The Patriot at Liberty: The Popular Reception of the Crimean War
Illustrated with Contemporary Periodicals and Literature

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Preface

In my fascination with the history of Britain’s wars, I decided to take on the relatively unknown topic of the Crimean War. To myself, it was a way to familiarise with this obscured event in British history and an attempt to add to the existing research. The Crimean War has every right to be remembered to the same extent of the Great War commemorations. In light of this, my dissertation is not so much committed to warfare, as it is a dedication to those that fought and died, and those that endeavoured to publicise the overall mismanagement and corruption during the war. I would like to thank anyone who makes the effort to read my dissertation, in particular my supervisor, prof. Demoor. I would also like to thank my family and close friends for supporting me throughout my years in college and university, and for proofreading my essays time after time, including this one. This piece of writing will be the capstone to my career as a student, and a transitional element in the path to a career as a teacher of English and history.
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Introduction

Part of the peculiarity of war lies in the thought of young men striving to defend the ideals of the older generation. The expenditure of a nation's youth has historically been a political asset used too comfortably in order to settle conflicts, either domestic or foreign. Evidently, there has been a significant diplomatic and democratic evolution in the resolution of disputed affairs, but the phenomenon of war is far from extinct. Highly civilised countries still have to assemble their military forces to cope with physical threats, such as the spread of terrorism. In relation to the latter, various nations – Britain for one – have sent their armies to the Middle East to deal with this menace, meeting violence with violence. Soldiers, many of whom enjoy all the benefits of modern, family life at home, wager that existence in such a hazardous operation abroad. Global efforts to create a safe and peaceful climate oblige governments to engage any organisation hostile to that purpose. Yet, why does the public agree to send its countrymen to fight ideological fanatics in countries so far situated from their homes?

If history is indeed slave to an endless cycle of repetition, then the chronicles of the past should offer helpful insights for present-day dilemmas. The typical line of action shows a subject reaching for familiar facts and events in his or her quest for meaningful arguments. In this case, an analysis of the events during either the First or Second World War would provide fascinating assumptions as to a nation's tendency to send its compatriots into a foreign warzone. Earlier examples, such as the Napoleonic Wars or the American Revolutionary War would deliver equally clarifying answers. Unfortunately, this constant referral to “mainstream” conflicts attests to the lack of appreciation for other wars and their casualties or veterans. These “forgotten” wars, however, often lead to intriguing perspectives that expand the existing war discourse. The Crimean War, for one,
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has all the necessary materials not only to allow an in-depth study of a country's military ideology, but to leave its discriminatory “unpopularity” completely unfounded.

Many an Englishman would argue that the controversy and obscurity surrounding the war, stimulated its descent into oblivion. Yet, succeeding conflicts, like the Great War, did not share the same fate, although they carry an identical load of suffering and waste. Carefully examining the nature of both events, scholars have noted more instances where the unique characteristics of the First World War are indebted to its Crimean ancestor. Historians, like Orlando Figes, call it the earliest example of a truly modern war. Trench warfare, the demise of the cavalry, blind charges, strategic incompetence, artillery bombardments, maimed bodies, poetic depictions and realistic accounts are elements that should be associated with the Crimean War as well.

The best way to establish the significance of the Crimean conflict is to envision it – perhaps, ironically – as a “popular” war. The coverage of its transpirations in the press and different genres of literature gave the public an unparalleled account of warfare. As a journalist in an issue of Bentley’s puts it:

“Amongst the changes which the progress of science and civilisation have wrought in the world, few are more remarkable than the effects of the rapid transmission of intelligence and the universal publicity of this age on the conduct of war” (“A Military Tour” 280).

These writings in their interwoven nature, the periodical press in particular, became the voice of the people. The Crimean War and its textual legacy, therefore, offer an exclusive opportunity to elaborately traverse the characteristics of British patriotism in the mid-Victorian era. A basic scholarly framework to start this excursion has been provided for, considering such works as Stefanie Markovits’ The Crimean War in the British Imagination. The more familiar pieces of literature, especially poetry, have led to a number of
enlightening articles; the main body of Crimean material has yet to reach the attention of a larger intellectual crowd. Nevertheless, many lacunae in this field of academic study can be overcome by resorting to the works of other, comparable areas that have been thoroughly investigated. Moreover, a combined analysis of multiple contemporary pieces from different genres will be the ideal climate to invite rational inferences. In order to fully understand how the totality of the periodical press, poetry, and prose affected the patriotic attitude of the British public during the Crimean War, this dissertation has to incorporate a study of all these formats.

First of all, a general conception of patriotism is needed within a British composition, namely the mid-Victorian imperial culture and ideology. Before actually engaging in any research of literary productions, a general approach to contemporary literature and its readership will summon a surficial structure for this essay to drill down. This chapter will not only help to fathom the extent of publishing, but also to establish a comprehensive image of the public as a reading entity. The encounters of this readership with Crimean content, then, will first be observed in a part dealing with journalistic publications. Periodicals offer the best opportunities to witness the dialogic relationships during the war. Next, the Crimean poetry, with a specific focus on Tennyson’s verse, allows an initial glance at literary, patriotic contributions. Combined with a chapter on prose, this essay surveys the civilian point of view on the events of the war through the eyes of home-based authors. Finally, this dissertation will zoom in on the particular perspective of the female writer as a civilian at the Crimean front.

By and large, these literary attestations function as the best sources to envision the British reception of the Crimean War. This dissertation attempts to explore these reactions as evidence of the English public’s redefinition of its patriotic ideology.
Patriotism and its Descent into Nationalism

A liberal strain

The notion of patriotism has its roots in antiquity, where “patria” indicated a “familiar place”. It was semantically linked to terms such as family (“familia”) or paternal (“patrius”), which the signified the “role of the father within a family” (Vincent 349). In a culturally primal context, country meant as much as “terra patria” or “land of the fathers” (Viroli 18). This early sense spiritually connected man to a strip of land through his ancestors, who lived, died and were buried there. He felt indebted to his forefathers to defend the land that had passed between generations. Moreover, this tie reached the kind of reverence and respect comparable to the relationship with the gods. It was a religious bond that demanded complete devotion of the individual to his country. Additionally, the ancients introduced a political connotation to the term with the idea of “respublica”, which refers to “common liberty, common good”. In the lapse of time between the origin of patriotism and the Crimean War, the concept became an intellectual topic for abstract, philosophical debate, albeit in the context of a particular country accompanied by its culture and politics. The core interpretation of patriotism as a liberal ideology was never truly expelled, although numerous varieties on the concept flourished; sometimes the historical conditions favoured “the celebration of the ... military and cultural superiority” (27) or “loyalty to the king” (56) rather than to the country or its inhabitants. The latter was especially the case in the Middle Ages, where the king became a symbol of patriotism in the eyes of his vassals; the protection of his person was the ultimate sign of devotion for the medieval knight. In the seventeenth century, the idea of “patriarchalism, where all authority is traced to the paternal role” (Vincent 349), elaborated on the conception of the supreme leader as a representation of the state; it turned the medieval king into an absolute monarch. With the rise of democracy and constitutional limits to power,
patriotism was adapted to the changing needs of the age. From the eighteenth century onwards, it gradually became more in the interest of parliamentary politics “to defend and preserve the political liberties which their fellow countrymen enjoyed under, and owed to, the constitution” (60). The argument of liberty and patriotic foundation was a useful tool to any party that wanted to convince the public of its political agenda. Increasingly, the concept returned to its ancient roots, referring to the liberties of the people which had inhabited a specific country throughout the ages. The fate of the population was equated with the fate of the country. “For this reason we rejoice at the good of the commonwealth and we suffer at its miseries” (47). However, the protection of freedom is not necessarily limited by national borders; it could also involve the freedom of other countries. Those that share the same liberal principles could come to the aid of each other, when the liberty of one of these nations is at stake. In a utopian vision, this would lead to some type of global patriotism, where mankind is united in its quest for universal freedom, and earth would form a representation of the fatherland.

Patriotism in itself can be observed in numerous manifestations. Constitutional patriotism, for one, “is seen as fostering citizens’ commitment to the ‘abstract procedures and principles’ outlined in the constitution” (Laborde 593). Its proponents argue that this form introduces a “liberal-democratic state” by allowing the identification of different cultures with similar systems of law. It is not just a particular government or country that matters, but the way that its subjects are controlled and protected by a constitutional frame of laws. It appears to invite both the existence of a local collective with common duties and the universal acceptance of other nations. The necessity of very abstract laws, however, undermines the idea by forcing people to “commit themselves to this or that particular constitution or polity” (593). Laborde goes on to evince two subdivisions to this branch: a critical and neutral theory. The first one calls for constant re-evaluation of
opinions. To Peter Euben, this subcategory of constitutional patriotism concerns a “loyalty to what is best and highest in the political and cultural traditions of a people, not to what the powerful say it is” (44). Criticalists suggests that patriots should value the differences in society and between countries, instead of concentrating on intolerant, national identifications. Although the focus on differentiation invokes the conditions needed for “the self-critical, other-regarding practice of deliberation in a democratic community” (Laborde 595), there is no actual patriotic sense that ensures a common ground or shared experience. The neutral theory falls victim to the same inadequacy, but also refuses to include a level of deliberation. These flaws are caused by the inclination of neutralists to separate the cultural from the political, whereas these dimensions are intricately intertwined. As a response to these unsatisfactory conceptions, Laborde proposes an alternative form of patriotism, namely a “civic” one. This form of patriotism does not act from the perspective of shared constitutions and their capacity for giving people the right to deliberate; it starts from the perspective of the people (read: the civilians) and their ability to “share a commitment to universal principles (civil liberties, equal rights, democratic self-government, etc.) and to the particular institutions and practices which actualize them” (599). The civic version includes an ideal of liberty where people choose to love their country, because it supports the liberal ideas they love, not the other way round.

In a recent study, the scholars Schatz, Staub, and Lavine have investigated another distinction within the patriotic spectrum. Their research is based on the existence of a notable gap “between a patriotism of uncritical loyalty – one that adheres to the dictum “My country right or wrong” – and a patriotism based in questioning, constructive

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1 In reality, that individual choice of principles is still often motivated by the ideals that have been propagated by the state during people’s entire lives.
criticism, and dissent” (152). Respectively termed “blind” and “constructive” patriotism, these notions can mainly be separated in their adherence to either an aggressive or a pacifying policy. The scholars’ study confirmed that “blind patriotism” was “positively associated with the belief that symbolic behaviors were more important to the country than instrumental behaviors” (168). Another academic, Christopher Parker asserts the opposite, as he defines the instrumental “as a means of regulating self-interested, goal-directed attitudes and behaviour for the individual” in contrast to the “attachment to various symbols of the nation” (100). Parker seems to forget that symbolic attachment is a hotbed of radical patriotism. Moreover, the “constructive” dissenter might as well resort to instrumental means. Still, this essay observes a compromise in either vision, where the “blind” variant incorporates the worst of both behavioural types and the “constructive” one inherits the most virtuous. Typically the “blind patriot” loyalty condemns any opposition to the establishment as an act of criticism, which is the very ambition of the “constructive patriot”. The latter disapproves of certain measures in the belief that “they violate fundamental national precepts or are contrary to long-term national interests” (153). In his or her way, the “constructive patriot” reacts out of loyalty as well, albeit to this persistent assessment. These two contrasting characters only come together as patriotic sympathisers in their attachment to the country.

A difficulty that arises from this “loyalty to the state” is its “discrete particularist understanding of morality” (Vincent 351), restricting the love of freedom to the specific context of a country. This invokes “an implicit tension with the universalist understanding of human rights”. Nevertheless, the dissentious nature of constructive patriotism ensures that the establishment is constantly evaluated. Much like civic patriotism, it relies,
furthermore, on the universal principles of liberty to provide the foundations for that criticism, indicating that not all types of loyalty are necessarily harmful. Vincent combines both conceptions under the category of “moderate patriotisms” (352), as opposed to “strong” ones. Only “constitutional” and “blind” patriotism acutely demonstrate the “particularist” hazard which he portrays in his essay. In addition to his categories, he mentions another phenomenon, which, in his argumentation, results from an inherent quality of “the civil state” (358). Society is characterised by its “plurality and uncertainty”, especially in the field of politics. As a result, loyalty to the state, involves loyalty to this “plurality and uncertainty”, which leads Vincent to assume a supplementary notion, that of “unpatriotic patriotism”. This patriot has to be loyal both to that chaotic situation and to the politics that attempt to sort it out. In the end, it is another, cosmopolitan manifestation that closely resembles the critical, liberal ideology of “constructive” and “civic” patriotism.

Nationalism and the British Casus

In any case, it must not be confused with the dogmatic concept of nationalism. An intrinsic difficulty that creates a thin line between (blind) patriotism and nationalism is that the historical culture of one group makes it hard to identify with that of another. The idea of having a shared history as a homogenous group enhances the illusion of national perfection. Love of country is mandatory in both nationalist and patriotic visions due to this familial legacy of values and systems. Problematically, the disproportionate growth of such a love can blind a man to the original set of inherited principles. The dividing line is drawn by Schatz, Staub, and Lavine in their study. They interpret nationalism “as a form of intergroup discrimination ... whereas both blind and constructive patriotism were operationalized as forms of ingroup identification and attachment” (169). When an ideology induces enmity and discrimination against foreigners, it unearths the tenets of
nationalism. In their view, not just different countries find it difficult to comply with each other's point of view; social, political and religious disparities within a nation can result in the emergence of diverging, nationalist perspectives. If one party – typically with the characteristics of white skin, prosperity and generational heritage – exerts prevailing dominance in a country, it often leads to attacks on the liberal rights of minorities. A single group that focuses only on its own culture and preservation, relinquishes a fundamental aspect of patriotism. Inevitably, they endanger other groups or nations in the pursuit of national glory and their patriotism is reduced to nothing more than pugnacious nationalism. To real patriots, aggression against others is generated only in the safeguarding of liberties. Loyalty to this perception alone allows man to avoid the pitfall of nationalism and to unite with others, despite any distinctness.

Consequently, a case study of the British imperial conquest in the Americas and the East, India in particular, casts moral doubt on the validity of British patriotism. Enslaving and corrupting other populations under the guise of patriotic pride, purely for the benefit of England, reveals a nationalist agenda – or one of blind patriotism at the least. The oppression of the American colonists, following that of the natives, shows how easily the British public shifted towards a narrow-minded, imperial jingoism. The English population distanced itself from a group of compatriots which originally hailed from Britain. Their decision to emigrate was perhaps more out economic or religious purposes, than to represent the fatherland in a new territory of the Empire. It can be stated without doubt, however, that the colonists developed a patriotic love for their new home in reaction to the constant, repressive abuse by the original one. The American Revolution united patriots mutually, aided by the French as ideological sympathisers, in their struggle for the birth and freedom of their own country. “Since America was born of colonial dissent from British laws and social custom, American patriotism is rooted in criticism”
The liberal drive\(^3\) of these Americans opposed the imperial belligerence and forced the ideology of the British Empire into the likes of a nationalistic doctrine. As a matter of fact, the expansion of the English culture on an intercontinental scale had demanded a revision of political ideas at home.

Indeed, in the nineteenth century, the Conservative party effected a transition in the interpretation of patriotism, using a rhetoric that equated Englishness with a national “pride for being subjects of a mighty empire” (156) instead of “the ideal of liberty and justice at home, and abroad” (157). The new, national ideal entailed the radical identification of a blind patriot, and the disposal of the old one led to the discrimination of a nationalist. The notion was utilised in many debates as a way of uniting certain classes or circles in society. Viroli uses the example of the Parliamentary Reform Bill and the Catholic Emancipation Act. Whereas the former gathered all the lower classes in an attempt to do away with discriminatory privileges, the latter “as a betrayal of the very idea of Britishness” (141) united Protestants across social boundaries. The resolution of social dilemmas was often managed in patriotic language by leftists, but the perseverance of the Tories eventually “shifted” the concept of patriotism “from the political left” (Parker 99) to a right wing position. In the Victorian era, it became a figurative synonym of nationalism.

