdeen had predicted, the Crimean war might protect the peace in Europe for the next 25 years disturbances by the Eastern Question which in the end, it was exactly what happened. When we are talking about this topic, I want to quote the Lord Cromer's saying regarding the Crimean War - "Had it not been for the Crimean War and the policy subsequently adopted by Lord Beaconsfield's Government, the independence of the Balkan States would never have been achieved, and the Russians would now be in possession of Constantinople". (Marriott, 1917: 222; Jelavich, C., & Jelavich, 2000: 107-108; Jelavich, 1991: 138-140; Agoston & Masters, 2009: 497; Craig & George, 1983: 36; Rich, 1970: 51; Albrecht-Carrié, 1958: 93; Dawson, 1919: 119)

From this quote also, we clearly see our hypothesis mentioned above connectivity between the eastern questions themselves. One way or another, Crimea has caused the new Eastern Crisis from 1875 until 1878.



As a coincidence, the years of crises extension are the same, three years of Crimea (1853-1856) and of the Balkans (1875-1878).

The Balkan Crisis (1875-1878) and the Treaty of Saint Stefano

Lord Aberdeen's prediction that the treaty of Paris will guarantee peace in Europe for 25 years turned out to be right. If we see all the Eastern Crises from a general viewpoint, we will see that all of them have dealt with the concrete issue of the problem in question. Therefore, it was never intended that the Caused would solve the Eastern Question altogether. The same logic continued with the Crimean War too. Its solution concretized with the Treaty of Paris, has only solved the war and not the whole Eastern Question. Maybe, having experienced the earlier crises, like Lord Aberdeen has predicted.

In the 70s of the 19th Century a new reality came in Europe.. The German Unification meant that now the continental power would be Germany, led by chancellor Otto Von Bismarck, who after securing the unification of Germany which created an internal stability, now he needed an external stability too, by which he would strengthen his reign and would put Germany as a continental power. What was the external stability that he needed? Balance of Power between the Great Powers, which means that neither power would gain power (especially military power) that would weaken another power. The danger of this result would be fatal for Germany. Her geographic position, laid between two big monarchies: the Russian Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, will be permanently threatening for Germany. Therefore, in order for Bismarck to avoid this permanent threat needed to create an alliance with them. Therefore, he established the League of the Three Emperors (germ. Dreikaiserbund) in 1873. This league would be functional and fruitful as long as none of its member's interest was violated from the other side. The fear from this reality has shown with the beginning of the Bosnia's revolt of 1875, which in the Dreikaiserbund's plans meant conflict of interests between Russia and Austria. The appearance of the Bosnian crisis has shown the weakened side of this league, meaning non-full unification of its members.

The beginning of the Bosnian revolt of 1878 from the Christians villagers over misrules caused by the Muslims Turkish leaders, which in the history of these lands it was not newness, as even in the earlier times there's been



Christian uprisings over Muslims, (Jelavich, C., & Jelavich, 2000: 99-100) although this one would take another dimension and extension as it won't be just another local uprising.

When we talk about the circumstances that urged this local Christians to revolt, we would see that according to the Anglophone authors the main circumstance was what I mentioned above, misrules and mistreatment of the Christian race (Ensor, 1975: 41) yet another important circumstance that urge the revolting was without doubt the external factor that we can split in two groups:

1) The Pan-Slavism factor which had also taken roots on the Balkans feeding the nationalist idea to the local population (Taylor, 1954: 229; Palmer, 1994: 140; Coolidge, 1917: 79-82; Agoston & Masters, 2009: 497; Remak, 1967: 8; Stavrianos, 1958: 397-398; Jelavich, 1964: 174; Jelavich, 1969: 114). Even though some authors have said that the importance of the Pan-Slavism movement has sometimes been exaggerated to a degree, it could be no more than a convenient tool and a blind for the designs of a Russian expansionism. (Albrecht-Carrié, 1958: 168)

2) Another important circumstance, not as determined as the first one, but also which cannot be considered as worthless, was the tour by the Austrian Emperor Francis Joseph in Dalmatia in the spring of 1875, when he did not hesitate to support the local population over the ottoman's reign. (Clayton, 1971: 130; Stavrianos, 1958: 399)

No matter how we consider the root cause that pushed them into the revolt, the external factor with particular emphasis on that Pan-Slavism is very important.

After the outbreak of the Bosnian revolt in 1875, what was the reaction of the Great Powers?

It is a question which the Anglophone authors had handled with big attention, because the Great Powers were always those who decided the fate of every crisis that arose and the way they would resolve it.

