**Operatic Battlefields, Theatre of War**

Flora Willson

As the allied bombardment of Sebastopol persisted through the spring of 1855, British, French and Turkish forces were joined by General La Marmora’s troops from Piedmont and Sardinia.[[1]](#footnote-1) Dispatches from the Crimean front continued to appear in the international media, but for the most part there was little progress to report. Undeterred by the lull, the satirical press offered readers a seemingly endless stream of lampoons and baroque absurdities. In April, the serious-minded, Boston-based *Dwight’s Journal of Music* jettisoned its conventional tone and overcame its geographical and political distance from the action to present its own contribution to wartime silliness. *Dwight’s* reported that the Sardinian tenor Giovanni Mario—celebrated as a lion of *bel canto* and as partner of the still more famous soprano Giulia Grisi—was thinking of joining his native army in Crimea. Evidently unsure whether the louder laugh was to be had from believing the claim in the first place, or from the ludicrousness of Mario’s military ambitions, the article settled for the latter. If Mario did indeed take to the battlefield,

the world will have to lament the spoiling of a good singer to make a bad soldier; for Signor Mario will find the bona fide soldier’s life in the field very different from the sham soldier’s life of the opera. The little squad of thirty or forty basses and tenors that make a grand army on the stage, is a much more manageable force than a division in the field, and the best martial air with which the prince of tenors ever rallied his forces in an opera, would be of little avail in the trenches of Sebastopol.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Having drawn up this basic distinction between operatic play-acting and the realities of military life, *Dwight’s* produced a litany of Mario’s “greatest hits” that would perhaps be heard no more. From “Una furtiva lagrima” (Donizetti’s *L’elisir d’amore*) to “Spirto gentil” (the same composer’s *La favorita*), these extracts—slow *romanze*—seem to have been chosen for their obviously sentimental qualities: they are vehicles for the tenor voice at its least aggressive, least forceful. It was precisely for this manner of singing that Mario was famous, his demeanor far removed from that of the military man as idealized at the mid-nineteenth century.

Yet Mario was not thereal target of *Dwight’s* satire. The article goes on to consider the best course of action for “Miss Coutts”—a mysterious figure famed for attending every single Mario performance, no matter where in the world he sang. For her, *Dwight’s* recommended

immediate enlistment in male apparel, in the Sardinian contingent, or a purchase of a choice loop-hole in the fortification of Sebastopol, from whence, with a hundred-horse power opera glass, she may inspect the movements of General Mario.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Here the comedy is more complicated. Coutts is considered automatically amusing, the scenario into which she is inserted redolent of many an opera plot. But there is also a significant sideswipe at the so-called “purchase system,” by which officers tendered family money for their commissions, regardless of qualification or experience on the battlefield. It is ultimately at this vilified practice (one abolished in the wake of the Crimean War), rather than at the familiar satirical double-act of Mario and Coutts, that *Dwight’s* takes aim.

I start with this item of journalistic ephemera because it foregrounds a central feature of Crimean War historiography. The idea that the Crimean War was to an unprecedented extent a *mediated* conflict has received considerable attention in recent scholarship, and has frequently been advanced as evidence of its status as the first truly modern war.[[4]](#footnote-4) Mary Favret’s work on the emergence of what she calls “modern wartime” makes this connection axiomatic, arguing that “the epistemology of modern warfare is an epistemology of mediation.”[[5]](#footnote-5) Favret’s focus is the Napoleonic Wars, but her contribution neatly encapsulates the ongoing debate about the relative modernity or conservatism of nineteenth-century warfare in general. In the Crimean context in particular, it is W. H. Russell’s frontline dispatches in *The Times*, Roger Fenton’s *in medias res* photographs, and the battles staged as a regular attraction of London’s mid-century nightlife that are repeatedly invoked in the accumulated evidence for the war’s status as—for the British, at least—fundamentally mediatized.[[6]](#footnote-6)

In each of these instances of a distant war mediated for a civilian population at home, we might also note a complementary reverse process: what we might call the militarization of the media forms themselves. With the electric telegraph and postal service between Britain and Crimea still unreliable, the reprinting of soldiers’ letters in newspapers became a primary conduit of information for local and national readerships. Fenton, we might recall, rose to prominence as a photographer largely through his documentary images of events and places in Crimea—the first time the medium was used in a military environment. And numerous theatrical shows in London that addressed the War brought invalided soldiers onto the theatrical stage as “living” proof. Not only did media forms become martial; members of the military increasingly became consumers of militarized media productions in their own right. The effects of mediatization on those at the frontline have not generally been addressed by Crimean War historians. Nor have military contributions to what was clearly a two-way process, in which events at the front were mediated, consumed, and formed a frame through which to view future events.

There is no shortage of examples of such mediations of the war within the military itself. We might, for example, consider the various dramatic troupes that emerged from among the British forces stationed in Crimea and put on military-themed entertainments—in one case in a specially-constructed 250-person theatre; or the fact that officers’ accounts of “their” war (in letters or diaries, later published) are routinely punctuated by the arrival of newspapers from home; or that it was apparently conventional for officers and visitors lucky enough to be accommodated in huts rather than tents to paste those newspapers over the wall boards, as both insulation and decoration. Colonel Edward Cooper Hodge, for instance, reported in a letter from October 1855 that he had “various scenes from *Punch* and the *Illustrated London News* depicted on the walls of my domicile”—a revelation that complicates any attempt to read those publications solely as records of wartime sentiment and public opinion back in London.[[7]](#footnote-7)

I raise these moments in which life at the front can be shown to be always already mediated—indeed, in which attempts to separate war and its mediations inevitably collapse—since they bring to light contiguities and continuities between spaces often considered at an almost total remove: between the men on the front line and the civilian population. There are various explanations that might be summoned as to why this new proximity of Britons at home and at war came about around the middle of the nineteenth century. The increased number of literate common soldiers in the British army must have played a part, as must the more rapid, more widely established communication and travel networks open to a growing proportion of the western European bourgeois populace. These social catalysts may have worked to blur boundaries between battlefield and domestic spaces, their differentiation “at a distance” being replaced by a grey area characterized by cycles of remediation. It is this grey area which concerns me above all in this chapter and which is central to my project in two ways. First, my principal geographic focus is on Constantinople, capital of the Ottoman Empire and the city through which all allied troops, observers and tourists passed between 1854 and 1856 en route to the Crimean front. It was an urban switchboard intimately connected with the War, many of its British wartime visitors and commentators eliding it with Crimea in a single, topographically vague sense of exotic Otherness. Yet Constantinople was simultaneously characterized by its distance from the battlefield and was seized on as the nearest metropolis—as an outpost of relatively “modern” urban life—for those with the means to come and go from the Crimean front.