Despite the widespread tendency of the era to materialise the love for the nation in an offensive manner, British patriotism should not be regarded as an obsolete concept. Not only has there been a revival of its original values during the twentieth century, but careful observation of the Victorian period shows that the public did not entirely forsake

\(^{3}\) Unfortunately, “many of the American patriots either failed to understand these liberal political values or failed to live by them because racial barriers precluded blacks” (Parker 98). The patriotic nature of the new American nation collapses as a result of the continued abuse of African-American slaves; a system of depravity that was instituted by the British in the first place.
the essential patriotic ideals. More specifically, the instance of the Crimean War highlights a brief burst of patriotic fervour evolving back to its purest, liberal form in line with Laborde’s civic structure; the constructive patriotism of Schatz, Staub, and Lavine; and Vincent’s moderate, unpatriotic patriotism.

**A Historical Sketch of “Englishness” and the Crimean War**

Favourable conditions for the cultivation of these types of patriotism would be the unity of the people in question and a common love for freedom. “The longstanding cult of Anglo-Saxon liberty” (Goodlad 145), threatened by the Norman invasion, gave the English a legacy of shared ancestry and a liberal foundation of their country. In the pursuit of a pure, Germanised descent, the Norman-French language had gradually ceased to dominate the higher circles of English society. It was part of a stronger persuasion to eliminate unwanted aspects of their culture on the path to a uniform identity. Laborde distinguishes four levels of national identity: the “ethnic”; the “broad culture, language, ways of life and social customs”; the “political institutions, practices, symbols”; and the “abstract, universalist political ideals... outlined in the constitution” (599). “Englishness” in the mid-Victorian culture predominantly referred to the latter two.

A considerable topic of discussion was the relative “self-government” of the people, as a liberal notion, which was “obsessively contrasted to the tyrannies of Continental nations such as France” (Goodlad 145). Local governments were largely at liberty to manage their own affairs, without profoundly centralised surveillance. Nonetheless, persistent blunders of the government and diverging opinions on the status quo demanded a re-examination of the establishment in the mid-Victorian era. Whereas professionals mainly preferred a centralised system of authority to control the parameters of societal conduct, entrepreneurs valued the freedom of small-scale government that embodied
“competency, energy, and perhaps above all, retrenchment” (150). Both visions attempted to redefine the political identity of England: the former allowed a rational and state-centred approach that invited constitutional patriotism and probably nationalism; the latter offered the liberties associated with civic patriotism. Although the reality of British imperialism included a sense of nationalism, “both Englishness and Victorian middle-class identity were immersed in an identifiably entrepreneurial ethos” (148). As a consequence, the concept of freedom was incorporated into the national identity, because it formed a significant piece of English heritage in the public mind.

The overall distribution of “Englishness” was an integral element of the imperialist and nationalist agenda, while it inspired the majority of the Victorian population at home to live by its standards. Yet, the middle of the nineteenth century also harboured a kind of patriotism that contested a solely nationalistic interpretation of “Englishness”. As laborde notes, “national identity is a complex, multi-layered phenomenon, which eludes any simplistic ‘either/or’ approach” (598). The phenomenon of “Englishness” with both patriotic and nationalistic tenets acts as a recurrent theme in the literary attestations of the Crimean War.

In the 1850s, an old dispute in Jerusalem between Catholic and Orthodox worshippers culminated in a wider clash of nations. The contested authority over the Christian Church of the Nativity and the Holy Sepulchre was the cause of great rivalry among both groups, in the midst of a larger conflict between Christians, Jews and Muslims. Moreover, the increasing number of Russian Orthodox pilgrims was observed by the English and French authorities with considerable discomfort. The French mainly reacted out of religious vigour, whereas the English abhorred a Russian pre-eminence in Turkey. The British Empire could not allow a Russian expansion towards Istanbul, granting naval access to the Mediterranean Sea. In the end, the aggregate of religious and politico-
economic motives instigated a call to arms. The British and French both sent vast amounts of troops to aid the Turks, as a reaction to the invasion of Russian forces on 30 November 1853.

This situation raises the patriotic dilemma as to why a country would endanger its own fellow citizens in a distant land, defending a foreign, Muslim population, considered to be inferior, against another Christian country. In spite of imperial interests, the English were reluctant at first to join France – their historical nemesis – in a war. They initially believed that the Turks “had brought the disaster on themselves” (Figes 145). The British government, led by Prime Minister Lord Aberdeen, took on a mild stance and preferred to support a peace initiative proposed by the Austrians. Queen Victoria herself maintained a friendly relationship with Tsar Nicholas and mentioned that “it would be in the interest of peace, and a great advantage generally, were the Turks to be well beaten”. Eventually, the declaration of war became inevitable. The persistence of Napoleon III to “establish an Anglo-French alliance” (112) and the Russian attack on Turkey convinced the political leaders of the necessity of a military expedition. By that time, however, the English public had already abandoned its pacifist views and British imperial ardour had been ignited by a widespread Russophobia. The resulting campaign has gone down in history as the Crimean War.

As soon as war was declared, sailing and steam-driven ships transported batches of soldiers, horses, artillery, tents, nourishment and other supplies to the battlefield. For the British, it was an opportunity to boast with an array of technological innovations, in the wake of the Industrial Revolution. The use of railways, the telegraph, improved medicine, defensive trenches, new types of cannons and appliance of rifling contributed to a modern sense of war. Much of this ingenuity can still be witnessed today due to the rise of photography in that period. The Crimean War was one of the first major conflicts
to be visualised through this medium, largely at the hands of Roger Fenton. Nevertheless, his rather static images of officers, limited still in its early technological stadium, offered no true representation of war to those who actually lived it. The public at home had to rely on written reports for a more accurate interpretation of life at the front. Periodicals regularly discussed military matters without the prohibitions of censorship. Consequently, all the details of the war reached the English population and influenced their disposition to it.

On 13 November 1854, an editorial in The Times briefed the British public on the developments during the Battle of Balaclava; it was a piece on the charge of the Light Brigade. This dramatic event has been memorialised in Alfred Lord Tennyson’s poem and numerous other accounts, either historic or literary. The extent of the literary production involving the Crimean war shows how profoundly the populace felt concerned for the imperial cause and the soldiers abroad. The persuasive potential of the pen showed itself in countless articles, editorials, readers’ letters, poems and novels. Naturally, a considerable amount of these writings was produced by those that experienced the war at close quarters; among them were the journalists William H. Russell and Thomas Chenery, historians like Alexander W. Kinglake, but women as well, such as Mary seacole and Frances Isabella Duberly. Female authorship was definitely on the rise in England, although not fully appreciated by society as yet. Moreover, women who wrote on the topic of war experiences would have lacked any credibility, as combat expertise strictly belonged to the masculine realm. And yet, countless women made the voyage to the Crimea, to live in the same conditions as the men. They, obviously, did not go as soldiers, but as nurses, innkeepers, soldier’s wives and even prostitutes. The hardships which they had to endure cannot be compared to the horror men went through in battle, as they are of a different nature. This, however, does not reduce the gravity of their situation. On the
contrary, a close examination of their diaries and memoirs will illuminate their suffering, considering the atrocities of war are often as prevalent away from the battlefield as on it. These women too experienced the bitter winters, the scarcity of food and water, the hurricane of 1854, the imminent threat of artillery, apprehension of Russian attacks, the occasional explosion of gunpowder storages, and the spread of epidemics.

The diversity of the events during the Crimean War was an invaluable source of writing material for contemporary authors and reporters. The resulting amount of publications influenced the public’s view on the war and consequently manipulated its interpretation of patriotism. In order to grasp this phenomenon and to understand what kind of readership was confronted with Crimean writings, this essay will first analyse the context of Victorian reading and publishing.

**A Critical Approach to Victorian Reading and Literature**

*The Proliferation of Periodicals and Literature*

In the nineteenth century, English readership was largely expanded due to an increase in literacy, continued technological improvements in printing like “electrotyping and the steam-driven printing press” (Korda 20), and a wider distribution over a growing railway system. The reciprocal effect of public demand and industrial supply was supplemented by the exponential growth of cities and politico-economic measures, such as the cutback and abolition “of the newspaper tax in 1836 and 1855” (10). The resulting literary production was unfathomable. For instance, the post office in Fleet Street, London, allowed up to “70,000,000 papers to be mailed in a year” (“Materiality” 4). An essay by Charles Dickens and W.H. Wills in *Household Words* describes the chaos at the respective distribution station on a busy day: “A fountain of newspapers played in at the window. Water-spouts of newspapers broke from enormous sacks, and engulfed the men inside.”
Although the publishing of newspapers and journals reached unwitnessed proportions, the Victorian period is probably most characterised by the expansion of the novel. This extensive resource of story and dialogue provides, among others, entertainment, opportunities for self-conscious reflection and identity construction, social insights and relevant case studies for literary and linguistic research. These facets are mainly present due to a fascinating aspect of prose fiction, that is to say, the continuous, psychological development of the narrative’s characters. Scholars suggest that the rise of the novel was received by Victorians in an ambivalent attitude. Francis O’Gorman mentions how “reading novels had been regarded as a suspect or dispensable activity since the genre began” (18). Critics probably feared the downfall of the more conservative, exalted formats and genres, restricting them to higher circles of intellect. Although the novel indeed became a *popular* medium, it would be wrong to assume its mainstream status coincided with shallow content and stylistic simplicity. Numerous authors come to mind – Charles Dickens and his social realism for one - to refute such statements. Additionally, other genres still thrived in industrial surroundings and many writers were interested in the potential of prose fiction, mutually exchanging characteristics between genres. Nevertheless, with the new position of the novel, others had to give way or adapt to the fresh conditions. The popularity of prose was definitely exploited by the press. Natalie Houston confirms the newspaper industry, perceived by contemporary critics “as a potential threat to serious reading” (234), contributed to the expanding store of novels.

As a matter of fact, an intrinsic bond existed between prose and periodicals. Unlike modern standards, the Victorians saw “the serial format as the primary and most significant way in which writers produced and readers consumed” novels (Bernstein 47). Serialisation of the prose genre offered readers the ability to look forward to the next instalment. As a result, many Victorians would be browsing a multitude of novels, in
various parts, for the length of a year or longer. As Mark Turner puts it: “In the breaks in the narratives of periodicals and in the lapses in time—over a day, over a week, over a month—is where meaning resides” (Bernstein 43). The serial format, however, was not limited to novels only, as some poetry, of considerable length, was also published in separate instalments. Linda K. Hughes notices how the “interactive relationship between the novel and newspapers, magazines,” also involved verse (“Materiality” 6).

By and large, poetry retained its stature, next to prose, and managed to proliferate notably in periodicals. In spite of its often shorter stack of lines and its small proportion in the periodical’s affairs, poetry surpassed the assumption of “filler”, as it enforced “the cultural value and prestige of the periodical itself” (“Why Poetry Matters” 94). The mixture of diverse topics and genres in periodicals contrasted historical, literary values of integrity and unity. Poetry, as the archetype of “the universal, the spiritual, and the permanent”, helped to “mediate the miscellaneousness and ephemerality of the periodical” (99). Typical to the poetical genre is the cohesive set of words that elicit some kind of emotional reaction, often parallel with the mental state of the poet or the persona. Poetry tends to contain elevated language which is capable of rendering its interpretation ambiguous, yet intriguing withal. In this context, some poems involve intellectual issues, such as mythological, scientific and theological references, which reserve them for a more enlightened audience. Here, the aforementioned criticism surrounding the popularity of prose arises from the idea that poetry was condemned to resort in conservative or avant-garde circles. “Serious poetry was a “value-added” feature” (94), when editors of periodicals aimed at a cultivated readership, but it does not automatically rule out the accessibility of the general populace to the genre. Even the lower classes enjoyed the qualities of verse. An artfully composed poem, to the nineteenth century poet Ebenezer Elliott, contains “the emotional resonance necessary to communicate effectively across
boundaries of region and class” (Easley 270). In this sense, poetry was an important medium to reach an entire population, as part of the periodical’s “vital role to play in improving the self-culture and political consciousness of the British people” (265). Verse delivered the sort of emotional reaction to contemporary events, but “in different language than that of the daily news” (Houston 239).

The printing business caused a surge of new periodical titles on many different levels. Especially local newspapers were popular for the distribution of poetry. There were more regional and national periodicals as well; all publishing their issues either daily, weekly, bi-weekly or monthly. A special type of publication was the literary annual—yearly compilations of poetry and prose with illustrations, designed as gift books—which was quite popular during the first half of the nineteenth century. According to Lee Erickson, “Annuals lowered poetic standards and provided an inadequate shelter for poetry against the ever-rising tide of the periodicals” (“Commodities” 12). The question remains whether poetry really had to take “shelter”, as periodicals and poetry both benefitted from their interaction. Erickson goes on to insinuate that annuals limited poetry to the interests of either a small, cultivated group of scholars or a large mass of females and juveniles. His assumptions may be correct, but the very relationship between poetry and periodicals would have brought poetry back to the attention of a massive readership. The sheer amount of printed material “challenges conventional critical paradigms on key issues such as the decline of poetry publishing and readers’ lack of interest” (Hobbs and Januszewski 66). All these papers combined, with provincial periodicals blending both national and local topics, provided the conditions for an integral, unifying reading experience.
In relation to that conceptualisation of a reading collective, a deeper issue arises concerning the actual existence of such a “readership”. In the Victorian era, the phenomenon of “individual, silent reading” (Lyons 343), which had started already in the previous century, was now gradually replacing the concept of reading en masse. It was still common to discuss matters of literature, science and political affairs in public places, such as coffee houses, where writers and other artists met to discuss their arts. However, the nature of reading itself was fundamentally changed on a large scale. Due to the rise in literacy and the prosperity of the age – consciously neglecting the deplorable state of the lower classes – many people were able to buy their own newspapers and read about the nation’s affairs themselves. Gatherings for oral production became less fashionable, as the British public had become used to the presence of a private sphere. Individual families temporarily secluded themselves from the outside world to enjoy the tranquillity of interior life, as opposed to the hustle and bustle of an industrial city. Here, at home, a majority of the reading took place. The perusal of newspapers or literary materials at the fireplace became a symbol of British domestication and was part of the cultural component of the national identity or “Englishness”.

This phenomenon was not applicable to all classes of society as yet. The lower echelons preferred the traditional oral culture: “For them, books were still respected and rare possessions, encountered most often in a religious context” (343). They continued to assemble in groups, when they desired to listen to others reciting poetry or reading stories out loud. The low literacy rates among the working classes surface when civil registries are consulted: “One third […] made a crude mark on the marriage registers” (Mitch). Only after 1844, with the introduction of the Ragged School Union, did working class children get a chance to receive elementary schooling. Meanwhile, at the other side
of the social spectrum, wealthy families expanded their extensive libraries with valuable books. This disparity was accentuated by the condition of the British army during the Crimean war. The continued purchase of commissions in the army discriminated men of modest means, ensuring the social exclusivity of the officer’s class. As a result, a part of the population was convinced that the British staff was crowded with incompetent men occupying high ranks. All in all, the social discrimination, not just in the army, together with the extremely disproportionate levels of intellect and the evolution towards individual reading that endangered “traditional forms of sociability” (Lyons 343) make it difficult to speak of a united, national readership.