From the Great Powers, the one who was the most concerned from the beginning of this revolt was undoubtedly the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. According to Anglophone researches, why was the Austro- Hungarian Monarchy so much concerned.



Regarding the outbreak of the Bosnian revolt, there were two main causes, which were of concern to the Austro- Hungarian Monarchy:

1) The outbreak of the revolt on its borderline was undoubtedly bad news for them. Because in addition to the beginning of the increase in the influx of Slavs refugees to its border, the danger of increasing the number of Slavs in the monarchy began to be noticeable. Therefore, for two nations: German and Hungarian, this was seen with a concern. (Clayton, 1971: 132; Seton-Watson, 1945: 513; Coolidge, 1917: 103) Andrassy himself too was known as pro-Turkish and anti-Slav.(Bridge & Bullen, 2005: 199-200)

2) The subsequent danger of the creation or establishment of a new Slav state along its border perhaps was even greater than the first cause. The establishment of the new Slav state meant that the Slav people who were under its reign such as the Croats would do their best to join the new state and thus its weakening would begin. Also the establishment of the new Slav state meant that its main economic sources would pass under a new state, which in fact was not in the interest to the Slav state. As some authors say that its economic fear was bigger than the political one. (Bridge & Bullen, 2005: 199-200)

These two main causes helped the Dualist Monarchy see the danger of the beginning of the revolt in Bosnia, therefore, she did the best she could to “localize” the revolt as much as possible, in order to not take the wave of extension in other parts of the Balkans, but it did.

When we are at this point, I should mention a quote from Andrassy, which I think the authors were absolutely right to mention, the quote by which we understand clearer how important the maintaining of the status- quos for the Dualist Monarchy.

“If it were not for Turkey, all these (nationalistic) inspirations would fall down on our heads... If a new state should be formed there (i.e. in the Balkans), we should be ruined and should ourselves assume the role of ‘the Sick Man”. (Taylor, 1948: 151; Taylor, 1954: 231)

Looking at this great threat for the future of his country, as we shall see below, Andrassy began his diplomatic steps to find the best and quickest solution of the issue.

Another Great Power who always had interests in the Balkans and carefully followed the development that happened there was undoubtedly



the Russian Empire.

It is true that the Russian Empire took a lesson from the Crimean War, therefore, at the beginning of the revolt it was not very much pro-requests of rebels, even that as I mentioned above, the Pan-Slavism movement was the one who encouraged them to revolt. The Pan-Slavism movement established in Moscow was a movement that very much gathered younger students from Balkans like Bulgaria, Serbia etc, in indoctrinating them for their only aim - the unification of the Balkan Slavs into a single state under the tutelage of Russian Empire. (Jelavich, 1964: 174)

Many authors emphasize that the Pan-Slavism movement has not been in an official state line, so they did not have their support. (Taylor, 1954: 229-231; Bridge & Bullen, 2005: 200) However, this does not mean that the state officials were not aware of their actions. The fact that even the Russian ambassador Nikolay Ignatiev in Istanbul, did not stop their activities, a plan-Slav, tells that tacitly they supported their actions, but the experienced "shock" in Crimea, has prevented the emperor Alexander II from repeating the previous mistake, therefore, they were more careful in their actions, and wanted to solve the issue with their partner from the Dreikaiserbund – especially with Austria. Bismarck was the happiest if his partners would agree to solve the Eastern Question together. So far it has gone on to propose to divide the Balkans in two parts.

Another Great Power who was not directly interested in the Balkans but feared of a possibility of strengthening Russia in those areas was Great Britain. At the beginning, as always, Britain stood neutral, without being directly involved. When the situation started to get worse, especially after the Bulgarian atrocities and the Gladstone's pamphlet, the country started to deal much more with the Eastern Question. (Bridge & Bullen, 2005: 198-199; Palmer, 1994: 146-147; Coolidge, 1917: 105-107; Webb, 1968: 347)

Germany, as another Great Power, never showed any interest for the Balkans. Bismarck just tried to keep away his "friends" from a possible conflict between each other, and by playing the role of "the honest broker", he tried to find an agreeable solution for both sides. (Quataert, 2005: 58-59)

According to the Anglophone authors, after the outbreak of revolt in Bosnia in 1875, what actions were taken by the European diplomacy to stop it and to prevent it from spreading?



The first action that they took was the so-called “the consular mission”, an initiative by the Austrian’s Foreign Minister, Andrassy.