Second, I hope to offer a new perspective on the war as a site of mediation by examining the presence of opera (which mostly meant Italian opera) in Constantinople, in Crimea, and ultimately on the battlefield itself. Unlike the war poetry read by Favret, or the visual art produced to record or monumentalize battles since time immemorial, music not only *reacted* to war.[[8]](#footnote-8) True, composers and publishers scrambled to produce Crimea-themed sheet-music for the British musical public—and enough “Sebastopol” quadrilles appeared in 1855 to merit an article about these “Dances of Death” in *Punch*.[[9]](#footnote-9) But “music” was also played and heard on the battlefield: in the form of the trumpet-and-drum signals still employed to communicate with the troops; and, more significantly for my purposes, in the performances of military bands in the evenings, on the march, or during funerals and other military ceremonies. On these occasions, as we shall see, the repertoire played was often dominated by operatic excerpts. This habitual remediation of opera on the Crimean frontline might channel our attention to larger historiographical themes, perhaps reflecting the newly elevated status accorded of band music in general around the time of the Crimean War.[[10]](#footnote-10) More importantly, the routine nature of opera’s presence might also prompt us to interrogate the kinds of auditory attention that the military band could demand. After all, it was in only the recent past that audiences of elite European music had, according to one highly influential narrative, “stopped talking and started listening.”[[11]](#footnote-11) And there is little question—even when allowing for geographical variation and for more a more gradual process of change than such headline-historiography might imply—that elite music performed in certain metropolitan spaces had, by the middle of the nineteenth century, begun to be thought to demand new modes of attention from its listeners.[[12]](#footnote-12) The Crimean frontline, and its bands’ remediation of operatic hits, may therefore provide the occasion to test the social diffusion and geographical reach of “modernized” listening habits at the mid-century.[[13]](#footnote-13) We might even ask how such shifts in listening practices in the years before the Crimean War might also have produced a widespread perception of the Crimean battlefield as one inundated by sound of all kinds; but reaching any conclusion (insofar as one might be possible) falls outside the remit of this project.

Nevertheless, by focussing on the war as it was saturated—however unexpectedly—by opera, this chapter attempts to recover a crucial aspect of the sensory experience it afforded. On the one hand, it encourages closer consideration of the rhetoric and social circumstances of the Crimean narratives available to us, pushing us to address the contingencies of particular elite references and experiences. On the other (and in some sense arguing from the opposite corner), such a focus serves to question our assumptions about the physical and discursive reach of opera at the mid-nineteenth century: to illuminate its presence in spaces far removed from its original social and geographical milieu. In the pages that follow, the very notion of “opera” stabilizes according to the three essential modes in which it was produced, consumed and made meaningful in the Crimea. First, opera as staged performances: an assemblage of performers, works and conventions imported from western European urban centres; a luxury item to be bought and displayed alongside other mobile commodities that signalled and were afforded by nineteenth-century globalization. Second, opera as a sonic metonym, represented (and, for many of its less socially elevated consumers, overshadowed) by a looser collection of associated musical experiences: excerpts and arrangements played by itinerant musicians or on abandoned pianos, or overheard on the streets or, most regularly, performed by military bands for the amusement of soldiers and civilians alike. Finally, opera in a third sense: as it was invoked by observers of the Crimean War—whether tourists, reporters, or commanding officers, all of whom participated in the war at a distance—as a metaphorical or symbolic point of reference.[[14]](#footnote-14) For these Crimean actors, opera was a filter through which to see and hear the war and its surroundings, a shorthand for the gilded, red-plush world inhabited by the war’s military elite. The twenty-first-century reader of officers’ memoirs and Crimean travelogues is thus confronted with a secondary battlefield: one in which observers’ and soldiers’ perspectives might be productively set in opposition.

**Cosmopolitan Constantinople (or, Between the battlefields)**

In 1837, when R. T. Claridge published his *Guide Along the Danube, from Vienna to Constantinople* in the wake of a trip made the previous year, he marvelled at how, in the Ottoman capital, “The total absence of carriage-wheels, clocks, bells, and all sonorous occupations, leaves the whole city wrapt in almost unbroken silence; while the people appear to be mute, and desirous of passing along the streets without being seen.”[[15]](#footnote-15) Claridge lingered over Constantinople’s so-called sonic void in order to draw a starker contrast with its magnificent Byzantine past.[[16]](#footnote-16) Yet he might equally have been comparing its soundscape to that of his native London, the “world city” of the 1830s, where noise seemed an inevitable by-product of industrialization—where hubbub and modernity went hand-in-hand.[[17]](#footnote-17) As heard by Claridge, Constantinople’s silence was not the peaceful idyll so often mourned by Londoners. Rather it constituted a series of striking absences: a dearth of modern technologies of transport and timekeeping, of any “theatre or public place of resort,”[[18]](#footnote-18) and ultimately of life itself, as if the inhabitants of such a backward city could be little else than muted and invisible.