However, closer examination of the facts leads to the confirmation that such a collective existed after all. It is hard to ignore the excessive numbers surrounding the production of related literature, press coverage and public response. The vast quantity of printed material alone hints at the momentous impact of the conflict on the entire country. Yet, it is not the sheer amount of publications that invites the concept of a united British readership, but rather the nature of many of these writings. The existence of such a collective, today, is exclusively visible in the recorded reaction of the people to the continuous flow of textual evidence from the front, mainly within the domain of the press. Although, this unity was in essence neither complete nor enduring, the British public’s capacity for acute, unanimous reaction to matters of national importance was exemplified by the events of the Crimean War. They largely responded through the same medium, i.e. the periodical press, but poetry and prose fiction were also legitimate ways of externalising the provocation caused by the original news reports. The periodical production per se instigated a reactive production by the British populace, not just limited to the original genre. Although, more elaborate research as to its patriotic validity is
necessary, this interaction at least provides preliminary proof of a unified, English readership.

The activation of the reader was needed to show the existence of this unity. The publication of readers’ viewpoints essentially showed the British largely thought alike concerning the topic of the Crimean War. In previous wars, the public’s role was confined to the consumption of newspaper articles. Any war related, civilian writings came long after the particular events took place. The Crimean conflict changed the role of the population, and more specifically of the wartime reader. Aroused by the quasi-live reportage via telegraph, the public wanted their share of the action. A thriving, industrious society in Britain had created a climate of activity and interaction. The literary cross-fertilisation during the war, between writers and between genres, displayed this world on a micro scale. More recently, Mikhail Bakhtin has delivered a basic understanding of the “dialogical (i.e. interactive) nature of utterance and of the intertextuality of written language” in his work (Brake and Humpherys 94). His theories are reflected in the dialogue that existed in the periodical press, poetry and the novel. The public must have been aware of the growing influence of the press, as it expanded its readers’ base to a wider, national level. It proved to be the ideal instrument to share their opinions with a larger audience. Even if people confined themselves to their homes when reading a newspaper, they were still confronted with the same news reports and reader’s answers. More importantly, the public managed to counteract the original criticism surrounding this isolation by taking on a writer’s role themselves. The literary interactions of the Crimean War existed in the responsive civilian writings. In order to become a part of the war, the public started a political discourse aimed at improving the fighting conditions at the front.
The textual legacy of the Crimean War not only influenced the military agenda, but also pervaded social and moral dimensions. The combined interactions of newspaper articles, reader responses, letters, diaries, memoirs, poems and novels should be taken into account when one tries to perceive the actual importance of all this printed material. For the purpose of this dissertation, the intertextual dialogue provides the information needed to shape the people’s view on the war. Apart from the actual gathering of knowledge, “reading was commonly regarded as at least as valuable as an affective experience” (Ablow 2). In the case of the soldier, a piece of paper could have profound effects on morale, which was exemplified during the siege of Sevastopol (1854-1855). As one of the predecessors of trench warfare, the siege produced a constant fear of incoming shot and shell. Incessant attacks on each other’s lines, without any progress, exhausted both sides. The loss of friends due to enemy fire, illness or starvation took its toll on many soldiers. Under such circumstances, a family letter with a few words of heartfelt sympathy or a passionate poem recited to the less literate could rekindle the combat spirit in those cold winter months. As mentioned in the novel *Jack Archer: A Tale of the Crimea*, “For a time the readers forget their surroundings, and all the toil and struggle of their existence, and are again in thought among the dear ones at home” (Henty). In the case of the British population, which this essay will further analyse, the detailed publication of victories at the front would turn out to be perfect nationalist propaganda for the further continuation of the war. Those very reports, nonetheless, also encouraged pacifist tendencies, when they testified to the unnecessary loss of English blood caused by the incompetence of the British commanders.

The function of all these writings will only be clarified, if this essay zooms in on a few individual cases – a poem like Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade* in *The Examiner*, for instance. Linda Hughes notices how “restoring such poems to their first publication
context exposes their participation in cultural dialogues” (92). Before such an endeavour is started, however, the actual medium of its publishing has to be expounded, providing it with a case study of its own. The research of a number of periodicals, dealing with topics on the Crimean War, will provide some insights into the workings of the periodical press and the way the English public was influenced by its reports on the war; it allows a first glance at the dialogic nature of Crimean War print.

A Patriotic Conference: The Crimean publications of the Periodical Press

The Effect of the Popular Press on the Mind of the Masses

The examination of a number of periodical titles, dating from the war years, should establish a broad conceptualisation of the public state of mind at the time. Such an investigation allows the present reader to immerse oneself in the contemporary imagination, becoming aware of political events and the resulting documented discourse. Journalists and editors offered the majority of articles, influencing their readers with their facts, opinions and conjectures. As Hughes puts it, the periodical press was “a fundamentally provocative and reactive medium, initiating dialogue on topics of the day, and demanding a response” (“Materiality” 4). In a unique way, it “provided a public forum for the expression of private experience” (“participatory journalism” 561), not only for journalists who witnessed the hardships of battle at close hand, but also for the readers at home who wanted to share their reaction to the situation at the front. The question remains, how much journalists forced their views on the public, or how they rather adjusted their writings to the desires of the readership. As many scholars emphasise the dialogic nature of Crimean War writings, it must have been an interactive relationship. The centuries leading to Britain’s constitutional monarchy have provided evidence of the power of the people’s voice, but, in the end, the press pulls the strings, when it comes to
shaping an image of a foreign-based event. Effectively, Stefanie Markovits has termed the Crimean conflict a “media war” (3). Consulting a differentiated, periodical corpus, this dissertation will analyse an assortment of miscellaneous, yet related articles in order to form a nuanced view on the popular perspective during the Crimean War.

In order to fathom the resonance of this conflict in society, this essay will briefly include a quantitative investigation as to the extent of Crimean articles throughout the years of the war. For this purpose, the periodical title Leader, digitalised and made available by the Nineteenth-Century Serials Edition, will function as an exemplary case. “The Leader was a mid-century, six pence weekly of 24 pages ... with its ‘master principle’ ‘the right of every opinion to its own free utterance’” (Brake). The use of specific terms in the database will initiate a responsive search and provision of linked items in the title’s corpus. The keyword “Crimea” leads to a considerable list of related articles over several years from 1851 to 18574. In the years preceding this time span, little attention was directed at this forgotten corner of no real interest to the British public. An occasional, touristic article, written by a travelling journalist, adds up to only seven articles published in the entire year of 1851 and just four in 1852. Even at the start of the war, in the month of October 1853 and several months later, the periodical incorporates only a few war related articles. A logical explanation for this observation would be the general uncertainty as to what the British role would be in the conflict, since continued diplomatic measures evinced a desire for peaceful resolution. It took some time for the periodical to shift its focus from mainly domestic matters to Crimean content. Most articles focused on Russo-Turkish skirmishes in the Danubian Principalities. The British and the French did not declare war on Russia until March 1854, but, even the British mobilisation had little

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4 See Appendix A.
to no effect on publications. However, when the Allied expeditionary force landed at Varna, Bulgaria, and later at the Crimea, the press devoted more and more space to the army's exploits. From July onwards, there was a steady rise in articles either dealing with the events of the war or hypothetical discussions of a clash between Russian and English forces. The number of publications rapidly rose as a result of the first actual encounter with the Russian army during the Battle of the Alma. Exactly one year after the start of the war, one hundred and six Crimean articles were published in the space of the month October alone. The ability of journalists to translate the battles into accurate descriptions captivated the public; the press became their prime informant. The level of publications remained constant, reaching its peak in January 1855 with one hundred and twenty-nine articles. From that point onwards, there was a slow decline: The issues of September 1855 still offered one hundred and five articles, whereas, the following month, only sixty-five reports were published. By this time, the war-weary population had grown tired of the immobile entrenchment during the Siege of Sevastopol, which demanded more and more casualties. A glance at the quantitative results of the keyword “peace” in the database confirms an evolution towards a pacific attitude, as a significant rise is noted in 1855 and 1856 from roughly six hundred articles per year to about nine hundred. As the Crimean War came to an end, by January 1856, the periodical gradually moved away from its predominantly Crimean focus. Nevertheless, the issues in the next years still included a number of Crimean related publications. In February 1857, for instance, the Leader still published twenty-eight articles on the topic. The Crimean events had started a political discourse in Britain that continued throughout the Victorian period. This cursory examination shows how the term “Crimea” had suddenly entered the British culture and how it affected the periodical press. As a journalist observes in a Crimean article of August 1858, “six years ago the title of this article would have excited but very scant attention”
It already hints at the way the war left its mark on “Englishness” and patriotism, the arguments of which will be obtained in the course of this dissertation’s research. In what follows, the patriotic content of the periodical press during the Crimean War will be surveyed in a thorough examination of relevant articles.

In the January issue of 1854, *Bentley’s Miscellany* published several articles, referring to the rampant British nationalism: “John Bull has grown warlike” ("Constantinople" 306). Although the issue, like many early articles, translates this bellicosity into a patriotic demand to “bring Russia to reason and compel her to conform to the laws of Europe” (309). *Bentley’s* emphasises the sway of “public opinion” ("The Campaign" 114) over political matters, as they “demand remedy and reparation”, for “every act of oppression and oblivion” against Christian rights (108). The periodical sensed that the Crimean war was bound to be different in a way that its outcome was to be decided as much at home as on the battlefield, driven by an “unanimous resolve of all that is patriotic” ("War Politics" 562). In this premature stage of the war, many reports poured in of initial Russian losses against the primitive – not to use contemporary terms such as barbaric – yet effective Turkish troops. Although peace efforts might have consolidated these early victories, diplomatically providing concessions on both sides, the British population wanted to discipline Russia on the battlefield. Several factors led up to this course of action.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, England had become “a peace-loving nation” (Markovits 102). The population had grown weary of war after decades of socio-political conflicts. In 1851, the Great Exhibition in the Crystal Palace was to introduce “a more prosperous and peaceful age, based upon the British principles of industrialism and free trade” (Figes 100). The prospect of a war against the Russians would jeopardise this “Pax Britannica”. However, due to the publication of a series of travelogues about Russia
and a volley of Russophobic pamphlets in the 1830s and 1840s, “the phantom threat of Russia entered into the political discourse of Britain as a reality” (73). In other words, the decision to declare war was hastened by “the impatience of the public and the press” (“Constantinople” 308) – a unique notion in the history of mankind. The Allied invasion of the Crimea was further legitimised by articles discussing how the Crimean “transfer to the Russian Crown” was effectuated by a “combination of fraud and force, intrigue and injustice” (“Historical Sketch” 88).

The British public’s desire for “a conquest as a proof that Russia was humbled” (“The Campaign” 109), was complemented by the need for Britain to display its capacity for heroic warfare. After years of peace – ignoring minor conflicts – England felt its superiority in the previous century had somewhat diminished. They still dominated the seas with their majestic fleet, but, compared to the French, their army was relatively outdated, concerning dress, weaponry, tactics and logistics. Many an Englishman reminisced about the valiant feats of the United Kingdom and its legendary figures at the start of the century. Particularly the Battle of Trafalgar with Lord Nelson, or the Battle of Waterloo with the Duke of Wellington reminded of “an epoch ever memorable for the overthrow of a gigantic military power” (“Crimea” 431). Napoleonic references in periodicals show that the public was nostalgic for those times. They feared the nation had neglected to maintain their status as victors and innovators, “for the experience of forty years ago is obviously inapplicable to the altered state of the world” (“A Military Tour” 281). More than anything, the English were in need of reassurance that the patriotic “John Bull” was not turning into a decrepit, senile man. They needed a reaffirmation of “Englishness” as an image of supremacy. Long before any British soldier set foot on hostile grounds, the periodical press went out of its way to solidify England’s heroic identity. Bentley’s mentions how England had “not had glory enough” due to the absence of “a good
Some articles stress the singularity of the logistic enterprise as “a feat unexampled in war” (“Crimea” 432), reserved only for those nations, like Britain, “with the talent and resources they have at their disposal (“Sevastopol” 336). Other articles focus on the legacy of the battles, “the gallant deeds [of which].... will live as long as the English language shall endure” (“Historical Sketch” 115). At the start of the fighting, each victory, albeit insignificant or even pyrrhic, was magnified by the papers as delivering “an immense moral effect over one, nay, we may say, over the four quarters of the globe” (“Crimea” 431). At the same time, these articles aimed at “paralysing the efforts of that unpatriotic party which is willing to sacrifice the honour and best interests of the country” (“Black Sea” 225). These types of news reports aroused the British populace in such a manner, that politicians were forced to dispel any gestures of peace; England would have its glorious war.

There was another feature, pertaining to the prospect of battle, which broadly captivated the population. The better part of man’s tendency for warfare comes down to “a craving for something tangible”5 (“The Campaign” 114). Typically, men join the army for the thrill of fighting and, often, as a response to pervading concepts of masculinity. This essay will return on the topic of gender and war, but for now it will focus mainly on the disparity between soldier and civilian. The novelty of the Crimean War was that the sensory aspect of the experience was no longer a privilege reserved for soldiers alone. Due to the uncensored reportage, “the perception of the war on the battlefront was very close to that on the home front” (“participatory journalism” 560). The English public took interest in the growing feeling that, in a modern era as theirs, “the whole country

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5 This quote from Bentley’s reminds of Santanu Das’ work on Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature. In his terms, attention to the senses and particularly the “tangibility” of warfare can be considered as universal elements in war writings. Again, characteristics of the Great War can be traced back to its Crimean predecessor.
participates in the contest and lends it intelligence and its resources to the army” (“A Military Tour” 281). This came to be an inherent aspect of “Englishness”. It initially revealed a tendency towards blind, bellicose patriotism, but also invited a critical approach. Prompt telegraph reports and widespread press distribution allowed “live” involvement in military matters. By and large, the public's support of the war can be traced back to this promise of a sensational experience.6

Besides this initial belligerence, not all periodicals extolled the idea of all-out warfare. Bentley's was actually very moderate in its nationalistic exultation: “let us not be enamoured of war for war’s sake” (“Crimea” 444). They, obviously, supported the national cause, but this did not automatically entail the course of action suggested by the general populace. Many of its early articles view war as necessary, though only “to obtain permanent peace” (“War Politics” 565). Its writers were well aware of the dire aftermath of a conflict that was “to take the youth and manhood [of England] and make soldiers of it” (“War and Peace” 217). They went as far as to contrive a pacifying ideology with anecdotes describing “the complete nullity of [Britain's] military and naval efforts” (“The War” 2).

Journalistic reports often incorporated a theme of sacrifice. At first, death in combat was profiled as the ultimate sign of patriotic dedication. Viroli notes, “when the country is the ‘object of esteem’, ... no sacrifice is to be thought too great” (104). Nevertheless, there are limits to this “love of country” which “may require the patriot to give his life... but never to conquer” (99). As a result of the imperial belligerence, reporters had to formulate the sacrifice of the soldier in the context of defending liberal values. This noble gesture partly lost its significance, when the predicament of the British troops became clear. Still, the

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6 It is not merely coincidental, that the OED defines sensational as either “dependent upon sensation or the senses” or “giving rise to great public excitement and interest”.

press managed to apply these facts to both the cause of jingoist and pacifist. The deaths of many young men allowed polemic statements such as “the Czar must be made to pay for the ... British blood” (“Crimea” 434), although a plurality of articles used this theme to lament the loss of Britain’s finest. As mentioned before, victories were depicted by journalists as having a “moral” character, which was actually part of the propaganda machine; the Battle of the Alma, for instance, hardly resulted in a “material advantage” (434), considering the four thousand British casualties. It was hard to keep the nationalist fire burning, when “nearly one-half of the army” had perished, not in some heroic act, but by “fatigue and exposure, want of sufficient food, clothing, ...” (“The Conduct” 318). Reports on the deplorable living conditions in the Crimea tempered the popular ardour. The press gradually adjusted the mood of its publications to this shift in opinion. The evidence of pointless, inglorious deaths had created a martyr out of the common private. He became the new patriotic embodiment for the English nation, who shared “the deepest sympathy ... for the fate of our gallant countrymen” (318). The public’s interest in the life of the ordinary soldier involved a social dimension which will be analysed in the chapter on poetry. As the conduct of war appeared to be a lot more complex than anticipated, the concept of patriotism was bound to become more complicated as well, absorbing elements of frailty and victimhood, merging them with traditional bravery and honour. For the public, a patriotic attitude was no longer a mere matter of cheering for a Russian defeat in a glorious fight. Early celebrations of the soldier’s courage and efficiency in combat now coincided with fits of sorrow and compassion at his painful endurance. Nonetheless, English pride was never truly dispelled, when news of victories reached the public, especially concerning the fall of Sevastopol. Journalists emotionally agreed that

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7 During the fighting, British infantry overwhelmed the Russians with precise, long-distance rifle fire; the first of many occasions where the actions of regular troops would decide the battle.
they “cannot but, in common with the organs of public opinion, most heartily congratulate our countrymen” (“Sevastopol” 331). To the soldiers themselves, the original notion of heroism was incompatible with the frontline experience during Sevastopol’s siege. The notion of death, which started as an idea to relish, quickly turned into a thing to fear, before it eventually “lost zest of novelty” (“Sebastopol” 40). This is not automatically an unpatriotic development. In Viroli’s eyes, patriotism differs from “heroic self-abnegation” (185). A patriot devotes his life to liberty and his country, preferably through the medium of diplomatic debate. Only in dire need will he resort to violence and self-sacrifice, while “the hero sacrifices all to the republic”. By this time, such a heroic act had become meaningless to the soldier and a sad waste to the public at home, without leading to unpatriotic assumptions. News reports grew increasingly melancholic and depressing, describing how “deeds of heroism become mingled up with ... the sanguinary horrors of the assault” (“Kertch” 36).