He first proposed that Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Russia should instruct their consuls to try to settle the revolt on the spot. This was turning the League of the Three Emperors to good use; the Russian would be pinioned to a safe conservative course with a German on one side and an Austrian on the other. The scheme was destroyed by a French expostulations at St. Petersburg. Dacezes wished to assert the prestige of France as a Great Power. The Russians, on their side, wanted to be free to play off the French against Germany; besides, they feared that, if they rebuffed Decazes, he would turn to England and recreate the alliance of the Crimean war. On the 14th of August, the French were invited to join the consular mission. This involved inviting also, the two remaining Great Powers Great Britain and Italy. The Italians were even more eager than the French to be treated as a Great Power, they would tail along with anyone who would recognize them as such. (Taylor, 1954: 233)

The British attitude was a different matter. Derby was the most isolationist Foreign Secretary that Great Britain has known. He hated action. Besides, “one can trust none of these Governments”, The Prime Minister – Disraeli, wanted to pull off some great stroke policy, though he did not know exactly what. He prided himself on his knowledge of the Near East, based on a visit to Palestine forty years prior. Like Metternich, whom he once acknowledged as his master, hoped that the Balkan troubles would “burn themselves out beyond the pale of civilization”; and he dismissed all stories of Turkish misrule and atrocities as plain gossip. Any attempt for improving the condition of the Balkan Slavs made him fear the example nearer home; he complained in October, “Autonomy for Ireland would be less absurd”. Ostensibly as a pupil of Metternich’s, his only practical aim was somehow to disrupt the League of the Three Emperors, which he regarded as an affront to British prestige. The British government would have preferred to reject the Russian invitation. They joined the mission of the consuls, only on Turkish prompting, and their sole object was to protect Turkish interests. Already, by August 1875, the League of the Three Emperors had been watered down, but the Concert of Europe was not taking its place. The mission of the consuls was a failure. (Taylor, 1954: 234)

The failure of the consular mission resulted in another diplomatic action from the Great Powers, the action that is known in historiography as “The



Andrassy Note". According to the authors, what did this note contain?

The Andrassy Note was another attempt from the Austrian Foreign Ministry Andrassy in cooperation with his Russian's counterpart Gorchakov, who proposed reforms to the Sublime Ports, which they accepted, however the rebels did not. Those reforms were as follows:

- 1) The establishment of full religious liberty and equality of sects;
- 2) The abolition of tax-farming;
- 3) The application of revenues gathered in Bosnia and Herzegovina entirely for local purposes, and their distribution by local assemblies composed half of Christians and half of Muslims, elected by the inhabitants;
- 4) The amelioration of the condition of the agricultural population. (Marriott, 1917: 286; Duggan, 1902: 130-131)

At the beginning, Andrassy has sent the note to the European chancelleries for coordination of actions. According to the author, Paris and Rome immediately joined, while London hesitated at the beginning, but later joined. Bismarck himself did not deal with the note, although he supported his counterparts. (Marriott, 1917: 287; Albrecht-Carrié, 1958: 259-260; Lodge, 1914: 748-749; Bridge & Bullen, 2005: 201)

The Andrassy Note did not make any solution because as I mentioned above, the rebels refused, however, the diplomatic attempts did not stop.

After this failure, Bismarck started to be more active in solving the issue, and in Berlin together with his counterparts Gorchakov and Andrassy formulated "The Berlin Memorandum", which was much more severe than the Andrassy note. It required that:

- 1) The Sultan rebuild all the houses destroyed in the revolted countries, furnish the peasants with cattle and implements, and exempt them for three years from the taxation;
- 2) Establish a Christian commission for the distribution of this aid;
- 3) Withdraw the Turkish troops except in specified places;
- 4) Authorize the Christians to remain armed until the reforms were affected; and



5) Delegate a supervision of the execution of the reforms to the consuls of the powers.

Moreover, the memorandum demanded that an armistice of two months be granted, and declared that, if at the expiration of that time the desired end had not been accomplished, the powers would resort to efficacious measures "to arrest the evil and prevent its development." (Duggan, 1902: 131-132)

This memorandum same as the Andrassy Note was sent to European chancelleries. Paris and Rome agreed but London did not, even though it roughly opposed it by saying (Disraeli) that: "England has been treated as though it were Montenegro or Bosnia". Seeing the British opposition, the Sublime Porte refused the memorandum and another diplomatic attempt failed. (Taylor, 1954: 236-237; Duggan, 1902: 131-132; Coolidge, 1917: 84-86; Jelavich, 1995: 354; Lodge, 1914: 749; Kinross, 1977: 517; Jelavich, 1969: 116)