Insofar as this Constantinople ever existed, it was vanishing in a wave of urban transformation by the late 1830s. When Sultan Abdülmecid succeeded his father Mahmud II in 1839, in a change of power that historian Philip Mansel identifies as inaugurating Constantinople’s “third golden age,” Mahmud had already begun rapid modernization of the city.[[19]](#footnote-19) The first official Ottoman newspaper, *Takvim-i Vekayi*, was launched in 1831; a new postal system was established in 1834;[[20]](#footnote-20) and, from the mid-1830s, regular steamer services ran to Odessa, Izmir and Marseille—reducing the journey time to the last of these cities from six weeks to six days.[[21]](#footnote-21) Abdülmecid shared his father’s desire to modernize the Ottoman Empire; he led it into an era that was, according to Mansel’s account, “torn between contradictory forces: between dynasticism and nationalism; capitalism and the pre-industrial state; Islam and Christianity; the Russian army and the Royal Navy.”[[22]](#footnote-22) Most important for my purposes, however, is the city’s equivocation equivocation between traditional Ottoman culture and its western counterpart, with the latter represented most obviously by Italian opera, nineteenth-century Europe’s most prestigious cultural export.

The decisive moment took place in 1826, when Mahmud II abolished the Janissary corps, his increasingly resented (and feared) elite infantry; he thereby did away with the Janissary bands, who had been the principal performers of traditional Ottoman ceremonial and military music. In their place, Mahmud recruited European musicians to establish a new Ottoman military band based on the European model. His first recruit, a French conductor called Manguel, was short-lived. His second, Giovanni Donizetti—the elder brother of the famous composer—was a great success: he remained in post from 1828 until his death in 1856, by which time he had been promoted to the lofty status of brigadier-general and had been conferred the honorific Donizetti Pasha. It was through this “other” Donizetti (the composer of *Lucia di Lammermoor* called Giovanni his “fratello turco”) that Italian opera was officially introduced to the Ottoman Court. Under Donizetti, the band’s repertoire was not limited to military music: it also included operatic extracts. The band frequently performed arias by Rossini or Donizetti Jr. in the city streets, even while accompanying the Sultan on his weekly processions to the mosque.[[23]](#footnote-23) Such was the popularity of this newly imported repertoire that word reached Paris that, as a result of the Sultan’s love of Italian opera, “the ancient Turkish music has died in agony.”[[24]](#footnote-24)

There are complex dynamics of cultural politics and domination at work here, symptomatic of Constantinople’s presence in an increasingly worldwide circuit travelled by European (and above all Italian) operatic works and performers. It was not only the new Ottoman military band that performed operatic extracts in the city: entire works were performed at theatres established in the Pera district of Constantinople (now Beyoğlu), which was populated largely by foreign emigrants and diplomats. Pera was so closely associated with the “Franks” (as all western foreigners were known) that in 1840 Murray’s first *Handbook* to the city reported sourly that “This suburb [...] is devoid of any Oriental character, and bears much resemblance to a second-rate Italian town.”[[25]](#footnote-25) It can be no coincidence that, in the same year, Constantinople’s first Italian opera house was opened in Pera (its inaugural production was apparently of Bellini’s *Norma*).[[26]](#footnote-26) The venue remained open until 1842, at which point it changed hands and was renamed the Naum Theatre after its new owners, two Syrian brothers. Under their directorship Italian opera became established in Constantinople, with new works—those of Verdi a case in point—increasingly receiving their first Turkish performances after a time-lapse comparable to that achieved by major operatic centres such as London and Paris.[[27]](#footnote-27)

More difficult to trace than *when* individual works first reached Constantinople is *how* audiences at the Naum Theatre reacted to the imported tradition. Special leaflets were produced by the theatre on its opening, not only to serve as publicity but to furnish advice on how one should behave in the new establishment. Among other instructions, prospective audience members were requested not to stand during performances and were informed that there should be no smoking, no fighting over seats and—above all—no noise.[[28]](#footnote-28) This final injunction is the most striking, revealing as it does something crucial about the Naum brothers’ ambition for their theatre. In 1840, elements of the audience at Her Majesty’s Theatre in London—the major opera-house in a city that fashioned itself as a cultural as well as industrial world-leader—had descended into riot in response to the establishment’s refusal to hire the star baritone Antonio Tamburini for the coming season. Newspaper reports of that occasion make it clear that, while rioting was unusual and generally considered unacceptable, talking during performances remained a conventional (if increasingly criticized) aspect of theatre attendance even in this prestigious venue. The shift charted by James Johnson by which operatic audiences fell silent and started to listen attentively, in other words, was still ongoing at this point. That around the same time, Constantinople’s new operatic public could be informed that silence was a prerequisite thus suggests a remarkable degree of respect for the medium as a form of instruction as well as entertainment.

This respect was shared, significantly, by opera’s other new market: London’s growing middle classes, whose attentiveness was matched by its desire to better itself. That the importation of Italian opera to Constantinople was anything but politically neutral is clear; indeed, it must be seen as one manifestation of the globalizing dynamics governing international cultural capital and participation in a “universal” elite culture. The comparison between Pera and London is instructive, not least because mid-century operatic cultures in cities across the globe developed in increasingly active dialogue with each other. In London audiences were marked by hierarchical divisions, with the top occupied by the established, aristocratic “fashionables,” for whom opera-going remained a largely social occasion, central to everyday life; on another level were the middle classes, growing gradually in number and political weight, whose new, markedly attentive presence in the opera house drew media attention (and constituted an emerging market for specialist music journals); on another level still were those in the lower classes who could never hope to attend an operatic performance, but for whom opera may nevertheless have constituted an important element in the auditory experience of urban life, whether mediated via domestic arrangements, open air band performances or street musicians. What is striking about the Crimean War’s establishment of a wartime experienced in Constantinople, as in London or in Sevastopol, was that it brought constituents of each of these groups of London’s operatic consumers into contact with Pera’s operatic culture. Moreover, as members of the allied forces regularly attended the Naum Theatre during the war, they wrought significant changes to Constantinople’s operatic scene. As the *United Service Magazine* observed ruefully towards the end of the war, “What a difference there was between the Pera opera-house of 1853 to 1854 and 1854 to 1855! I am not alluding to the cantanti, but to the audience.”[[29]](#footnote-29)