A Patriotic Dialogue

Naturally, someone was to blame. The public, in their persistent sympathy for “the brave, but harassed soldier” (“The Fall” 331), demanded an explanation for the continuous state of misery the British troops were left in. A great deal of the English casualties resulted from faulty military strategy and incompetent in-battle decisions based on inadequate information. “The heroic individualism of the English soldier was thus contrasted to collective “maladministration” (Goodlad 162). Especially Lord Raglan, Field Marshal of the British army, received the brunt of the blame. His often vague commands led to disasters such as the charge of the Light Brigade. However, a lot of journalists also targeted non-combatants: “It is at home that the responsibility lie” (“State of the Army”

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8 One of the first examples of trench warfare and its ideological consequences, as a prototype of the Great War.
113). As usual in a state of crisis or discontent, the press and the population turned to the nation’s leaders for clarification on the matter. As Goodlad notes, “by the end of the war the Russians were a far less accessible enemy than the English generals and the ‘aristocrats’ behind the scenes at Whitehall” (162). Editors and readers did not refrain from spilling their “contempt for the administrative and official imbecility” (“The Conduct” 318) in the papers. The public was convinced that politicians were only acting in their own interests, being very proficient in the securement of their election, but not capable of administering the situation at the Crimea. Countless articles focus on this “ministerial evasion of responsibility” (“State of the Army” 113) and the vicious circle of liability – who was to blame, really? Specifically, the mismanaged transport of vital provisions for the welfare of the British troops was a highly disputed subject. Politicians, army officials, the Admiralty and private transport companies tried to divert any culpability on their part.

It should be no surprise, then, that some periodicals, which have the ability to reach and move a large audience, go out of their way to refute accusations directed at the establishment. One periodical in particular, The Edinburgh Review, published such articles with an obviously propagandist agenda. These types of publications aim to persuade their readership that all necessary precautions were made within the boundaries of “the sagacity of our statesmen” (“A Military Tour” 274) and the “duty of the Government” (264). They use arguments that emphasise the difficulty of a large campaign in a foreign land: “little was known of the country, of the climate, of the strength of Sebastopol” (274). They attempt to legitimise the amount of casualties “which are always inevitable in a

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9 During the first winter of the Sevastopol siege, the soldiers had to get by without the necessary equipment, because the essential cargo had stranded a few miles out from the British camp. Why the government or military command did not manage to overcome this relatively small distance was beyond comprehension of many a journalist or reader.
young army entering upon a campaign in a strange and trying climate” (277). They not only condone the loss of men, but rejoice how “those illustrious soldiers have given their lives for a large accession to glory, the security, and the power of England” (264), making it “worth the great sacrifices\textsuperscript{10} which it cost us”. The Edinburgh Review goes even further in saying that the only “charge made against Ministers” should be that “they did not put forth the whole military strength of the country” (282). Moreover, when it comes to public criticism against the government and the army, they simply state how “officers in the field should look with some suspicion … on the gossip of the town which affects to judge of military operations” (281). According to these journalists, the status quo in Britain did not provide the most preferable conditions for the act of war. They dwell on the fact that the signature element of success in “war is authority – direct, rapid, uncompromising, and … uncontrolled” (285). In other words, they try to deviate from England’s historical route to democracy, stating that power should not be “limited in a thousand conflicting forces and interests”. Their policy shows the restrictive particularities of constitutional patriotism and the reactionary loyalty of blind patriotism and nationalism.

The arguments produced in those periodicals seem to hint at a divided opinion among the British populace, concerning the conduct of the war. Some journalists trace the war’s blunders back to individual, administrative errors and a lack of accomplished leaders. Whereas others propose to institutionalise a form of autocracy as a controversial remedy to a so-called flawed political system, increasing the authority of those already in charge. This fact makes it hard to envision a legitimately patriotic collective, acting as an entity for the common good in Britain. The quote of the previous paragraph (“a thousand conflicting forces”) seems to acknowledge just how much people – many of them ignorant

\textsuperscript{10} The report uses the earlier mentioned theme of sacrifice from a pro-war point of view here.
of military matters – wasted time on debating the best possible way of acting, while precious time to alleviate the predicament of the soldiers at the front was lost. These wearisome discussions that seemed to change little about the situation and were of no use other than exchanging opinions, led to anxiety among intellectuals: “Has old England suddenly become voiceless?” (“The Conduct” 329). And yet, in the dialogic characteristics of these debates the very rudiments of a participative, patriotic nation are found.

Reader’s letters responded to certain articles in former issues. In *The Times*, these publications were recognisable in their address “to the Editor”. One reader used the instrument of the press “to say a few words in behalf of the Crimean chaplains” (“Crimean Chaplains” 10). He points out the situation of a young man who “was suddenly thrown out of employment” by the ungrateful British government. In another issue, “quoting from your correspondent in yesterday’s leading article” (“Prospects” 9), a reader disputes the absence of “despondency”. After reading an officer’s letter on “the wretched state of our soldiers”, he wants to “give publicity to another warning through the medium of the press”, as his earlier ones “have been disregarded”. Similar indignation is voiced by a different reader, who is “outraged by the horrible and heartrending endurance of our brave army in the Crimea”. He is, however, more infuriated by “the smears” of an individual general that have been “levelled at your correspondent” and “are regarded by the people as an insult to themselves” (“March 15” 10). A fourth instance shows the attempts of a certain S.G. Osborne at exempting his liability as to “the health and comfort of the sick and wounded” (“Sick Transport” 8). Apparently, he held back information on the mismanaged transport of convalescent troops, but now considers “the revelation of these horrors, however painful, still a just debt to humanity.” A different reader’s letter

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11 In this instance, the industrial rapidity of publishing can be observed.
mentions how “much attention has of late been bestowed upon the vicious system of administration prevailing in the various departments of the English army,” but not to its “sister office, the Admiralty” (“February 16” 10). These reader responses ensured that corruption in all its manifestations and in all fields of society were publicised on a national scale. Notwithstanding, letters could also serve as instruments to share nationalistic pride in a competitive environment. One reader boasts how “no school has sent so many brave officers into the Eastern Army as Rugby”. He includes a list of victims and promises to send “a list of those who have obtained medals and clasps” (“Rugby”). In this multitude of letters and their different functions, a peculiar case is that of H. Shirley, who writes to the editor,

“Sir, - You will persist in killing me on that unfortunate day, the 18th of June. In the Times of the 21st of August you inform your readers that my body is on its way home in some ship or another” (“February 6” 10).

It seems he had been mistaken for dead and uses the medium of the press to assure others he is not. All these attestations evince the relevance of the periodical press as a medium for public debate and fast news reportage.

As this dissertation stated, these contributions of the press were facilitated due to technological innovations in the field, which led to an audience of national proportions. The “gross and most culpable mismanagement of the war” (“State of the Army” 111) brought to the public by journalists, assembled “the country at large” and rendered it “unanimous in opinion” – despite the confluence of disparate voices – that something had to be done about it. As noted before, the British populace became actively involved in the progression of the war through their discussions and literary production. Although at first their participation might seem hollow, by and by, it at least provided the necessary attention to the case and maintained the importance of the people's freedom to speak and
act for the good of the country. “Love of country is a moral strength that makes ordinary citizens capable of doing great deeds against tyranny and corruption” (Viroli 39). That resolute support of liberal values summons the validity needed for a unified readership to proclaim itself as (civic and constructive) patriots. In a reciprocal manner, it is this patriotic “desire for liberty” and the justice “demanded by a large legislative majority and by the unanimous voice of the country” (“The Conduct” 326) that “works as an inclusive, uniting force” (Viroli 58).

The interactive periodical press delivered a literary stage for individuals to enact their personal emotions and ideas in front of a large, responsive audience. “We have the press to lay matters before it with copious publicity” (“The Campaign” 442). The resulting, passionate dialogues are testimony to a vibrantly interactive community; they testify to a kind of patriotism that is not restricted to shallow warmongering, but one that shows an honest desire to procure the best future for the country and its compatriots. Both the unity of the people and liberal patriotism were absorbed into the notion of “Englishness” during the Crimean War, as a result of the responsiveness of the public. The latter is not a phenomenon purely isolated to news reports, but notably present as an inherent feature in contemporary prose and poetry as well.

**Crimean Verse**

*The Quintessential Crimean poem as a Patriotic Hoarding of ‘Nobility’*

Countless essays have dealt with the nature of the single most famous British poem that originated during this conflict: Alfred Lord Tennyson's *The Charge of the Light Brigade*. For the benefit of this essay, it might still prove useful to incorporate a brief analysis of this poem. Specifically the reader’s point of perspective, when confronted with Tennyson’s piece, will be of interest to this dissertation. In today's society, the poem’s context may be lost on the English populace, but many still know its importance to the
The Charge of the Light Brigade starts with the repetition of "Half a league, half a league / Half a league, onward," simulating the sensation of riding along with the cavalry. In the original draft, Tennyson inserted this part after the second stanza. He must have realised the potential of his words, since he repositioned them for the official publication. Next, the actual event of the charge is portrayed, as they ride “into the valley of Death”, national heritage as a commemoration of British bravery. A few weeks after the report in *The Times*, readers of *The Examiner*, on the 9th of December 1854, came across the initial publication of Tennyson’s *Charge*. Immediately, the reader’s eye was directed to a white gap on the three-column page. Centred in this white space, the poem was printed out. The passion and pride which had been instilled by the earlier editorial in *The Times*, were recalled: “Boldly they rode”, “horse and hero”, “honour the charge they made”. Tennyson’s ballad encouraged patriotism among its readers by effectively creating a collective experience. Despite the evolution towards solitary reading, people still gathered to read aloud, at times. “This love of the recital [...] of poetry, was part of a traditional, or ‘intensive’, relationship between the reader/listener and the printed word” (Lyons 343). If the *Charge* was recited thusly, those present would have been aroused by the unified feeling it evoked. The long, oral tradition of the poem in schools elevates this feeling to a state level, but, paradoxically, the more it was recited as a national symbol, the more hollow its actual words became. In 1890, a recording was made, at the hands of Thomas Edison’s servants, of Tennyson reading his own poem. His composed voice turns the poem into a lament, filled with awe. Each time the words “six hundred” occur, he appears to struggle to finish the line. Perhaps, he only managed to whisper them, as if to honour their immortal status. It is also the year when Rudyard Kipling wrote his *Last of the Light Brigade*; by this time, the public had grown disgusted of the war and patriotic poems such as Tennyson’s must have been embarrassing.
with guns to the “right […] to left […] in front of them”. The reader can follow the attack, as if he or she is watching from a hill overlooking the plains. An individual reading or hearing this would mentally transport their person to this location and become convinced of a shared experience with those involved. A theme of controversial tourism enters here, which is present in other literary genres discussed in this dissertation as well. In reading this poem, the English public became one with each other as a readership, exemplified in the line “All the world wonder’d”. Moreover, this line connects “the awe of the event’s actual spectators with that of the newspaper’s readers, and the poem’s readers” (Houston 358), as a truly imperial nation. Tennyson, himself, appears to have sacrificed his identity for the sake of this unanimous solidarity, as the Poet Laureate only mentions his initials “A.T.”, rather than his full name. This “choice of anonymity seemed appropriate to his new position vis a vis the court and the sensitivity of the public issue” (E. Francis 113).

The poem mentions Lord Raglan’s order, delivered by Captain Nolan, which led to the fatal mistake of attacking the wrong guns. If the Charge was meant to arouse the English populace, these lines face the reality of the situation. “T’irs not to reason why, / Theirs but to do and die,” is a blunt reminder of the traditional image of officers and soldiers, and the age-old class distinctions. The ordinary enlistee has to blindly enact the orders of the incompetent military staff. As Stefanie Markovits suggests, “the centrality of the concept of blunder to Tennyson’s poem would seem to undermine the straightforward patriotism” (153) and it put Tennyson in a difficult situation as Poet Laureate to the court. Evidence of the latter is provided by the poem’s republication in 1855, in which the element of “blunder” was removed. Still, how could the public rejoice at what seemed to be such a waste, caused by simple stupidity? The poem’s effect of patriotism is nullified, considering these facts. And yet, it was celebrated by the people as a showcase of English nobility, cf. the last line: “Noble six hundred!”
Focusing on the latter concept, some may have interpreted Tennyson’s piece as “an attempt to reinstate the historically threatened aristocracy”, as it mentions “honour” and “death”, symbolic notions of key importance to their identity (Markovits 149). It comes across as a way to influence the notion of “Englishness”. In an act of blind patriotism, it seemed as if he showed loyalty to the original social categories. In this sense, nobility refers to “people belonging to the highest social class”, according to the Oxford Dictionary.

The Light Brigade’s attack was encouraged by the prolonged “failure to employ the cavalry in the sort of bold attack for which it had earned its reputation” (Figes 247). The act of charging was a way to show that the ruling classes, in the shape of the cavalry, still had relevance in the context of war and society. The way they “flash’d all their sabres bare” and “sabring the gunners there” provides a taste of the might of a mounted attack. Tennyson seems to lament the downfall of the cavalry and actually refuses to acknowledge it, exclaiming: “When can their glory fade?”. At the time, many must have shared his nostalgia and were reminded of it, when visiting horse races or hunting grounds. This theme of wistfulness resurfaced regularly in posterior literature, notably during the First World War, when the horse was demoted to logistical support.

Yet, this type of nobility was of no significance to the common public. “The cavalry’s dandified aristocrats were frequently criticized before the charge at Balaclava for not performing their assigned duties” (Houston 361). During the Crimean War, the charge of the cavalry – the historical pride of any army – met its demise against the new dominator on the battlefield, i.e. the gun. Readers from other social levels would not have taken this poem as a glorification of the upper classes. If anything, they perceived it as the swan song of the British aristocracy. Those readers were aware of a changing society, brought about by the industrialisation and the Enlightenment. The increasing influence of the middle classes was noticeable in many fields, including literature. Tennyson, himself, “was always
an aristocrat, though [...] it was a government of the best men that he desired, and not a
government of rank and birth alone” (Preyer 328). It reveals Tennyson’s true nature,
namely that of a constructive patriot, who is loyal to a critical approach on the matter of
government. The public became more interested in the exploits of ordinary people.
Consequently, during the Crimean War, more and more journalists discussed the
successes of the infantry. The courageous actions of the “thin red line”, for instance,
occurred at the same day of the disastrous charge of the Light Brigade. This knowledge
raises the question as to why the public was so moved by Tennyson’s Charge and why this
very poem has become the billboard of the British part in the Crimean War.