When we are talking about the British rejecting the memorandum, the conclusion of R.C.K. Ensor should be mentioned, where according to him what pushed Britain, respectively the Prime Minister Disraeli not to accept the memorandum, primarily because of fear from Russia. She was behind the Berlin memorandum, two men, Gorchakov and Bismarck, whom he deeply distrusted and who had once before caballed to trick England over the Black Sea clauses. Linked with them was Andrassy whom he (rightly enough) regarded as an intriguer playing a double game". (Ensor, 1975: 43)

While diplomatic attempts of powers were not solving the problem, the situation on the ground took a different direction. In the spring of 1876, an uprising broke out in Bulgaria known as the April Uprising, which will change the consequences of history and even international attitudes. The suppression of the uprising by the Ottoman forces did a huge echo at the European press, which has been transmitted as "The Bulgarian atrocities", as Gladstone would write in his famous pamphlet, which he called "The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of East". His pamphlet has been sold in the record number, 40 000 copies in one week, translated in Russian and was sold in the record number in Moscow 10 000 copies per month. (Palmer, 1994: 146-147; Coolidge, 1917: 105-107; Webb, 1968: 347; Ensor, 1975: 45)

When we talk about the pamphlet, it is important to emphasize what Gladstone wrote about Bulgaria, 20 years later: "from that time forward, till the final consummation in 1879-80, I made the Eastern Question the main



business of my life". (Ensor, 1975: 45) From his affirmation, we clearly see that the new troubles in the Balkans which he utilized for his policies, were not because he was that much "worried" or "disappointed" of what was happening in the Balkans.

This changed attitude of England was mostly suitable for Russia, which now has free hands to take any action and needed to only agree with her allies from the Dreikaiserbund, Austria. To achieve this, its Foreign Minister Gorchakov and his Austrian counterpart Andrassy had met in Reichstadt on July 8, 1876 and agreed on two main points:

1) What would their action be in case of a victory of the Ottoman Empire over Serbia and Montenegro;

2) How they would divide the Ottoman territories in Europe, in case of a victory of the Balkan states.

As for the first one, Russia would not be allowed to benefit from the victory in which case would remain *status quo ante bellum*, while if the victory belongs to the Balkan states, then Russia would recover Bessarabia, which has been taken away in 1856. Austria-Hungary would acquire some or all of Bosnia, Istanbul was to become a free city, and Bulgaria, Rumelia and perhaps Albania, would become autonomous or independent. (Taylor, 1954: 237; Coolidge, 1917: 95-96; Jelavich, 1995: 355; Stavrianos, 1958: 404-405; Albrecht-Carrié, 1958: 170)

Regarding this moral agreement, the famous historian Taylor said about Russia:

"There was nothing new in this programme. Gorchakov was still obsessed with the "humiliation" of 1856, hence the demand for Bessarabia, in return for this he had always been willing to let Austria-Hungary have a slice of Bosnia. The Reichstadt agreement was not the prelude to a Pan-Slav policy, it did not even try to apply the policy of partition which Bismarck recommended. It was rather an effort to carry out the Austro-Russian promise made in June 1873 that if differences arose, they would settle them amicably. By its means, Andrassy and Gorchakov still hoped to turn their back on the Eastern Question, and not to get themselves involved. The agreement was, in fact, the last splutter of the Austro-Russian entente, and not the prelude to the Russo-Turkish war". (Taylor, 1954: 237-238) Regarding with Austro-Hungary he said: "this (the limitation of aims) was the object of Zakupy (Reichstadt)



agreement of 1876, (Taylor, 1948: 152) a greater deterrent of Russia toward the Balkans.

In summary, the Reichstadt agreement was a balance of interests between Russia and Austria. (Jelavich, C., & Jelavich, 2000: 147-148)

The defeat of Serbia and Montenegro, made Gochakov's plans fail but he did not lose his hope. Russia willing not to repeat Crimea's mistakes started a new policy of solving it through the likes of a New European Concert, including Britain. Its aims were achieved when the English Foreign Secretary Derby (Edward Henry Stanley, 15th Eearly of Derby), on November 1876, has proposed to call for a European conference known in historiography as "The Constantinople Conference", and held from 23rd December 1876 until 20 January 1877.