Traces of opera-going abound in Crimean War memoirs penned by officers and hangers-on alike. Lord George Paget, Colonel of the Fourth Light Dragoons (who rode in the Charge of the Light Brigade but whose reputation suffered from his decision to take home-leave with the war still ongoing) makes passing mention of regular visits to Pera’s “fairish” opera between accounts of other excursions and occasional overwrought commentary on the war itself.[[30]](#footnote-30) Colonel Hodge (commander of the Fourth Dragoon Guards, the man whose hut was decorated with copies of *Punch* and the *Illustrated London News*) records a night at the opera in late December 1855—the work was Verdi’s *Il trovatore*, “the singing and acting very respectable.”[[31]](#footnote-31) Edwin Galt, one of the war’s many battlefield tourists, reported on the “capital Italian opera” where he twice attended *Lucrezia Borgia*;[[32]](#footnote-32) but a self-styled “Roving Englishman” warned “the enlightened traveller” against an operatic excursion to Pera: “There is an unhealthy smell of dead rats about it—a prevailing dampness and dinginess—a curious fog, a loudness, a dirtiness.”[[33]](#footnote-33) Such terms were regularly employed by western visitors critical of Constantinople, who diagnosed the city as filthy, disease-ridden and overrun with packs of wild dogs.[[34]](#footnote-34) It is interesting, then, that the same author goes on to relate how, before attending the opera one night, he ducked into the theatre’s coffee house, where British sailors and French soldiers were simultaneously singing native melodies. The author confesses to

a keen enjoyment of their songs. There is a fine raciness about those of the British tar, which it is positively invigorating to hear. I shall not have half so much fun in the theatre, where Mademoiselle Squallini, an autumnal *prima donna* from Islington, is tearing one of prolific Verdi’s operas into shreds, and screaming in a manner which is inconceivably ear-piercing.[[35]](#footnote-35)

What is more, he ends his account of Pera’s operatic offerings by explaining that the theatre’s elite clientele—“Highly-connected young gentlemen, mostly from the neighbourhood of Sloane Street or Putney, and belonging to her Majesty’s commissariat”—are in the habit of going “behind the scenes” during performances to display their knowledge of the “elegant dissipations of London and Paris.”[[36]](#footnote-36) The author does not approve. For him, it seems, opera could represent upper-class debauchery in Pera just as it did in the art-form’s longer established urban centres. Furthermore, in comparison with the “invigorating” songs of the soldiers and sailors, an opera by Verdi is imagined to be no more than noise—as if the degeneracy of its consumers has rubbed off onto the art-form itself.

There is little doubt that by the mid-nineteenth century, in Constantinople as elsewhere, Italian opera was understood and even celebrated as an international art. Purveyed by itinerant troupes of singers, its audience was governed by behavioural conventions established in London or Paris but, as we have seen, reproduced to great symbolic effect further afield. Yet for “The Roving Englishman” attending the opera in Pera during the Crimean War, opera’s fundamental mobility was coupled to another international force: that of the aristocracy and other elite members of any European society, whose wartime leisure was partly based—as in peacetime at home—in the more or less luxurious surroundings of the opera house. What is more, the appearance of this foreign elite at the Naum Theatre itself seemed to constitute a military sortie, albeit one directed against Britain’s and France’s Ottoman allies. The *United Service Magazine*—a British military publication whose regular coverage of theatrical events at home, in Constantinople and in Crimea is itself significant—reported how, following this friendly invasion of foreign officers,

The native fair of Pera were no longer allowed to frequent the scene of these reforms by their jealous owners, and the only females to be seen in the edifice were a few English ladies, who were sharing the campaign with their husbands, and the fair vocalists on the stage.[[37]](#footnote-37)

Taking suitability for female consumption as an international measure of respectability, the *United Service Magazine* charts a striking reversal: here it is the residents of Pera (whether Ottoman or Frank) who are understood to represent civilization, while the behaviour of the recently arrived, western European social elite is judged to be little short of barbarian, apparently “creating much disorder and confusion, to the inexpressible disgust of the native audience.”[[38]](#footnote-38) In the hallowed space of the opera house, the officers’ claim to social elevation was trumped by their military status: they brought with them the aggression and strife of the battlefield, rendering the opera house—like the theatre of war—an arena largely off-limits to women of any nation.

***Intermezzo*: operatic manœuvres**

There were, however, exceptions to this rule of female exclusion, as the *United Service Magazine*’s mention of military wives makes clear. In addition to the small number of spouses who had travelled with their officer husbands to Crimea (most remained in Constantinople or in Scutari, a nearby Black Sea resort town; a handful insisted on being accommodated in the military camp itself), the warzone and its environs became a destination for British tourists as the bombardment of Sebastopol continued through 1855 and allied victory was awaited with ever greater confidence. These visitors appear to have formed a new operatic market in the Crimea: according to Elizabeth Grey, “regimental bands were detailed to play ‘appropriate airs’ to entertain these spectators during lulls in the fighting,” as though (as for the officers visiting Pera) opera constituted a natural interlude for battle.[[39]](#footnote-39) Yet allied military bands had long been regularly performing operatic excerpts, eliciting mixed responses from those at the front. The band of the Sardinian army—a military force generally looked on with patronising amusement by their allies—was particularly well known for its operatic renditions.[[40]](#footnote-40) Colonel Hodge, for instance, attended a review of the Sardinian army in November 1855 and reported (in a peculiar conflation of Italian stereotypes) that “There was first a kind of High Mass, opera music playing the whole time,” as if it were only natural that Catholic ceremonial should mingle with operatic performance.[[41]](#footnote-41)

Much more unexpected by visitors to the Crimea, whether military or civilian, and apparently more comment-worthy than opera’s penetration into Constantinople, was the fact that the Ottoman forces also boasted a military band whose repertoire was centred on Italian opera. The officer Frederick Robinson, for example, visited the barracks of the Turkish artillery at Pera and found “an amusing burlesque on our English bands.” He heard a selection of excerpts from Bellini’s *I puritani*, in which “the high notes appeared to me particularly defective. Two of the performers carried ‘trees’ of small bells, which they rotated slowly.”[[42]](#footnote-42) The instrument to which Robinson refers is presumably the *chaghana* or “Jingling Johnnie,” whose popularity far outlived the Janissary bands in which it originally appeared. Rather more unexpected than this performance of Bellini’s opera (which was almost two decades old and its highlights unequivocally world-famous) is that in April 1855, an officer’s wife heard the same band play a medley from Verdi’s *Rigoletto*. The opera had premiered in Venice less than four years earlier, and its first performance at the Naum Theatre had taken place only the previous year.[[43]](#footnote-43) By the mid-century, opera evidently travelled at least as quickly in military band arrangements as it did in its staged form.