Tennyson assured that his poem would appeal to the general population by adding such
words as “man” and “soldier”. Referring to these identities, he emphasised the common
nature of those that comprised the Light Brigade; they too were soldiers merely following
orders of the high command. This way, the public had no trouble in accepting the heroic
qualities of the charge and adopted the poem as a symbol of British patriotism. As for the
concept of nobility, the Oxford Dictionary offers an additional definition: “the quality of
being noble in character”. In other words, the people would embrace Tennyson’s “Noble
six hundred!” as a statement of the English soldier’s composed courage, rather than a
social reference. This semantic issue allowed an interpretation of the poem that both
attested the continued relevance of chivalry as the undisputable rise of the ordinary
soldier, which is, perhaps, why it has acquired its immortal status. Also, the “blunder” of
the Light Brigade has been exaggerated; the general aim of a cavalry attack is “to scatter
the enemy’s lines and frighten him off the battlefield” (Figes 252), which the charge
effectively had achieved, in spite of heavy casualties.

Other contemporary poets shared this vision of noble simplicity. Alexander Smith
and Sydney Dobell, for one, published a collection of Sonnets on the War in 1855. They
chose the charge of the Light Brigade as the subject for two of their sonnets. The first one similarly focuses on the “glory” of the “common Brittons”. The general sense of the sonnet offers the kind of patriotism Tennyson showed, with its actors coming “back from victory”. It testifies to the kind of heroism in the early days of the war; a “love enhanced by ... a passion for glory” (Viroli 185). The speaker goes on to ask: “Is this to lose?”. It indicates the loss of human life is vindicated by the glorious characteristics of the charge; any martyr gains “a life above his own”. Smith and Dobell clearly published their collection of sonnets to evoke a patriotic reaction from the public. It was actually also an attempt “to salvage the poets’ reputations from the taint of effeminate spasmodism” (Markovits 135). The blame of writing “whiny” poetry about domestic life haunted many poets. They were forced to do so, since they had no knowledge of war. Nevertheless, it still encouraged many poets, such as Tennyson, to publish on war topics, deliberately engaging the problem of legitimacy.

The Dilemma of the Civilian Poet and the Poet Persona as War Spectator

Compared to the First World War, where soldier-poets produced verse that echoed their own life in the trenches, Tennyson could not use his own personal experiences. He had to rely on first-hand accounts of front life to identify with the troops. Journalism allowed a never before witnessed “live” reportage of the war, but this still entailed the notion of copying from another’s work. The poet’s “artistic labor boils down to mechanical translation of prose into verse” (Markovits 126). This notion was accompanied by another dilemma: the poet’s safe existence back in England jeopardised the legitimacy of his war poetry.

The accusation of mere translation is easily rejected; Tennyson’s poem offers a depiction with the characteristics of a “heroic painting”. W.H. Russell’s “graphic [writings] are thus transformed into art which encourages patriotic pride rather than questions or debate”
In order to prevent criticism as “armchair” poet, Tennyson used a few strategies that would ensure a favourable reception of his *Light Brigade*. For one, he explicitly stated that the *Light Brigade* was meant for an audience of soldiers. This way, to the men at the front, the poem suggested some sort of “inaccessibility” to outsiders (Markovits 152). Popularity among the soldiers would render validity to the poem’s patriotic contents. The first, official publication of his poem was this soldier’s version. Naturally, it was read by the people back in England as well. Throughout the poem, he introduces pronouns such as “them” and “their”. The use of these words creates a space between readers at home and the actual participants of the event. This “respectful distance” (152) allows the poet to incorporate wartime experiences, in which he takes no part, into his poetry, without raising suspicion as to concerns of legitimacy. As a part of this strategy, he omitted the line “*We saw* their sabres” from the original draft, in favour of “Flash’d all their sabres”. It eliminates “the observers as part of the poem’s subject and therefore does not specify who sees the charge” (Houston 359), whether it’s the readers and poet at home or the soldiers in the Crimea. The original line would have harmed his credibility, suggesting a physical presence at the scene and a shared experience of poet, readership and soldier alike. Carefully respecting the established distance, the poem still allows outsiders to mentally transfer their conscious being to the place of action, permitting a sense of participation in the war as a whole. Tennyson met with both the desires of the public to passively partake in the events of the war as with the soldier’s demand for respect.

This duality, contrived by the poet to conceal his armchair existence, is present in a plurality of Crimean verse. A less known product of Tennyson’s poetical mind is *The Charge of the Heavy Brigade*, published in 1882. Its qualities are, nonetheless, equally patriotic and the importance of the historical event should have outdone its “lite” variant.
At the Battle of Balaclava, the Heavy Cavalry was sent in to save the 93rd Highlanders – i.e. the “thin red line” – from a second attack by the Russian Hussars. Their charge was much slower and even clumsier due to their heavier mounts and equipment, but the effect was all the more devastating when they collapsed into the ranks of the Russian light cavalry. Their steady pace is emphasised in Tennyson’s repetition of “up the hill, up the hill, up the hill” – Tennyson appears to use the same technique as the Light Brigade’s “Half a League” to mimic the horses’ trot or gallop. This easy rhythm is interrupted when the charge meets the enemy. The events of the fight (“Fell like a cannon-shot, / Burst like a thunder bolt, / Crash’d like a hurricane,”) quickly ensue, although in reality “the opposing horsemen were so tightly packed together” (Figes 245) that it must have resembled a clumpy mass. The “gallant three hundred” were enveloped “amid thousands” of Russians.

Arrived at this moment, Tennyson establishes the perspective of the spectator (“And some of us,”). Moreover, he explicitly mentions that the onlookers “were held from the fight”, branding them with the status of a tourist “standing at gaze”. This perspective of the passive bystander is similar to that of Tennyson’s other Charge, but now he confirms the physical presence of the speaker at the scene, ignoring his own lack of war experience. This can only be explained because of the changing nature of society at the time. The British public had momentarily withdrawn its nationalistic antagonism in favour of promoting a peaceful existence, while lamenting all the suffering. Tennyson could no longer produce a soldier’s version, yet he had to keep the sense of distance, which now denied any involvement in the war. Although, this still raises the question as to why the spectator has to be physically present.

In order to give an adequate answer, the context of the poem will have to be surveyed. Kathryn Ledbetter notices how in the 1850s “the accusation of warmongering was drowned by a chorus of patriotic praise” – in fact, a nationalist attribute. By the end
of the century, however, “the Crimean campaign in general seemed more blameworthy and Tennyson’s new defence of it anachronistic” (136). In the decades after the war, it was unfashionable to display the sort of jingoism that had been rampant earlier. Professor Ledbetter keenly observes the peculiarity of Tennyson’s publication. His effort at writing a poem with similar ingredients as its celebrated predecessor comes across as an attempt at copying its popularity. Yet, due to the transition of the age, the same poem would never have yielded an identical response from its readership, which remembered the war only in all its depravity. The very subject of the *Light Brigade* had become a matter of controversy, exemplified in Kipling’s verse. By and large, Tennyson’s endeavour to write another piece on British patriotism seems completely out of place.

While professor Ledbetter makes a sound argument, it is not entirely reasonable to suggest Tennyson “defended” the Crimean War, at this stage. His *Heavy Brigade*, with its tourist-like perspective and the poet’s guidance, is more of a harmless stroll to the spot of a former battlefield, where anecdotes of an old war are brought to life. He must have been aware of the general war weariness of the people. Undoubtedly, Tennyson believed the public would rebuke him for the contents of his second piece on the Battle of Balaclava. He tried to exempt himself from “the charge of praising the ‘barbarism of wars’” (Sypher 109) in the epilogue to this poem (“And who loves war for war’s own sake / Is fool, or crazed, or worse;”). The poet may have felt a stir of nostalgia for the war’s glorious days, but his *Heavy Brigade* was no act of militarism.

Tennyson, rather, responded to new demands which younger generations had developed in the peaceful decades after the Crimean conflict. The lack of contemporary figures that instilled national pride became an ever wider concern of the English populace. Tennyson reacted in a way that recalled “British heroism from previous generations” by means of an “an artistic response to a dark, late-century public mood increasingly in need of heroes”
This facet of late nineteenth century society belongs to debates involving masculinity and domestication, which are not the main focus of this dissertation. However, it cannot be denied these notions are intrinsically connected to the development of a public sense of patriotism and heroism. According to Martin Francis, in the years that followed the Crimean War, a general domestication of the male had occurred. Men preferred the comforts of family life over an adventurous existence. Yet, all of this changed towards the end of the century, when the British imperial force started to reach its climax. From 1870 onward, the masculine identity was related once more to a militaristic ideology. This “flight from domesticity” was actually an individually complex phenomenon, as men regularly shifted “across the frontier of domesticity”, torn between the attractions of both lives. In any case, Tennyson took this revival of heroism into account when he decided to write his *Heavy brigade*.

The Poet Laureate knew he had to address that part of the population which was appalled at war violence, as well, when he wanted to present males with an ideal to look up to. Here, it can be concluded decisively that the spectator perspective, and his physical presence, allowed the revisiting of the Crimean scene, to give a taste of British heroics, without tearing up old wounds. The figure of the ordinary soldier was the perfect subject for this cause, as he had been lauded as the champion and martyr of the people and posed a suitable role model for aspiring adventurers. Similar to “the political poetry of the early 1850’s, then, Tennyson strives for a balance between the perspectives of victim and aggressor” (E. Francis 123).

The difference between the actors in his *Light* and *Heavy Brigade* comes down to the foregoing notion of simplicity, “juxtaposing the elite, but nameless Light Brigade soldier with the common man who serves courageously in the Heavy Brigade as a “patriot-soldier” (Ledbetter 136). Just like the noble horsemen of the Light Brigade were partly
cast into an ordinary identity to appeal to the public, the simple soldiers in Tennyson’s *Heavy Brigade* seem to borrow traits of nobleness. This chiasmus is acknowledged in “the warrior’s noble deed” and in the way “they rode like victors and lords”. The fact that the majority of both brigades were formed by dragoons, which historically were mounted infantry, only increases this confluence of simplicity and nobility.

In another poem, Tennyson’s *Maud*, published in 1855, the protagonist leaves England and his troubles behind, to fight in the Crimean War. This “hero … feels at one with his fellows and with the national purpose: “We have proved we have hearts in a cause, we are noble still” (Sypher 108). Tennyson added the aspect of nobility in all these poems, as an ambivalent sign both of nationalism and patriotism. The ideal warrior “is unwavering in his fearless determination to do and die for his cause” (Sypher 109) in either ideology, although the specific “cause” differs from one another radically. The image of the common infantry was the pivotal element in the development of a nationalist ardour to an anti-war attitude; it was an alternative to the officer class’ failure, a personification of the war’s suffering and the epitome of British vigour. Tennyson was aware of the soldier’s immortal qualities, as he, once more, refers to him, in his *Heavy Brigade*, as one “whose glory will never die”.

Whereas Tennyson devoted either *Charge* entirely to the purpose of the glorification of the war’s heroes, Smith and Dobell’s take on the events at Balaclava is more ambivalent. In their sonnets, the sense of patriotism is accompanied by a sense of remorse, explicitly present in the second sonnet (“In vain that human thunderbolt was flung”). In the first one, however, this feeling can also be analysed in the aforementioned line “Is this to lose?”. The “glory” that builds “a temple o’er the [soldier’s] bones” offers little relief, as it “does not explain or justify the disaster” (Houston 361). In reading these poems, the public was reminded of the blunder of the British military authorities and the
universal brutality of warfare. Contrary to Tennyson’s incentive to honour the audacity of the soldiers, the people are inclined to lament the waste of fine men. The perspectives of the sonnets boost this emotional reaction. In the first one, the narrator addresses a “traveller on foreign ground” and asks him/her to “tell the great tidings”. In this “traveller”, the figure of a tourist can be discerned, which complicate the validity of any statements he makes involving the war. The speaker’s spatial and temporal distance from the event, albeit identical to Tennyson’s *Heavy Brigade*, rather weaken his appeals for a war spirit. In the second sonnet, again, a distance is created, using pronouns such as “we” and “them”, juxtaposing the people at home with the soldiers at the front. The perspective of the public not only enhances the topic of mourning, but it “self-consciously recognizes the ideological positions of the event’s observers in England” (Houston 361). Numerous poems from their collection deal with the matter of perspective, expanding the sonnets’ effect.

Smith and Dobell apply different perspectives throughout their collection, conjuring up a variety of responses from their readership. This amalgam of public reactions to their “journalistic poems” mimicked readers’ letters published in periodicals. Tennyson’s poetry testifies to that very same dialogic nature, as his most legendary Crimean poem was a reaction to another piece writing, which in its turn instigated other literary responses. In spite of a better understanding of British patriotism, the writings insofar have all been rather limited in size. Perhaps, more voluminous genres, such as the novel, will provide other, innovating perspectives in their typically extensive elaboration of characters, phenomena and events.
Crimean Prose

The Exemplary Role of Crimean Novels in Public Identification

The written work of the Crimean War did not merely consist of journalistic reports and poetry in the periodical press. Literary representations of this event also included novels and memoirs. One of the notable perks of working with these genres is the ability to expand on certain events and ideas at great length. Entire narratives could be dedicated on the subject of the Crimean War and in particular on the topic of patriotism. Much of the Crimean prose contains both elements of the archetypal military pride and of the brutality of warfare. Zooming in on a selection of these novels, this dissertation will try to confirm the conjectures postulated in the earlier chapters on periodicals and poetry. Additionally, it will then gradually switch over to a series of memoirs published by significant women of the time. These writings will act as a source of information for the discussion of Crimean life as non-combatants. The perspective of civilians in the middle of a war scene allows for fascinating insights that can be used as part of this dissertation’s research on British patriotism. More importantly, the female identity of these figures might introduce a potentially interesting angle. Thus far, no real gender-specific inclinations as to patriotism have been incorporated in this essay – definitely not in the case of femininity. Therefore, the meditations of women such as Mary Seacole and “Fanny” Duberly will hopefully add to the present speculations about the British public’s stance on the Crimean War.

The dilemma the present reader is faced with, when reading these novels and memoirs, is that a considerable lapse of time is lodged in between the events and the publication of these works. The Three Commanders by William Kingston, for instance, was published only in 1876. The other two novels which this dissertation will discuss, Jack Archer: A Tale of the Crimea by George Henty and The Thin Red Line by Arthur Griffiths, were published even later, in 1883 and 1886 respectively. This problematises the
reliability of these novels as an accurate reflection of the public’s mood at the time. It also reminds of the accusations of "armchair" literature which already occurred in this essay’s analysis of Crimean poetry. Still, the authors had all experienced the developments during the Crimean War themselves as part of the British population. More than any author before them, the age gave them the privilege of an extensive, public database in the form of newspapers and other related writings, such as William Russell’s first-hand letters or William Kinglake’s historical *Invasion of the Crimea*. These novelists had the advantage of carefully considering all the details, before publishing their narratives, in order to create a piece that encompassed all the events of the war and perfectly embodied the opinion the authors had formed in the course of it.