All the Great Powers have participated in this conference. On this conference, it has been agreed a sweeping of reforms, a principal which was to be an autonomous 'Bulgaria', divided into two parts by a North-South (vertical) line. The Turks at once rejected these reforms. While attending the conference, a loud booming of a cannon caused the delegates to exchange astonished glances. In great excitement, their Turkish colleagues (Mithad Pasha) explained that the joyous salvos of artillery commemorated the issuance by the Sultan of a Constitution, which includes the requests of the Great Powers, for freedom and equality regardless of religion or ethnicity, and therefore, the Sultan's representatives argued that the conference had become a superfluous irrelevancy. Therefore, the Constantinople Conference did not achieve its aims, (Taylor, 1954: 241-242; Palmer, 1994: 147-148; Schevill, 1991: 399) but did not stop Russia in her way to declare the war on the Sublime Porte.

When we talk about the Ottoman Empire's rejection, respectively of her representative Mithat Pasha, it should be mentioned the diplomatic tool that he used, 'the tool of drafting the constitution', by which he could resist the strong requests of the European Powers, as well as having approval of the Sultan. This smart diplomatic movement of Mithat Pasha, Ensor describes it in this way:

"The young ottoman leader, Midhat Pasha was now in power, and had induced Abdulhamid to grant a constitution. Undercover, he fought the powers with the usual weapons of the Turkish procrastination; and finally, when the Sultan himself favored accepting their programme it prevailed



on the Turkish grand council to reject it. Two motives stiffened Midhat, he believed that the Russian government (with reason, as the event showed) would shrink from engaging its army; and he was not convinced that, when Salisbury threatened leaving Turkey to her fate, he represented the real intention of the British government. For the latter disastrous illusion, Elliott (the British ambassador in Istanbul - F.P.) and some of his subordinates were in part to blame. There is no evidence that it was Lord Beaconsfield though some passages in his letters show that he was far from understanding or sympathizing with every step in Salisbury's masterly negotiations". (Ensor, 1975: 46)

The Constantinople Conference was the last chance to solve this crisis in a peaceful way. (Stavrianos, 1958: 405)

The failure of the conference, according to many authors, was the last step before the declaration of war from Russia. Therefore as the last ever chance of solving it in a peaceful way before the declaration of war, was the London Protocol. With this protocol, even though Russia had not secured a mandate from Europe to act against the Turks, they had made it certain that a European mandate would not be exercised against them. Not even Beaconsfield could condemn the Russians for going to war in order to execute a programme, which the British government had helped draft. (Taylor, 1954: 241-242)

To feel free and without pressing in the already inevitable war, the Russians did the last step of her security, which was to ensure the neutrality of Austria and they did it by signing two agreements with the Austrians, known in historiography as "The Budapest conventions". (Taylor, 1954: 242-243; Jelavich, C., & Jelavich, 2000: 148; Albrecht-Carrié, 1958: 171)

Russia has paved the way to declare the war and was free to destroy the Turkish Empire without interference if they were strong enough to do so and did it quickly, as the historian Taylor said, (Taylor, 1954: 243), but her plan for quick and easy victory was not achieved as planned, because the failure to pass Plevna (in Bulgaria) changed the course of history.

The defense of Plevna's fortress changed the political circumstances at the time. Its defense of four months from the commander Osman Pasha made a huge impact on Europe, even in England the course changed from horrors to heroes. The four months of resistance, not merely gave the Ottoman Empire another forty years of life. In the second half of the 20th



Century, the Turks still control the Straits, and Russia is still 'imprisoned' in the Black Sea. (Taylor, 1954: 243-247)

However, after four months of resistance, Osman Pasha on December 10 1877 was coerced to surrender because of starving and decimated troops. (Schevill, 1991: 400)

The historical defense of Plevna in the Anglophone historiography has been mentioned in the superlative. It was considered as one of the great battles of the 19th Century, (Coolidge, 1917: 122) and one of which the Turkish had every reason to feel proud. (Langer, 1956: 121)

The fall of Plevna has paved the way to Russia for further march. The conquer of Edirne was fatal. The Russian army headed to Istanbul and they were seen not far from it. Feeling of losing, the Turks and the Russians signed the Treaty of San Stefano on March 3, 1878. (Palmer, 1994: 155; Seton-Watson, 1917: 107; Jelavich, 1964: 181)

When we talk about the accepted terms of San Stefano from the Ottomans, without any great resistance (for instance for Big Bulgaria), the famous historian Taylor (except the known reason the fear of taking of Istanbul), he mentioned another reason that "pushed" the Sublime Porte to easily accept this treaty. According to him, "the Turks realized that Big Bulgaria would provoke an opposition from other powers; and therefore accepted the peace of San Stefano, signed on 3 March, with every confidence that it would soon be overthrown". (Taylor, 1978: 547)

The San Stefano's articles provoke harsh reactions from the Great Powers, with emphasis on Austria and Britain. Because the creation of Big Bulgaria, merely, has been seen as the creation of a Russian satellite. The big pressing on Russia, and the fear of a second Crimea, made to surrender to the Great Powers and accept an agreement for allowing a thorough revising of the Treaty at a European congress, agreed to be held in Berlin.