The mechanisms by which such musical circulation takes place are notoriously elusive. Yet we might call attention to two prestigious bands that may have served as institutional nodes in the proliferation of Italian operatic music among the Turkish troops. First, there was the official Ottoman military band trained by Giuseppe Donizetti: the band which, as we have seen, had undergone explicit westernization (under the flag of modernization) in the years before the Crimean War. Second, the commander of the Ottoman army, Omer Pasha, possessed his own private, uniformed band, which was reported to play both traditional Ottoman and operatic repertoire at the Crimean front. Writing his memoirs in 1915, Thomas Buzzard, a member of the British medical staff with the Ottoman army (and Crimea correspondent for the *Daily News*), attributed the extravagance of maintaining a personal band to Omer Pasha’s newfound “appreciation of luxury which we associate with the Oriental,” the commander having been born in Croatia and only later converted to Islam. Yet Buzzard also reveals that the musicians in Omer Pasha’s band were German rather than Turkish; and he recalls how, “It was just about this time that the *Trovatore* of Verdi had recently appeared, and we used to listen to the strains of ‘Ah che la morte’ under a brilliant sky in as lovely a landscape as the eye could rest upon.”[[44]](#footnote-44)

For all that he saw the German band as a sign of “Oriental” excess (overlooking the fascinating politics implied by the employment of German musicians by an Ottoman commander whether in the service of extravagance or anything else), it is clear that Buzzard was more than happy to enjoy its renditions as fitting accompaniment to his own exoticized experience of the Crimea. We might safely assume that Buzzard’s memory of hearing a famous extract from Act 4 of *Il trovatore* was calculated to give a certain tragic colouring to his account of the war. Yet this particular passage not only forms a strange juxtaposition with the “brilliant sky” of the Crimean landscape in which he heard it. It is a moment in which Verdi’s incarcerated hero is heard from offstage, his reflections on death alternating with a *Miserere* sung by a similarly off-stage chorus and interjections from his heartbroken lover—the one figure actually seen by the audience. The operatic excerpt thus brings its own complex sense of multi-dimensional space to the scene Buzzard describes. Indeed, to insert the sound of Verdi’s music into that landscape—one sketched in distinctly picturesque terms—is almost to imagine the scene to be theatrical; to render Crimea itself operatic.

**War through opera glasses**

Buzzard was not alone in embellishing his memories of the Crimean War with an operatic accompaniment. The notorious Mrs Duberly recalled a horse-ride inland from the Crimean port of Eupatoria, during which she and her companions had entered one of the many houses abandoned by the retreating Russians and found a grand piano. Coming upon the intact instrument was, she gushed, “like meeting a dear and long absent friend.” Duberly played various popular mid-century songs before declaring

One more song and I must hasten back, to be on board my ship by twilight. Heavy guns are pouring their dull, broadsides on our straining ears. What shall the song be, sad and low, or a wild outburst of desperate courage? I have it:

Non curiamo l’incerto domani.

Se quest’oggi n’è dato goder.[[45]](#footnote-45)

Like Buzzard, Duberly refers to a specific operatic piece at a moment of heightened theatricality, posing her question against a melodramatic backdrop of nightfall and pounding guns. It might thus seem in some sense fitting that she should provide an answer in the form of the Act 2 *brindisi* from Donizetti’s *Lucrezia Borgia*, with its energetic exhortations to live in the present rather than worrying about the future. Yet, as in Buzzard’s operatic turn, Duberly’s reference fails to ring true to a reader with knowledge of the opera beyond the Italian snippet that she provides. Donizetti’s drinking song is, after all, saturated with dramatic irony, its music markedly in contrast with the dark hues that pervade the opera; at its end, the work’s eponymous villain will appear to πannounce that she has poisoned the wine of all those present.

As understood in its staged context, this is hardly the cheerful leave-taking Duberly seems to have intended (nor can it be wholly described as a “wild outburst of desperate courage”). There are, however, two connected explanations as to why both Duberly and Buzzard might have embedded such operatic meaning in their Crimean narratives. First, we might conclude that both authors were keen to demonstrate their fluency in the cultural language of the upper classes; but that neither was sufficiently literate in operatic terms to alight on examples that retained their intended meaning and original illustrative purpose under more expert scrutiny. Second, we might decide that scrutinizing these individual references is to miss the more important point: that “opera” (whether represented by an extract from *Il trovatore* or *Lucrezia Borgia*, or any other work) was most significant as an index of a particular system of cultural values; that “opera” was being invoked symbolically, rather than literally. Both explanations are probably true; but it is the broad symbolic meaningfulness of “opera” in the Crimean War that is important above all here, and which has the farther-reaching implications.

Perhaps the best-known instance of such symbolic invocation of opera comes in the most famous British account of the Crimean War. *Times* correspondent William Howard Russell described watching the 1854 Battle of Balaklava alongside the commanding officers of the British army:

The instant they [the Russians] came in sight, the trumpets of our cavalry gave out the warning blast which told us all that in another moment we should see the shock of battle beneath our very eyes. Lord Raglan, all his staff and escort, and groups of officers, the Zouaves, French generals and officers, and bodies of French infantry on the height, were spectators of the scene as though they were looking on the stage from the boxes of a theatre. Nearly every one dismounted and sat down, and not a word was said.[[46]](#footnote-46)

Ulrich Keller has discussed at some length the association between military events and theatrical spectacle that is encapsulated here.[[47]](#footnote-47) I would add that

the “theatre” Russell imagined would almost certainly have been an opera house. Opera was, as already discussed, the most prestigious and most widely disseminated theatrical medium during the nineteenth century, not to mention the art-form most automatically associated with the elevated social milieu of Russell’s military co-viewers. In light of this intuition, we might usefully return to the final sentence—that, met with the spectacle of battle opening out below them, “Nearly every one dismounted and sat down, and not a word was said.” Such a detailed account of the behaviour of this “audience” is striking—not least because Russell paints a scene not only in which a battle is rendered broadly theatrical, but also in which its spectators behave according to the newly silent norms of modern operatic listening.