An interesting quality of these novels is the parallel of their narratives with the evolution of the public’s state of mind. Each story starts out with statements of blind patriotism at the prospect of war. When the main characters are informed of their duty to depart for the Crimea, they exhibit “a state of constant high-pitched excitement” (Griffiths 42) at the thought of it. The idea of protecting the fatherland “excites the sense of belonging to a greater unity that prompts one to do one’s share” (Viroli 117). The characters mimick the nostalgia for British supremacy, which this dissertation noticed in early periodical issues, as they are “manfully hopeful of emulating former glorious deeds” (40). One of the protagonists even assumes the entire British nation was bred for this sort of conflict: “Isn’t it natural we should want to be at it?” (42). Unmistakably, the initial chapters of these novels are textbook cases of propaganda, describing how much the population was “impressed at the magnitude of the preparations which were being made for the war” (Henty). Kathryn Castle mentions how George Henty “exemplified the ethos of the new imperialism” (55).
The nature of such propagandic content becomes ever more serious, when the audiences of these novels are taken into account. Both Kingston and Henty were avid writers of adventure stories for boys. When the young protagonist in *Jack Archer* is informed of his duty, he exclaims, “This is glorious” (Henty). Ostentatiously, he copies his father’s disposition, who states that war is necessary, because “the honor and interest of England are at stake”. These adventure novels were a source of inspiration for adolescents to become a “true soldier”, one who “acted instantaneously, and with bold decision” (Griffiths 109). They use the strong motif of paternal influence in their propagation of warfare, as fathers acted as role models in the development of the masculine ideals of their sons. At times, these role models are replaced by older soldiers or senior officers, however, and they seem to counteract the primal patriotic pride the actual fathers produced:

“You talk like a youngster who doesn’t know what it’s like,” replied Sergeant Hyde.

“I’ve seen something of campaigning, and it’s rough work at the best” (44).

The novels also act as guidelines for the conduct of women, in particular soldiers’ wives, with regard to Britain’s declaration of war. During the time of the Crimean War, and at the time these narratives were published as well, duty was ranked above family life as part of Victorian gender interpretations\(^\text{12}\): “My duty is there, in the Crimea, with my comrades—with the army of my Queen” (Griffiths 247; emphasis mine). Kingston lets the spouse of his protagonist argue that “she should be ready to sacrifice\(^\text{13}\) her husband for the good of his country”. When another character, Mrs Wilders, sees the town of Gibraltar “held by

\(^\text{12}\) “Between 1870 and 1914, the imperial and military spirit created what John Tosh calls a “hypermasculinity”, as a reaction to the earlier domestication of the male”. This “domestication”, where family life became priority, occurred shortly after the dehumanising events of the Crimean War.

\(^\text{13}\) Notice how the theme of a soldier’s sacrifice, mentioned in the discussion of contemporary periodicals, also surfaces in the context of these novels.
British bayonets”, she shares her pride as “an Englishwoman” (Griffiths 61). Apparently, Victorian women were supposed to be no different from their husbands in their support of the imperial conquest: “Remember you are to be a soldier's wife. Be brave, I say” (86). Moreover, the books seem to encourage females into passive patriotism, as male protagonists debate the presence of “a tender woman – in that wild land, amidst all its dangers and trials!” (248). Yet, these women are by no means generalised as weak and dominated beings. They are personified with “the Holy Virgin” (Griffiths 65) as devout christians, but also depicted as enterprising and worldly figures. “While [men] are playing at soldier” (63), they keep being productive for the welfare of society, rather nursing the future generation, than endangering it. Not allowed to join the army, they could still prove their prowess, as exemplified in Kingston’s narrative where “a female of Amazonian proportions” holds back retreating Turks “with a fury ... as effective as the shot of the enemy”. The introduction of feminine characters like these made such violent novels more accessible to a Victorian female audience interested in Crimean fiction. But, possibly, the best arguments for feminine productivity and versatility are to be found in the writings of Mary Seacole and Fanny Duberly.

In the novels, the boyish, soldierlike elements are balanced – or rather intertwined – with aspects that remind of civilian life at home. One example is the analogy of “round-shot” in the way it “bounded like cricket balls” (Griffiths 98). There are also troublesome love stories, especially between hostile nationalities, adding more drama to the narrative, and the industrial craving for social mobility (Mrs Wilders tries to murder the protagonist to secure her inheritance of nobility). The authors seemingly wanted to reach a large readership, using familiar content and popular themes in order for unaccustomed and often depressing matters to comply with a patriotic ideology.
On the other hand, the way these authors incorporated long sequences of suffering into their narratives challenges the seriousness of their propagandist statements. “Terrible was the sight indeed” (Henty) provides the gist of the extensive accounts in the wake of a battle. Particularly Griffiths manages to visualise the monstrosity of warfare with an unprecedented realism:

“The deafening roar of artillery; and the murderous fire of the guns” (108), “the loud shriek of acute pain, the long-drawn moan of the dying, the piercing appeal of those conscious, but unable to move, filled every echo (114).

In the novels, the war seems to form the threshold to a reinterpretation of certain systems and values in society. As discussed in the chapter on poetry, the cavalry, as a branch of the army historically reserved for the upper classes, was forced to give way to the infantry, typically crowded with the lower classes. Griffiths paints this transition in his own, realistic way, using the image of an “old white charger, riderless, his flanks streaming with gore, ... galloping madly down the hill” (108). His protagonist is the epitome of the simple soldier’s new, elevated position (“I do not want a commission; I am perfectly happy as I am” (80). Kingston addresses the increasingly obsolete role of the mounted class as well: “Poor Pat... burst into tears, as the farrier led off his well-beloved horse to the spot appointed for its execution”. Whereas Henty tends to focus on the sad predicament of the ordinary soldier. He avoids any horrendous details, but he draws a depressing atmosphere in the aftermath of battle scenes. According to Henty, any thought on Britain’s glory is “dimmed indeed by the sorrow for the dead”. It emphasises the focus of his novel on patriotic values, rather than heroic ones. He manages to deconstruct every victory in the legendary battles of the Crimean War, in the face of “the losses which ... were so tremendous as to overpower all other feeling”. Moreover, his novel also deals with the privations of the troops during the large amount of time they were not engaged. The
public at home is familiarised with “the illnesses which had already decimated the army” and the “incessant work in the trenches” that weakened the mental and physical state of the soldiers. Readers are confronted with improvised field operations that are “performed without chloroform, and borne [by the regular private] with heroic fortitude” (Griffiths 117). In Kingston’s novel, a disgruntled soldier vents his discontent with the inactivity experienced between major battles, standing “in the cold for hours together, with the chance of being shot at any moment”. These aspects of war, encountered in press reports as well, were new to the Victorian audience and difficult to incorporate in a pro-war ideology of blind patriotism.

The realistic, melancholic depiction of warfare and camp life implies that the authors believed in peaceful resolution of conflicts – typical of constructive patriotism – using the Crimean War as a complicated parable. Although their narratives include very heroic scenes and the typically Victorian, national pride, the reader has to witness the cold and brutal reality of the Crimean War as well. It is the sort of patriotic focus on national identification, combined with a critical approach to the nation’s actions that excludes any nationalistic intentions. The authors were convinced that the war had caused Britain to suffer immeasurable losses. One particular element confirms the authors’ rancour against military measures, among many other facets which these novels have in common with the contemporary periodical press and poetry: the castigation of the army staff for its ignominious incompetence. In Jack Archer, this prevalent complaint enters with the statement that “the army had been entirely neglected” (Henty). The author transfers the popular mindset at home to his soldier characters who do not believe “that the generals have any more idea than we have”. The Thin Red Line contains similar content, yet more blatanty mimicks journalists’ claims how military conduct “under more skilful leadership” would have led “to a prompt and glorious termination of the war” (Griffiths
120). With the command as it was, an officer in the novel gives the order that "the brigade will advance!"—to certain death, he might have added, for he knew it" (142). As if to close the series of accusations of mismanagement, Griffiths builds up to a quote that concludes the novel's appeal; a doctor struggles to obtain the necessary equipment for medical treatment due to an abundance of red tape, and lashes out at the officers, "It's little short of murder!" (233). In *The Three Commanders*, the notion of murder was prone to cause even more outrage: “he did not like shooting down men in cold blood, but yet he must obey his superior” (Kingston). In view of these arguments, all textual evidence which has been examined leads this dissertation to assert a conclusive, public contempt for the British military command. Reporters, poets and, apparently, novelists as well were influenced by this viewpoint and copied it into their work. As Griffiths puts it in his novel, “Now the incompleteness of the subsidiary services of the English army became more strikingly apparent” (114). Such a joint – not to say national – response against a strand of the established leadership is the ultimate proof of the development towards a civic, constructive patriotism during the Crimean War.

*The Point of Perspective: External Criticism and Internal Sensitivity*

The incompetence of English officers did not merely exist in the popular mind as local gossip, but soon became a topic of ridicule for other nations. American author Mark Twain's short story, *Luck*, dwells on the matter in a way that delivers useful insights from an external perspective. His “enduring fascination with excessive types of male characters” (Obenzinger 175) led to a satirical take on the “illustrious” British military leaders. Twain’s “sketch” sees an anonymous officer rise to power in what appears to be “a product of incredible luck” (Twain). He managed to pass the examination board by mere chance, “while others, who knew a thousand times more than he, got plucked.” The legitimacy of his acquired position would normally have been challenged in an actual
conflict requiring a particular set of military skills. Yet, this man, who is compared to “a crippled child”, effortlessly continues his way to the top during the campaign in the Crimea in a series of fortunate events. “Every fresh blunder he made increased the lustre of his reputation.” But Twain’s narrative carries a submerged meaning. Typical of Twain’s characters, e.g. the infamous Tom Sawyer, is the “deficiency of guilt except under adverse conditions” (Stanovsky 458). In the short story, the officer is a blessed imbecile, who lacks any remorse as he remains blissful in his ignorance. Twain submits another character to address this moral gap. The clergyman who supported the officer from the start onwards, admits he feels “as guilty and miserable as the creator of Frankenstein” (Twain). His satire seems to be a clever assault not only on the inept army command, but on the flawed system of commissions and decorations and especially on the English public’s complacence. The officer’s life may seem to be governed by serendipity, but it was popular consent that allowed him to rise to prominence. “The deep, loving, sincere worship welling out of the breasts of those people” for this “unconscious” fool shows that the public is partly accountable for the misplaced honour. As if to reach a conclusion in a moral lesson, the narrator contemplates, “Who could ever have foreseen that they would ... put such a load of responsibility on such ... inadequate shoulders?” In Twain’s version of the facts, the British people are lulled by an uncritical sense of blind patriotism and contribute to the erosion of the British “glory” concept in their support of idiotic officers, who will “remain for ever celebrated.”

In addition to Twain’s refreshing perspective, this essay found that even English writers showed without any censorship how other nationalities poured scorn on the

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14 The notion of blunder in the context of British leadership comes close to being an ever present, international motif in both Crimean fiction and non-fiction.

15 As opposed to the typically humorous nature of his stories, Twain ostentatiously starts this one on a serious note, warning, “This is not a fancy sketch.”
British cause. The problematic identity of a population who at first blindly supported a war that sparked a lot of controversy is subject to criticism in the earlier mentioned novels too. The imperial invasion of the Crimea becomes troublesome, as Spanish residents in Gibraltar seem displeased with their English rulers ("Cursed red-coat!—common, beggarly soldier!" (Griffiths 75). The blind patriotism of the young, bellicose protagonist of *The Thin Red Line* is contrasted with the constructiveness of a Spanish girl, his lover, who immediately perceives the futility of war. Her "face turned ghastly white" (82) at the idea of her lover leaving for the front. At the end of the narrative, the Spanish girl reaffirms her pacific beliefs, "How I hated that war!" (233), which acts as a reminder of her liberal judgement and civic patriotism. Even in the British trenches, there is discomfort as to the purpose of the war. An Irish private objects to his English subalterns, "Ye may call it fightin’, but it’s just murder I call it meself" (Henty). With the orchestrated Act of Union, the aftershocks of the Irish Potato Famine and the Rebellion of 1848, it was hard for the Irish to live by the idea of “Englishness”, let alone share the imperial pride. The reactions of these people are essentially more sincere than those of the hypocritical, English public. Their responses “translate into solidarity beyond national boundaries” (Viroli 144), because they share an honest “love for common liberty”, which is unattainable for the British as long as they continue their imperial aggressiveness.

That hypocrisy, in part, must have been the reason why the authors of these novels avoided the perspective of actual combatants; much like poets such as Tennyson did. The characters mostly observe the action at the front, rather than participating in the fighting. In this role of spectator, they steer clear of liability for what later turned out to be a controversial conflict and the authors manage to keep at a respectful distance. Another explanation for this phenomenon could be that the available sources pertaining to Crimean battles and camp life largely originated from visiting journalists. Perusing the
novels, the perspective of the onlooker not only seems a logical consequence in view of
the former arguments, but appears to be the only way that allows a comprehensive
experience of the Crimean War. Henty refers to the dilemma of a soldier’s combat
perspective: “I thought in a battle ... one would see something of the general affair, but I
certainly did not”. Encompassing eyewitness reports of battles generally position their
point of view on top of an overlooking hill and even then “a thick cloud of smoke” (Henty)
could lead to situations where one “can hear, though ... can’t see” (Kingston). But, as Mark
Smith suggests, this focus on what is visually perceived is an inadequate method for the
reconstruction of historical experiences. Smith acknowledges the importance of the entire
catalogue of the human senses in tracing the true nature of past events. This notion in
itself is not innovating, as scholars have already noted the significance of sensory
experience in a war context\textsuperscript{16} and this essay mentioned before how the British public
embraced such vibrant press reports. Although, it helps in identifying works that succeed
in reshaping a faithful war experience and, as a result, provide a strong foundation for a
legitimately patriotic nation.

In a comparative analysis of the novels that have been dealt with, it seems they
prefer the use of visual elements. “Many an eye was watching”, “horrified at seeing”, “the
most dreadful spectacle”, “with telescopes in hand” (Kingston) are but a few references in
just one novel. Audible elements are prevalent as well: “hear the boom of cannon” (Henty),
“do you hear that firing” (Griffiths 103), “hear one of them groaning” (Kingston). These
observations are explained by Smith as a consequence of “the post-Platonic, Western
sensory hierarchy promoting the supposedly “higher” senses of hearing and, especially,
seeing” (844). More directly, it stems from the limitations of the spectator’s experience.

\textsuperscript{16} Cf. Santanu Das’ \textit{Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature}. 
The use of other senses is less common, but still present. The noses of readers are stimulated by the odours in the British camps, mostly in connection to “the smell of the food” (Henty) or the “abominably-smelling” body parts struck by disease and “horribly-smelling” essence of death (Kingston). In combination with the mention of food, the faculty of taste, however, is more typical, especially when it comes to a post-traumatic “want of taste” (Griffiths 80). In *Jack Archer*, the narrator describes how “his lips were parched with excitement and ... gunpowder”, which refers to the brother of the main character. The author cannot send his protagonist into battle, but cleverly uses a minor character to introduce battle-inspired sensations. Even tactile experience is included in the narratives, though it is very rare because it too seems incompatible with the perspective of a non-participant. Only Kingston (“not a shot touched her”) and Henty (“from their front sap they could absolutely touch the abattis”) incorporate it in their novels. The remainder is used in a different sense: “untouched by the events of the day” (Griffiths 141). Other instances of sensory perception can also be metaphorical: “smelt the coming fight” (Griffiths 181) and “a taste of our cutlasses” (Kingston).

These authors endeavoured to recreate a vivid Crimean background to their main storylines. The result is an ambivalent showcase for both the glory of brave Britain and the failure of a divided nation in a contested war. Their works are key components in the Crimean moral discourse, involving periodical and poetical writings as well, which explores the patriotic constitution of an expanding empire. That purpose of these narratives, nonetheless, is restricted by their fictional qualities. Their realistic portrayal of the senses “stimulate our powers of imagination to their fullest extent” (Smith 846), which invokes useful responses from the readers. More importantly, this essay pointed out at the start of this chapter that their narratives are the products of their own experience as British citizens during the Crimean War. Nevertheless, their depictions of
Crimean life will always be labelled as a mere interpretation of the past. As Smith puts it, such attempts at copying the conditions of foregone times “can invite uncritical acceptance of the legitimacy and accuracy of contemporary characterizations” (843). The present reader can shape his own image of the Crimean War, using all types of documents, but it is impossible to relive or even recount the exact same experience of an eyewitness. Sensations such as odour or taste are bound to a certain context and, as soon as that moment has passed, “that world ... has evaporated” (845). Therefore, it would be in the interest of this essay’s research to include first hand sources. The analysis of news reports have added to the main discussion, but such writings are often influenced by commercial purposes, the political preferences of the periodical and the expectations of their readership. A medium that is, possibly, less motivated by these factors would be that of the journal or the memoir.