Conclusion

The Eastern Question is a historical question, which has a very important place in the Anglophone historiography. Not only for the Anglophone researches, but for the politicians at the time too. The Eastern Question meant internal questions of the Sublime Porte and its problems despite of place and time. It is important to emphasize this, because by this definition,



it was the same for them even though the problem was on the Balkans (Europe), Anatolia (Asia) and Egypt (Africa), the problems were by timing separated. Therefore, at their perceptions, we see the continuity of the question in space and time. Starting by this continuity, we can see that the last two Eastern Questions: the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the crisis of 1875-1878, are in the conditions. The Peace of Paris (1856) has solved just the Crimean War, not all the Eastern Question, and seeing from this viewpoint we easily understand the prediction of the Lord Aberdeen about the length of this peace by 25 years.

The Paris's articles were offensive for Russia, especially the Black Sea clause. The nullification of that article started to be the main policy of the Gorchakov - the Foreign Ministry of Russia and has committed to do anything to null it, but to do this, he needed a statesman to help and support him, and fortunately, he found him. In Europe during the 70s of the 19th Century, great changes happened in diplomacy and in policy. The continental power became Germany after its unification under the reign of Otto von Bismarck. His victories over Austria and France were a tremendous achievement in the external policies. In his wars, he needed neutrality from Russia, which Gorchakov gave. Now in return, Bismarck did not oppose Gorchakov's action of nullification of the Paris clause when he sent a circular to all the Great Powers. Great Britain now alone after her allies from the Crimea – France – had been defeated, could not do anything to stop Gorchakov, and was forced to accept the Gorchakov's action. Bismarck now needed to keep Europe in peace, not allowing to fall in a Pan-European war. To avoid it, he established the League of the Three Emperors (Dreikaiserbund) in 1873 together with Austria and Russia. But, unfortunately this league has a big weakness, a weakness that will be her Achilles' heel. Its weakness was the Balkan because Austria and Russia had opposite interests in relation to it. The Bosnian revolt shows in reality the weakness of this league.

The diplomatic attempts of Andrassy and Gorchakov to solve the problem peacefully were not successful. The Andrassy Note and the Berlin Memorandum did not give any results. At first, the Ottoman Empire accepted its terms but the insurgents did not, later it was refused strongly by Great Britain and then by the Ottoman Empire. The new developments of the next spring of 1876 in the Balkans has changed the Great Powers' approach for the Balkans question. The April Uprising in Bulgaria had made a huge echo at the European press at the time. "The Bulgarian atrocities"



covered all the European presses of that time, especially in England and Russia. England now changed her position from the Turkish-phile to Turkish-phobe, and helped Gladstone to write his famous pamphlet, which has a huge impact not just in London but also in Moscow. Even in the years later,, Gladstone did not hesitate to accept that: "From that time forward, till the final consummation in 1879-80, I made the Eastern Question the main business of my life".

This largely changed attitude of England was mostly suited for Russia, because it realized that even in the event of any war against the Ottoman Empire, there would not be any obstacle from England. Therefore, Gorchakov had free hands to take actions. The last important actions that he did before declaring the war was an agreement with Austria, known as the Budapest Convent, by which it secured Austria's neutrality in the war. Therefore, in April 1877 Russia declared the over. The victory from Russia was expected to be achieve fast and easy, but that did not happen. Their plans changed in Plevna when they could not take the fortress until the winter of 1877. This big protection was seen with great admiration especially in England when now the opinion changed from the Turkish-phobe to the Turkish-phile. The surrender of Plevna has paved the way for Russian marching at Istanbul. The protection of Plevna is considering by the Anglophone researchers as one of the greatest and magnificent wars of the 19th Century, the battle that changed the course of history and gave the Ottoman Empire longevity in Europe for almost half a century. The Russian marching, rose fear at the Ottoman camp which accepted the armistice, signed on January 31, 1878 in Edirne. According to this armistice, the Treaty of Saint Stefano was signed on March 3, 1878.

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