What is more, these operatic ears were matched by operatic eyes. During the bombardment of Sebastopol in June 1855, in which Colonel Hodge effused that

Shot, shell and rockets were going all this time. The sight was awful, particularly where I knew that friends were in the midst. It was grand, however, as a spectacle. [...] Much thunder today, mixed with the firing, the effect was very grand.[[48]](#footnote-48)

Crucial here is the contrast between Hodge’s friends, “in the midst,” and his own position, at a sufficient distance that the events could be rendered spectacular—and pleasurably so. Such distance was nothing if not a mark of social elevation: a privilege accorded only those with the social pedigree to occupy the higher levels of military command, or those non-combatants who had the means to travel to the front as observers. It is no coincidence that these two groups—one civilian and one military—shared an essential piece of equipment: opera glasses. Ubiquitous in accounts of the war by tourists and officers alike, these literally provided their users with a perspective on the war’s events. Small wonder in the circumstances that everything seen by these elite spectators seemed to be imbued “with the essence of opera,” as Russell described a review of the French troops.[[49]](#footnote-49)

There is little doubt that the mid-century British military was itself “a theatrical institution,” as Scott Hughes Myerly has argued; or that, as Paul Fussell explored with great sensitivity in his study of the Great War, we now *expect* modern war and theatricality to be intimately connected, precisely because life at the front was so often felt to be “unreal” in comparison to news from back home.[[50]](#footnote-50) But these readings of war’s theatricality tend to address only soldierly experiences and perceptions, as if theatricality can emerge in the absence of an audience. On the contrary, the distinctly *operatic* theatricality of the Crimean War constantly throws our attention back onto the physical presence of audiences, and onto the observations of individual spectators, above all. At least among those whose experiences of Crimea we can most easily gain access to, there is nothing short of an operatic mode of perception. This mode had, for sure, primarily been learned in the opera house, but once established could reach far beyond its walls, to constitute a much broader experiential frame of reference.[[51]](#footnote-51)

What might give us pause at this point is that recourse to operatic frames of reference was to some extent an established feature of orientalist travelogues by the time the war began. Yet among the endless references to “panoramas” and “backdrops” beloved of visitors to the neatly exoticized foreign landscape, the bazaars of Constantinople stand out, for they drew surprisingly specific operatic references. John Harwood reported that the Ottoman traders tended to assume “as supercilious and *goguenard* an air at the casual purchaser, as the regular frequenters of the Parisian opera assume when an uninitiated mortal ventures to intrude into the hallowed precincts of the *foyer*.”[[52]](#footnote-52) Murray’s *Handbook* of 1854 warned prospective visitors that to pass through the city’s bazaars, “more ceremony is required than amongst the well-dressed mob of an opera-house.”[[53]](#footnote-53) Again, the opera-goers and their behaviour, rather than the operatic performance itself, are the subject of the implied comparison—and both rely on the reader’s familiarity with such social conventions. Indeed, insofar as the Crimean War might be understood to be “operatic” (in a way the writer for *Dwight’s* with whom I began could only have found comic), it was so both because Constantinople and the Crimean peninsula already had its own operatic culture; and because these places were already understood in operatic terms by their western European visitors.

**Opera and “modern war”**

In approaching the Crimean War through an operatic lens, as did so many of its elite participants and hangers-on, I have attempted to reveal an important sense of continuity—however class-contingent—between wartime as experienced from Crimea and that lived on the British domestic front. I have thus been concerned with the relationship between military events and “opera”—understood multiply as performance, re-mediated sound and cipher—as figured by the war’s many published witnesses. Perhaps inevitably, the majority of those narratives (whether civilian or military), have come from members of the British social elite—people, that is, for whom “opera” would indeed have been part of everyday life. At the very least, such an approach to the War via its operatic elements might—as Favret (rightly) recommends—remind us of the particular social origins of many of the war’s eye- and ear-witnesses. I hope, though, that I have also offered some sense of opera’s sheer pervasiveness in and around the Crimea: as performed by military bands at the front, staged in Constantinople, and resorted to as a symbol or frame of reference. I have attempted to plot the outline of an argument about the art-form’s ability in the mid-nineteenth century to cross or even collapse geographical and social distance; and even about its centrality, for some, to the experience of war. Understood thus, opera demands inclusion in any account of events in Crimea—at least for those who seek to address war as a sensory experience, or for those interested in the war’s mediatization.

Taking opera’s presence in Crimea more seriously may also enable us to gain a more socially sensitive perspective on the continuing debates over the war’s claims to being either “the first modern war” or “the last of the old-style wars.”[[54]](#footnote-54) Earlier I quoted Philip Mansel’s description of mid-century Constantinople as a city “torn between contradictory forces,” in which rapid modernization could be seen alongside the persistence in the city of much older traditions. As discussed, one could indeed see the arrival of Italian opera in the city as a symptom of this process of modernization; yet although its advent was of course enabled by modern networks of transportation and communication, opera might also be understood as intimately connected with older technologies. The Crimean tourist Edwin Galt could report that “The European population here use sedan chairs at nights, and in the dark streets, returning from the opera, almost every one carries a long white round paper lantern, purchased at the shops for a piastre (2*d*)”: opera-going here was every bit as reliant on the sedan chair and the lantern as on the steamer or the telegraph.[[55]](#footnote-55) We might also recall Frederick Robinson’s account of a rendition of excerpts from *I puritani* by the (famously modernized) Ottoman military band, which nevertheless included two *chaghanas*: instruments from the Janissary bands that had supposedly been superseded almost thirty years earlier.