**The role of the female at the Crimea**

*Emancipation and Identification*

The addition of such works by Mary Seacole and Fanny Duberly to the corpus of this essay, therefore, arises from a point of originality. This pertains not only to the authors as direct witnesses, but foremost to their civilian and female identity. In their own time, they were already acclaimed for their contributions on the Crimean War. Arthur Griffiths, for example, mentions “Mother Charcoal” in his novel as “a stout but comely negress ... of an enterprising nature” (272) who quickly invaded the hearts of the soldiers. Fanny Duberly, then, is portrayed by a reporter in an issue of *Bentley’s* as “a soldier's wife” with an “unaffected sympathy for all that is good” and “that true English spirit of piety” (23). Indubitably, the efforts of these women to record their own version of the Crimean conflict helped to expand its legacy. Present-day readers may increase their
understanding of public patriotism, analysing as much narratives of individuals, like these, as possible. By no means, however, should the consumption of these works be considered just for the sake of femininity. The writings of Seacole and Duberly should not be interpreted as an attestation of a different kind of experience, resulting from gender differences. Their narratives should be read, rather, as Santanu Das suggests, because of cross-gender similarities in their response to the vast scale of violence and suffering.

The Crimean novels that were discussed partially confirm the typical, Victorian image of the submissive and fragile woman. In this context, Seacole's memoir and particularly Duberly's journal initially appear to serve as a reminder of this detrimental viewpoint. Seacole speaks of her struggle “to persuade the public that an unknown Creole woman would be useful to their army” (74). She mentions how the “battlefield was a fearful sight for a woman to witness” (159). The only reason for her presence is to “do my woman’s work” (153). Yet still, soldiers tell her, “it’s not the place even for you, who knows what hardship is” (84). Nevertheless, Seacole’s work as a nurse and innkeeper seems more meaningful than Duberly’s passive role as an officer’s wife. Her part in the manly world at the Crimea is restricted by her dependence on her husband and her servants. Without her husband, she can provide no legitimation for her presence, which is why she would “endure any hardship than be separated from him” (80). Her lodgings are based on a ship, because, as a woman, she cannot live among the soldiers; many a day she has to spend “imprisoned in my cabin” (21). In a tourist-like fashion, she seems preoccupied with the surrounding scenery and local town activity, as her actions are limited to observation. The moment when Duberly is first confronted with the horrors of warfare, she already speaks of “as much suffering as I ever wish to experience” (9), not yet aware of future events. Seacole also admits early on that her “worst anticipations were realized” (74). Moreover, she yields to a similar inclination of touristic observation any time a
particular scene “formed a picture so excitingly beautiful that we forgot the suffering” (165). In a specific scene, Duberly and some officers are dining in a saloon, while another officer is caught in a death struggle with cholera. The dinner party, where “champagne corks flew”, is “separated from the ghastly wrangle only by a screen” (74). At this point she starts to feel out of place as a female in an emotionless world, inhabited almost solely by men. The Crimean experience makes Duberly feel “so worn and weak” (70) and occasionally leads to “a rush of tears” in both women’s works (Seacole 87); the archetypal behaviour of a Victorian lady in a distressful environment.

Seacole and Duberly’s observations, nonetheless, do not fall short of a soldier’s experience. At first they share in the blind, jingoist support of the imperial glory and even towards the end of their narratives, these outbursts still occur. Seacole admits she “shared in the general enthusiasm” (75) and Duberly too felt “a high degree of excitement” (102). Similar to Tennyson’s *Heavy Brigade*, they use the plural form to indicate the common struggle: “We fought as all know Englishmen will fight” (129). Witnessing “the magnificent din of war” (108), they were mesmerised into defending “a cause it was so glorious to fight and bleed for” (Seacole 76). Seacole states that convalescent soldiers, after “enduring a few days’ pain, gain the tender love of relatives and sympathy of friends” (198). Duberly is more extreme in her views on sustained losses after a battle, nuancing, “these sad sights are merely the casualties of war” (47).

However, much like the characters in the examined novels, they soon witness the full monstrosity of battles from an exterior perspective. Duberly continues to use a touristic, panoramic approach, but it increasingly shifts towards a melancholic “sight ... I never shall be able to throw entirely away” (285). At times, she even grows “blind with watching” (222). Seacole, in her role as nurse, “was soon too busy to see much” (170). Furthermore, the spectator involuntarily becomes involved in the war, as “now and then a shell would
fall among the crowd of on-lookers” (Seacole 168). In the end, newspaper readers at home “were much more familiar with the history [of the war] at their own firesides, than we who lived in it” (147). These women remain close enough to the violence and often haunt the battlegrounds afterwards, allowing them to empathise with the combatants. Such instances of close contact establish “the subjectivity of the women, marking their transformation both as witnesses and participants” (Das 178). Duberly’s narrative turns into a very realistic, gruesome portrayal of battle scenes, with “the foul heap of green and black, glazed and shrivelled flesh” (285), “living cakes of mud” (196), “the ruddy glare of blood” (122) and “desecrated ... dead” (67). Seacole includes realistic elements (“the poor body is torn and rent in hideous ways” (165) in her writings as well. Still, her descriptions of suffering are more reserved (“why should I sadden myself or my readers?” (154). The excessive exposure to suffering, like the soldier, makes the women “so indifferent and callous that nothing dismays” (Duberly 162), “so deadened to danger had the excitement ... made us” (Seacole 168). Santanu Das explains how this “self-protective callousness” was “required by the young female ... to cope with the general atmosphere of inhumaness” (175). In their identification with the situation of the soldiers, Duberly starts to distance herself from other spectators, which she calls “amateurs” who “have no business within range” of the guns (273). Her status as naïve witness evolves towards the rank of participative observer. The officer’s wife becomes tired of waiting passively “in inaction too long” (66). She is convinced of her public role as informant and whistle-blower. Furthermore, the constant proximity to her husband was obscured by a domestic veil, which is now lifted, as she asserts a matriarchic role of caretaker, towards her husband and others, similar to Seacole’s nursing. These moments of female activity in a war zone “signalled emancipation” (Das 186).
The stage of war is “characterized by a certain fluidity and liminality” (Poon 508). Both women repeatedly manage to invade masculine, military territory, either “disguised” and losing all “traces of a lady” (Duberly 73) or using a “bag of bandages” as “a passport” (Seacole 158). Seacole grows very close to her “soldier-friends” (185), not just as a harmless mother figure, but as a “woman-comrade” (127); the nurse turns into a true “Crimean heroine” (76). These Victorian ladies transgress sexual boundaries and become part of the army, all but on official terms. They transcend the prescribed gender relations\(^{17}\) and even reverse them as “rough bearded men stand by and cry like the softest-hearted women at the sights of suffering” (98). Masculinity and femininity are conflated, because “war, like death, is a great leveller, and mutual suffering” made them all equal (192). The female, in her prominent presence as nurse or other occupation, is no longer excluded from war communication, as “knowledge flows across genders ... through active service” (Das 187).

For Queen and Country: Seacole and Duberly as Pioneering Patriots and the Epitomes of ‘Englishness’

Considering their unique bond with the soldiers, Duberly and Seacole’s legitimate testimony would have incited a passionate response from the English public. Basically, their writings act as guidelines for the exploration of British patriotism. Either woman admits that the English soldier is subject to horrific trauma. Typically, they lament the waste of youth, for instance after the charge of the Light Brigade, “the flowers of English chivalry that had there been reaped and mown away!” (Duberly 207). The source of all this pain, once more, is “mismanagement and privation” (Seacole 113). Duberly, in her upper class obsession with horses, cannot fathom how the “commanders should have

\(^{17}\) Effectively, they find themselves in a transgender state, literally embodied by a cross-dressing Duberly. Seacole, in becoming a mother figure, achieves a “non-threatening, and desexualized feminine identity” (Poon 509).
suffered the surviving horses of our Light Cavalry Brigade to die” (143), among a series of other complaints about military miscalculations. She calls for “men who are in a position to lead” (311).

In Seacole’s memoir, the “inadequate staff” (75) is not necessarily assaulted in a similar way, although the origin of her adventure is just as provocative. In a persistent manner, she had addressed the war office to voluntarily offer her service as a nurse at the Crimea. Eventually, she sets out alone on her noble, self-financed quest. Whereas she does not “blame the authorities who would not listen to the offer of a motherly yellow woman” (78), she goes out of her way to persuade her readership of her honest attempts to benefit the British cause. Evidence of her intentions is the enclosure of many letters she received from thankful patients and friends. What indeed might have been an initially hesitating reaction from the public to send a black nurse, would in hindsight stir enormous indignation among her readers. “If the authorities had allowed” her (80), she would have assisted in alleviating the suffering of British soldiers. Seacole mindfully plays the public, when she argues that she would “carry [her] busy (and the reader will not hesitate to add experienced) fingers where the sword or bullet had been busiest” (75). Throughout her writings she addresses her readership in an identical fashion, in order to simulate an artificial bond. It is part of her strategy “to negotiate a socially and economically comfortable position for herself vis-a-vis a white metropolitan audience” (Poon 502). As opposed to Duberly, she did not automatically enjoy the privileges of an English descent. In her role of nurse and innkeeper, however, she got “the chance to take on the duties and responsibilities of an Englishwoman” (508), which at least established a synthetic

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18 See Appendix B.
19 "Was it possible that American prejudices against colour had some root here?" (79). Seacole, a Jamaican woman under British rule, mentions a point of racial discrimination, that could harm the credibility of the British nation, much like the examples in the novels.
connection with the mother nation. As a matter of fact, Duberly had to convince her readers just as much of her intentions, due to her ambiguous, civilian presence at the Crimea. She too had to devise a narrative that linked her person simultaneously to the imperial and sentimental ideology of the public. The credibility of these women’s works depended not only on their connection with the soldiers abroad, but also with the people at home. By and large, their conduct was motivated by the “idea of embodying Englishness” (502), typical behaviour of Victorian civilians, but also indispensable in a patriotic account.

The obvious strategy for these ladies was the insertion of nostalgic references of life in England. “Victorian patriotic writing [...] came to be intimately linked to longings for home” (Markovits 128). Duberly reminisces about “the quiet Sundays at home”, with “pleasant walks to church, through sunny fields and shady lanes” (3). She voices her wistfulness, “Oh, English memories!” (233) and pleads, “Give me the smallest house in England, with a greenhouse and a stable, and I will sigh no more” (10). Seacole had spent some time in London, but was not as familiar with English traditions. Instead, she uses the concept of suffering and caretaking to project a feeling of homesickness onto her patients. According to Seacole, “a woman’s voice and a woman’s care have brought to their minds recollections of those happy, English homes” (127). In other words, the independent, self-financed activities of this initially unsupported woman still have the ability to invoke images of home. Like a “black Nightingale”, Seacole “thus appropriates a radically individualist and entrepreneurial rhetoric in order to imbue nursing with a palpable Englishness” (Goodlad 164). Throughout her memoir, she utilises that notion to shape the contours of English domestic life in a foreign country. The transferal of English standards into foreign lands can be interpreted as the ultimate nationalist experiment; this act concretises the core of nineteenth century, imperial patriotism and its transition towards
nationalism. Although, a core principle of patriotic dedication can also be observed in the action of shaping the Crimean camps into a piece of identifiable England. Inhabiting this Crimean copy of England, Seacole did not merely perform the same tasks of the Englishwoman, she replaced her entirely. With the soldiers separated “thousands of miles from mother, wife, or sister” (126), she symbolised “the comforts and values of home in the relative absence of other white British women” (Poon 502). Seacole writes, it was “like having a large family of children” (152). As “Mother Seacole”, she was imbued “with a new and essentially female mode of power—domestic surveillance” (Goodlad 153). She looked after the soldiers as if they were her own “sons” (140) with the same English blood running through their veins. This way she was elevated to a position of patriotic reverence similar to that of medieval kings and absolute monarchs. Similar to their paternal power, her maternal role lent her authority and transformed her into the pivot of the Crimean setting. Soldiers would gather in her inn between the battles that were fought in the name of Queen and Country. On their calling her a mother, she explains to her readers, “there was something homely in the word” (127). Seacole symbolised home and, therefore, embodied “Englishness”; she was the personification of both the Queen and the motherland the soldiers were fighting for.

Duberly’s account, as a series of observations from an English tourist and servile wife, leads to identical evocations of English domestic life, with rides through “lovely home scenery” (52), before “hurrying home to be in time for dinner” (32). Her descriptions of local towns are typical pastoral scenes. Just as easily, however, she disrupts that image: “the absence of trees takes away from the ‘home’ feeling” (180). As this domestic construction collapses, she reminds her readership that the inhumanity of warfare sooner or later dissociates itself from anything homely. It seems soldiers – and these women – consistently shifted from a (pseudo) domestic environment to a hostile warzone and back.
This phenomenon is emphasised by Duberly in her relation of the cavalry's typical spare time occupation: horse racing. She mentions how they moved “from the race-course to the battlefield, from the camp to the course” (Duberly 172). The incessant cycle between home and danger mirrored the public’s behaviour. Their affection for the ordinary soldier lead to a confusing mixture of supporting his march to battle and praying for his safe return; praising his glorious sacrifice and lamenting the waste of his death. This amalgam personifies the overlapping nature of the many conceptualisations of patriotism. Although, generally, there was a linear evolution from the approbation of war to a yearning for peace; a development from blind to constructive patriotism.

From a wider perspective, life in the camps marked a transitional stage between the home front and the warfront. In this liminal position, soldiers and others inevitably brought along their English habits to the Crimea and established a comfort zone, to cope with the fraught conditions. Yet, it never truly satisfied their nostalgic cravings nor completely shielded them from harrowing events. Civilians, such as Seacole, Duberly and many reporters, who were stuck in this zone for a large part of the war, acted as pioneers for the nation’s ideology, adapting their patriotic notions to their surroundings. As a prelude to the changing mindset of the public, their writings move away from blind jingoism towards an honest, constructive patriotism, that favoured the identification with, or appreciation of national heritage. In combination with that longing for home, or establishing of a surrogate, it all came down to the patriotic safeguarding of England as the fatherland, or, in light of the significant role of women, the motherland. The word “excites the sense of belonging to a greater unity that prompts one to do one's share” (Viroli 117).

Their writings do not differ from other Crimean texts in their gradually shifting opinion on the sacrifice of the soldier. The analysis of press reports already showed how
the notion of death would rapidly evolve from an instance of collateral damage to a waste of British heritage. However, the reactions of these women are still unique as a result from the fusion of the civilian perspective and the soldier's experience. At a point in their narratives, they embrace death as a deliverance from suffering ("I should merely shrug my shoulders and lie down quietly" (Duberly 163); a difficult concept to grasp for the public at home. Duberly even introduces the theme of death into her touristic observations, when she envisions the calm sea "like beauty newly dead" (234). To her, the demise of the soldier actually continued to have heroic qualities. She recalls "a death won with such impetuous courage that the memory of it must last throughout all time" (128). The focus on the waste of life and deliverance of death, coincides with the old notion of bravery, which continues to be an important motif in Duberly's account ("individual instances of courage are too many for me to record separately" (113). This can be explained as a consequence of the charge of the Light Brigade. Duberly was obsessed with the cavalry and its horses. After the ignominious debacle, she wanted to restore its lustre and emphasised the bravery of the charge ("Groom fought like noble, squire like knight, As dauntlessly and well" (127). Nonetheless, her rhetoric conflates social categories and raises the "groom" and "squire" to a higher, noble status, much like Tennyson's poetical version of the transpired events. She already assumed that the ordinary soldier would become the new pivotal element in the imperial ideology of the people. For the rest of the war, the cavalry performed the "ungracious work of special constables" (273), keeping civilians like herself away from battle scenes, and their proud horses withered away as logistic transportation devices.