In one of the few studies dedicated to music produced during and in relation to the Crimean War, Didier Francfort makes his position on the conflict’s relationship to modernity clear from his article’s title, which heralds the war as “the founding moment of European military music.”[[56]](#footnote-56) He goes on to pose the question as to whether the war did not, surely, constitute the first European musical expression of the “concert of nations,” ahead of the redrawing of the map of Europe in the 1870s.[[57]](#footnote-57) It is certainly tempting to trace acts of musical diplomacy between the Crimean allies, and thus to see the conflict (as Francfort suggests we should) as an instance of musical universality at a time more famous for growing nationalist tendencies. But in contrast to Francfort, who is concerned above all with the production of new works in relation to events in the Crimea, I have largely been addressing the presence there of already established, even canonized pieces from the Italian operatic repertoire. As such, any claim to international operatic diplomacy being enacted beyond the *a priori* fact that the prized status of canonic works rested on their supposed universality would also need to account for the successful mid-war staging of a season of Italian opera in St Petersburg; or for the fact that pre-war Sebastopol itself boasted an opera house, where one “Lady Resident Near the Alma” reported watching a performance of *Norma* in which a “motley group of Druids” could be seen from close up to be wearing the boots of Russian soldiers.[[58]](#footnote-58)

Insofar as the Crimean War can be celebrated as an instance of musical universalism, in other words, it must be understood as such within the larger context of a musical culture increasingly centred on a canon of revered works, which were reproduced and disseminated across a vast network of urban centres. In this context as in so many others, the war must be seen as a single, midway stopping-point on a much longer trajectory. As military historian David Edgerton writes:

The military, and war itself, have often been seen as left-overs from the past. War was not something which modern, democratic free-trading nations did. Soldiers, particularly officers, were relics of an older agricultural and warlike society, which like chivalry, would disappear as modernity marched on. Modern war was a tragic clash of the old and new.[[59]](#footnote-59)

Although Edgerton’s principal concern is with twentieth-century conflicts, in which this “tragic clash” would come into ever-sharper focus, the point is still a useful one when applied to the Crimean War, offering a sobering alternative to the choice between old-fashioned war and modern war; old technology and new. Instead, Edgerton suggests that the crux of “modern” war is located precisely in this combination, this constant tussle, between the old, established ways and those that claim to be produced by “progress,” forging the route to a better future.

With this in mind, I want to end with a final comic take on opera’s role in events in Crimea—this time from *Punch*, the war’s ultimate satirical opponent. The article in question combines an attack on what was becoming known as London’s “organ grinding plague”—the musicians, often Italians, who played incessantly on the city’s streets—with an account of a fantastical new system by which music could be piped directly into the homes of the capital’s music-loving inhabitants. Consumers could apparently choose to be supplied from the “Grand Mozart and Beethoven Junction,” the “South Donizetti Milk-and-Water Works,” or “the Great Hydraulic Processes of Verdi,” according to individual preference. The article’s relevance to this chapter, however, is revealed in its parting shot, aimed directly at the organ grinders. The author suggests that they might volunteer to join the allied forces in Crimea (perhaps even uniting with Miss Coutts, Mario and the Sardinians?) where, “if they were properly organised with their own frightful organs, and brought well into play, every Russian would give his ears, rather than to endure the cruel infliction to which they would be subjected.”[[60]](#footnote-60) In a conflict famous for its showcasing of the new, and above all for its deep media imprint, *Punch*’s suggestion of a resolution to the continuing bombardment of Sebastopol is striking indeed: the deployment of a troupe of organ-grinders playing extracts drawn from an art-form in which longevity was increasingly venerated (and whose own prestige rested in part on its ancient pedigree) as a means to repulse an enemy equally sensitive to such offensive operatic reworkings. The true conflict here is neither of old and new, nor even that between nations: it is one waged by the international social elite against a changing world order, in which opera could be consumed by all—but only once removed from its gilded cradle and remediated irrevocably as noise.