Duberly adjusted to this change, because she was aware of her key position as intermediary between the Crimean events and the home public. She knew her journal was of equal value to the reports in the newspapers. She mentions the press as "our best
general, our most unflinching leader” (311) and “so long as every man is familiarised, as it were, with the life of the soldier, so long will this war be a popular war”. According to Duberly, unconditional absence of censorship was needed to keep the public informed and, consequently, satisfied. Viroli notes, “by telling our fellow-citizens the truth we give them a powerful weapon to resist tyranny” (98); it functions as a central quality of liberty in civic patriotism and similar conceptions. A “popular war” is not necessarily a celebrated war. By the end of the Crimean conflict, it was still “popular”, due to the continued efforts of the press and other writers such as Duberly. Through the coverage in the press, the public was able to voice its opinions and even influence the general direction of the war. The press turned out to be a far better leader than the British staff. Duberly’s use of the term “popular” most definitely refers to the Crimean events as a people’s war. Moreover, the reports were also useful to those at the Crimea, because they “cheered the hearts that were well-nigh failing, and gave animation, hope, and courage to all” (293). Likewise, the empathic writings of Duberly and Seacole offered soldiers a meaningful reflection on their experiences. It was this duty as reporter, which in time gave Duberly a sense of responsibility and usefulness as a Victorian woman away from home. She herself had always hoped to "wear out [her] life, and not rust it out" (102). As Das concludes, “While the act of ‘witnessing’ suggests a certain degree of exteriority and detachment, the idea of ‘service’ is of the order of action and participation” (188). Seacole’s narrative reached this level of servitude, as well, in its shape of “a self-endorsing testimonial of patriotic and heroic work performed during the Crimean War” (Poon 501).

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20 The editor of her book nuances this opinion: “It was by means of private letters, handed from man to man and read with the greatest eagerness, that the true state of the case became known; and it was only when starvation and cold had done their work, and concealment was no longer possible, that the Times broke silence, and endeavoured to gain credit as the mouthpiece of public indignation. – ED.”
Their patriotic contributions to the glory of the British nation were as much acts of gender defiance. Similar to adventurous males enlisting in the army, they partly escaped the restrictive boundaries of domestic life\textsuperscript{21}. Goodlad mentions, “the profundity with which constructions of gender and sexuality are implicated within histories of the political” lead to “a far-reaching transformation of what the political and its history are understood to include” (143). The very participation of Duberly and Seacole, in combination with their literary attestation of it, added to the short revival of liberal patriotism, the continuous reinterpretation of “Englishness”, and the British legacy of the Crimean War. Although, these women had suffered as much as the soldiers they supported and, like the public, wished for peace, much of their emancipating functionality relied on their presence in the Crimean War. It is not surprising, therefore, that they showed “regret … that the play was fairly over, that peace had rung the curtain down, and that we, humble actors in some of its most stirring scenes, must seek engagements elsewhere” (Seacole 197).

\textbf{Conclusion}

Throughout human’s existence, myriads of men and women have left their mark on a particular field of knowledge or a physical piece of heritage. These attributes have been passed on ages upon ages, in the progress of humanity, forming different cultures and nations. Whereas all share a genetically identical origin, the descent of man has led to a wide differentiation within the human race. This diversity is inherent to nature, as all individuals possess unique qualities. Yet, men and women that have lived close to each other as a result of familial or other bonds, develop certain qualities and ideas that

\textsuperscript{21} In spite of this, they had to fashion the masculine habitat into a pseudo-domestic environment, as mentioned earlier, to provide a frame of validity for their actions at the Crimea. In the end, their experiences never really replaced their Victorian responsibilities as wife or mother. The significance of their participation in the Crimean expedition lies mainly in their exploration of the male territory of war, as pioneers not just for the entire country, but specifically for its women.
separate them from others as a group, rather than as an individual. These common characteristics are part of the foundations of culture and society. In the evolution of civilisation, they gradually protrude social, economic, religious and political levels. As they become part of the shared heritage, they obtain a sacred status and become anchored in the identity of such groups. History has shown that only radical insights, that affect the majority of the group, have the ability to change the ideology of this union.

This fact is the fundamental principle that led to a shift in the public interpretation of British patriotism and, consequently, “Englishness”. The latter concept evolved together with the expansion of England and the rise of the British Empire. From Anglo-Saxon times into the nineteenth century, and of course up to the present, the notion partially kept its ancient roots and partially adapted to contemporary conditions. As a constant feature, it has always emphasised a shared Anglo-Saxon ancestry and a sense of liberty. By the time of the Victorian, industrial period, “Englishness” was largely imbued with national pride and imperial spirit. In spite of this, the century was host to controversial events such as the Crimean War which momentarily distorted that nationalistic vision of “Englishness”.

In a way to define nationalism, as differing from patriotism, this essay mentioned how it is more directed at discrimination, instead of identification. The British imperial ethos, indeed, resulted in innumerable discriminatory acts in different continents. Although, the literary sources in this dissertation have evinced that identification was just as fundamental to “Englishness”. Thus, for the large part of the nineteenth century, it pertained a concoction of both nationalism as blind patriotism. During the early moments of the war, journalists convinced the public of the need to check the immoral Russian invasion, although a hidden, politico-economic agenda to protect its imperial assets had instigated Britain's involvement. It acts as an example of typical political behaviour at the
time, particularly of the Conservative party, to abuse patriotic language for nationalistic purposes. The extent to which the public had been brainwashed becomes clear in the narratives of novelists such as Henty, Griffiths and Kingston. Their protagonists are portrayed as courageous soldiers, albeit initially blinded by a desire to fight and die for the fatherland. The same sense of glory is evoked in Tennyson’s *Charge of the Light Brigade*, and Smith and Dobell’s *Sonnets on the War*, where the charge exemplifies British devotion and pride. Additionally, female autobiographical writers, such as Seacole and Duberly, perhaps offer the best opportunities to imagine civilian bellicosity through their quasi-enrolment in the army. These facts alone lead to the assertion that the Crimean periodical articles and literary writings, as cultural capital, are useful sources to demonstrate Britain’s national identity, which incorporated a nationalistic, imperial ideology. Of course, the purpose of this dissertation was to argue that Crimean writings temporarily altered this view.

Resisting that development, a small group of journalists attempted to reduce the blame directed at the military command and the government, which can be characterised as acts of blind and possibly constitutional patriotism. In the typical reactionary loyalty to the establishment, they condemned the very phenomenon that allowed the critical evaluation of political and military measures: the interactive responses of the public to the uncensored war reportage. Periodical reports of battles and camp life invited the population to share their thoughts in readers’ letters to the editor of the periodical. Moreover, they catalysed the literary production during and after the war which was also a form of response. An obvious example was Tennyson’s *Charge*, published in the *Examiner*, which in turn led to additional interactions, but the discussed novels and memoirs functioned in this manner as well. The use of the spectator’s role in Tennyson’s poems, Smith and Dobell’s verse, the Crimean novels, and Seacole and Duberly’s
narratives transferred the audience to the distant warfront and united it in unanimous solidarity. It was a way of summoning the likes of a single readership that historically had been growing apart as a consequence of domestic reading and social divergence. Furthermore, it repudiated the disputed relevance of prose and verse, and provided evidence of its practical relevance in relation to its publication in the periodical format.

As initial war fervour slowly perished, the population came together as readers in their attempts at easing the plight of the ordinary soldier and condemning the high command for its mismanagement. The dialogic attestations in the periodical press and different literary genres assembled the public as one voice and signalled their active participation in the conflict. It was the ultimate sign of the (re)birth of liberal patriotism.

The evolution from antiquity indicated how patriotism was founded on the notion of identification and liberty. Although, at first, patriots literally identified with the land they inherited, they soon shifted their focus either to the common culture, the people, the supreme leader or eventually the nation. Whereas the latter is a prerequisite for nationalism, it was the idea of liberty that prevented the corruption of the patriot. In the nineteenth century, this liberal aspect was still important in the entrepreneurial vision. That is to say, it would have been completely overshadowed by the jingoism of the Empire, had the Crimean War not delivered a brief interlude of civic, constructive and moderate patriotism. Laborde's liberal vision; the loyalty to assessment in the study of Schatz, Staub and Lavine; and Vincent’s unpatriotic ode to “plurality and uncertainty” are all attested in the Crimean texts that have been discussed.

Apart from the periodical accounts and their dialogic relationship, Crimean literature offers extensive descriptions and poetical language that emphasise the significance of this liberal patriotism in the mid-Victorian period. Tennyson's *Light Brigade* offers both an interpretation of a blind charge out of pure aggression and that of a more heroic attempt
at preserving British (aristocratic) values. His *Heavy Brigade* gave the public national heroes; the poem offered younger generations a patriotic role model, and older ones a reminiscent view of the public’s claim on the ordinary soldier as national martyr. His poems are liberal in a way that they provide a confluence of social categories, of the noble and the simple. Within the same poetical spectrum, Smith and Dobell’s sonnets stress the waste of English blood, which goes against the patriot’s attempt at preserving the nation’s identity. In the case of the Crimean novelists, the contradiction between national glory and dismay at the brutality of warfare combine into a patriotic whole of critical identification. Their harrowing realism is enforced by the application of all the sensory faculties. These authors assumed the mantle of constructive patriotism, as they convinced their readership of the depravity of war and provided arguments in favour of pacific diplomacy. They use nostalgic elements as well to aid in the patriotic identification of the front with home, which is a predominant theme in the memoir of Mary Seacole and the journal of Fanny Duberly. These women not only longed to return to their homeland, they transformed the Crimean camps into domestic territory, which is the ultimate sign of patriotic devotion. The efforts of all these writers conjoined in a common denunciation of the amateurish British military staff. They all expressed their aversion to the military mismanagement and the ensuing political blame game. Seacole, in particular, did not explicitly assault the government or the army’s leaders, but their stubborn refusal to accept her services as nurse, all the more reveal a corrupt and truly unpatriotic leadership. The public discourse, as an endeavour to remedy the political misconduct and alleviate the conditions at the warfront, brought about a momentary shift away from aggressive nationalism; the British public achieved the status of pure patriots, returning to the ancient, liberal rudiments.
The Crimean writings did not just display acts of patriotism, they functioned as a way to confirm the identity of the authors as part of that patriotic body. The use of perspective was instrumental in accomplishing this effect. As noted, Tennyson removed the presence of the observer in his *Light Brigade* in order to allow both a soldier’s perspective and that of a civilian; it exempted him from any accusations as to the legitimacy of his work. As a contrast, he explicitly applied the angle of the bystander in his *Heavy Brigade*, giving his audience a patriotic tour into Crimean battlefields. Similarly, the novelists used characters that refrain from participating in the fighting as onlookers. They use a narrator’s perspective, introducing the pacific thoughts of other nationalities, in a way to avoid liability to any belligerence of their protagonists. The analysis of Twain’s narrative, as a non-British case, affirmed the international dismay at the imperial aggression and military blunders. The inclusion of differentiated views on warfare and factual evidence helped to secure the position of those British novelists as honest patriots. That creative manipulation of perspective was not possible in Duberly’s journal or Seacole’s memoir. Nonetheless, they managed to assert the role of patriot more convincingly, even as domestic women in Victorian times. Their female presence at the Crimea seems controversial at first, but they were soon promoted from the passive role of tourist to one of a participative actor. Duberly assumed the function of a journalist that transferred the “truth” to the public and added to the ongoing dialogue. Seacole financed her own venture to the Crimea to become a nurse, innkeeper and surrogate mother to the soldiers. They were pioneers as civilians venturing into a warzone and as women residing in male territory. In addition, their narratives conflate and reverse gender views on masculinity and femininity. Their experiences corresponded to those of male combatants. Furthermore, soldiers were often reduced to helpless infants and these women had to display their courage and skill in their self-proclaimed duties. Although their
emancipation still relied on the principles of domestic “Englishness”, they used identification to claim a state of independence and patriotic virtue. These women became matriarchic figures, resembling the paternal monarchs of preceding centuries and acquiring a similar sense of patriotic embodiment for their subjects, i.e. mainly the soldiers, but also their readers. By and large, the writers of Crimean literature and periodical articles were invested with the patriotic traits that their works propounded. In the process of writing and publishing, the notion of “Englishness” was equipped with a liberal sense of patriotism.

In light of the provided arguments, British imperialism and nationalism during the Victorian period should not be overgeneralised. Among other conflicts in the nineteenth century, the Crimean War realised an ideological modification in relation to the national identity of Britain. The public mood is not a constant factor, but submitted to what Vincent termed “plurality and uncertainty”. It is not necessarily a pretence of an opposition between patriotic and unpatriotic behaviour, but more of an indication that the notion of patriotism is fluid. In the chronicles of mankind, there has always been evidence that attests to the evolution of matter and mind. Yet, the peculiar propensity of history to repeat itself surfaces, when the present-day individual explores the depths of time and human knowledge. The Crimean war was as much an individual showcase, as it was another link in a chain of prior conflicts and imminent threats. Invariably, nations have sent their compatriots into battle. Whereas motivations may differ endlessly, patriotism has remained a central structure in the declaration of war.
Appendix A

Table of results for keyword search of “Crimea” in Nineteenth-Century Serials Edition

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Appendix B
A collection of letters from Seacole’s memoir

"Sebastopol, July 1, 1856.

"Mrs. Seacole was with the British army in the Crimea from February, 1855, to this time. This excellent woman has frequently exerted herself in the most praiseworthy manner in attending wounded men, even in positions of great danger, and in assisting sick soldiers by all means in her power. In addition, she kept a very good store, and supplied us with many comforts at a time we much required them.

"Wm. P——, “Adjutant-General of the British Army in the Crimea.”

(Seacole 132)

"Dear Mrs. Seacole,—It is with feelings of great pleasure that I hear you are safely arrived in England, upon which I beg to congratulate you, and return you many thanks for your kindness whilst in the Crimea.

"The bitter sherry you kindly made up for me was in truth a great blessing to both myself and my son, and as I expect to go to Bombay shortly, I would feel grateful to you if you would favour me with the receipt for making it, as it appears to be so very grateful a beverage for weakness and bowel complaints in a warm climate. With many kind regards, believe me, dear madam, your obliged servant,

“Samuel P——,
“Late Superintendent Army Works Corps.”

(Seacole 130)

"Upper Clapton, Middlesex, March 2, 1856.

"Dear Madam,—Having been informed by my son, Mr. Edward Gill, of St. George’s Store, Crimea, of his recent illness (jaundice), and of your kind attention and advice to him during that illness, and up to the time he was, by the blessing of God and your assistance, restored to health, permit me, on behalf of myself, my wife, and my family, to return you our most grateful thanks, trusting you may be spared for many years to come, in health of body and vigour of mind, to carry out your benevolent intention. Believe me, my dear madam, yours most gratefully,

“Edward Gill.”

(Seacole 131)

"Stationary Engine, December 1, 1855.

"I certify that I was severely attacked by diarrhœa after landing in the Crimea. I took a great deal of medicine, but nothing served me until I called on Mrs. Seacole. She gave me her medicine but once, and I was cured effectually.

"Wm. Knollys, Sergt., L.T.C.”

(Seacole 129)
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“A Month in the Crimea, after the Fall of Sevastopol.” *Bentley’s Miscellany* 1 January 1856: 221-238. *Periodicals Archive Online*. Web.