1. For more on the participation of Italian military forces in the War, and its subsequent place in Risorgimento historiography, see Delia Casadei, “A Voice That Carries,” in **this volume**, PAGES. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Musical Chit-Chat,” *Dwight’s Journal of Music* (14 April 1855), 12-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “Musical Chit-Chat,” 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See Ulrich Keller, *The Ultimate Spectacle: A Visual History of the Crimean War* (Amsterdam: Gordon & Breach, 2001); elaboration of Keller’s “first media war” thesis can be found in Georg Maag, Wolfram Pyta, Martin Windish, eds., *Der Krimkrieg als erster europäischer Mediankrieg* (Berlin: LIT, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Mary Favret, *War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. In this essay, I use the term “mediatization” to denote the proliferation of technological, literary and theatrical forms that conditioned the knowledge and experience of war in the nineteenth century. However, the word is also meant to suggest its overtones in twentieth-century media discourse, in which it has come to signify the revaluation of “truth” brought about by mass media. See for example Jean Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign,* trans. Charles Levin ([1972] St. Louis: Telos, 1981), 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. *“Little Hodge”: Being Extracts from the Diaries and Letters of Colonel Edward Cooper Hodge Written During the Crimean War, 1854-1856*, ed. Marquess of Anglesey (London: Leo Cooper, 1971), 131. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. In this sense, although my project builds to some extent on Ulrich Keller’s rich and wide-ranging account of the war’s visual traces, I do not share his aim to examine the war’s mediation simply as a set of representations (however subtly excavated); see Keller, *The Ultimate Spectacle.* [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. “Dances of Death,” *Punch, or the London Charivari*, 28 (1855), 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. It may be no coincidence that, as Trevor Herbert and Helen Barlow have recently noted, there was a distinct change in the status of military bands at mid-century. In 1854 the Royal Artillery Band made a British concert tour—the first ever undertaken by a military band. It was above all a symptom of a nascent understanding of such outfits as musical ensembles as well as military accessories; and of an attendant desire to listen to what could thus be considered a performance rather than a colourful by-product of military activity. Trevor Herbert and Helen Barlow, *Music & the British Military in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 196-99. See also Henry George Farmer, *Military Music* (London: Max Parrish, 1950), 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. This central problematic was identified by James Johnson in his groundbreaking study, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. For an overview of the larger context in which this epistemological shift took place, see William Weber, *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste: Concert Programming from Haydn to Brahms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. That opera in this context indicates almost exclusively the early nineteenth-century Italian repertoire (from Rossini to middle-period Verdi) says much about that tradition’s hegemonic status in elite European circles at this time; but that ubiquity is also symptomatic of its increasing *global* spread—an international dissemination that both predated the Crimean War and was perhaps bolstered by it. See Benjamin Walton, “Italian Operatic Fantasies in Latin America,” *Modern Italian Studies* 17/4 (2012), 460-71. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. It is worth noting that this third sense is thus simultaneously furthest removed from the first, “literal” definition and most predicated on its assumed truth—that opera was ultimately a staged performance and its modes of consumption. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. R.T. Claridge, Esq., *A Guide Along the Danube, from Vienna to Constantinople, Smyrna, Athens, The Morea, The Ionian Islands, and Venice, from notes of a journey made in the year 1836* (London: R.C. Westley, 1837), 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The orientalist trope of the Ottoman city’s “silence” would, it seems, continue throughout the nineteenth century and later; see, for example, Edmondo de Amicis, *Constantinople*, trans. Caroline Tilton([1878] New York and London: Putman’s, 1888), 241. See also Kevin Karnes’ discussion of the orientalising of Turkish subjects through urban silence in **this volume**, PAGES. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. See James Q. Davies, “A Musical Souvenir: London in 1829” (PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2005), 1-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Claridge, *A Guide Along the Danube, from Vienna to Constantinople*, 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Philip Mansel, *Constantinople: City of the World’s Desire 1453-1924* (London: John Murray, 1995), 261. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. See Emre Aracı, “A Levantine Life: Giuseppe Donizetti at the Ottoman Court,” *The Musical Times* 1880 (Autumn 2002), 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Mansel, *Constantinople*, 262. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Ibid., 261. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See Aracı, “From Napoleon to Mahmud: The Chequered Career of the Other Donizetti,” in Federico Spinetti, ed., *Giuseppe Donizetti Pascìa: Traiettorie musicali e storiche tra Italia e Turchia* (Bergamo: Fondazione Donizetti, 2010), 11; Bülent Aksoy, “Musical Relationships Between Italy and Turkey Through Turkish Eyes,” in Spinetti, ed., *Giuseppe Donizetti Pascìa*, 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Aracı, “A Levantine Life,” 51. Even Pers Tuglaci’s late-twentieth-century account of the history of Turkish military bands proclaims that “In 1831, with the official establishment of the Imperial Orchestra, the centuries-old *mehterhane* [the traditional music played by the janissary bands] entered a dark period in its history.” Pers Tuglaci, *Turkish Bands of the Past and Present* (Istanbul: N.P., 1986), 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. *A Handbook for Travellers in the Ionian Islands, Greece, Turkey, Asia Minor, and Constantinople* (London: John Murray, 1840), 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Mehmet Baltacan, “The Relationship between Turkish and Armenian Regarding the Ottoman Empire and Contributions of Armenian Artists to the Turkish Opera,” *International Journal of Social, Business, Psychological, Human Science and Engineering* 8/5 (2014), 1149-55; here, 1151. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. *Ernani* and *Nabucco* both had their Turkish premieres in 1846 and were followed by *Macbeth* (1848), *I Lombardi* (1850), *I masnadieri* (1847), *Il trovatore* (1853), *Rigoletto* (1854) and *La traviata* (1856). I take these figures from Baltacan, “The Relationship between Turkish and Armenian,” 1150. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Baltacan, “The Relationship between Turkish and Armenian,” 1151. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. “Society at Pera Since the Western Invasion,” *United Service Magazine* (January 1856), 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. *The Light Cavalry Brigade in the Crimea. Extracts from the letters and journal of the late Gen. Lord George Paget, K.C.B., during the Crimean War* (London: John Murray, 1881), 154. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. *“Little Hodge*, 140. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Edwin Galt, *The Camp and the Cutter; Or, a Cruise to the Crimea* (London: Thomas Hodgson, 1856), 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. *Pictures from the Battle Fields*, by “The Roving Englishman” [Eustace Clare Grenville Murray] [2nd Ed.] (London: Routledge & Co., 1855), 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. One interesting example is that of Albert Smith, who visited the city before the Crimean War and drew a contrast (strikingly reminiscent of Michel de Certeau’s writings on walking in the city) between the view of Constantinople from afar, and the impression from close up: his first glimpse of the city from the Golden Horn was a “gorgeous panorama” comparable only with the experience of looking down on London by night from a balloon. Once disembarked, however, he “felt that I had been taken behind the scenes of a great ‘effect.’ The Constantinople of Vauxhall Gardens, a few years ago, did not differ more, when viewed, in front from the gallery, and behind, from the dirty little alleys bordering the river”; Albert Smith, *A Month At Constantinople* [2nd Edition] (London: David Bogue, 1850), 42; 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. *Pictures from the Battle Fields*, 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Ibid., 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. “Society at Pera Since the Western Invasion,” *United Service Magazine* (January 1856), 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Elizabeth Grey, *The Noise of Drums and Trumpets: W.H. Russell Reports from the Crimea* (London: Longman, 1971), 44. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Mrs Duberly, the seemingly ubiquitous wife of Captain Henry Duberly (paymaster of the 8th Royal Irish Hussars), whose presence at the front was sufficiently famed that *Punch* could satirize her as Mrs Jubilee, was typical in her view that “There never was such a pretty little army sent into the field as that of the Sardinians”; Frances Isabella Duberly, *Mrs Duberly’s War: Journal and Letters from the Crimea, 1854-6*, ed. and intro., Christine Kelly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 259. See also Delia Casadei’s discussion of what she terms the Sardinian band’s “sonic assertion of nationhood” in **this volume**, PAGES [pp.27-28 of her essay]. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. “*Little Hodge*,” 136. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Frederick Robinson, *Diary of the Crimean War* (London: Richard Bentley, 1856), 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Duberly, *Mrs Duberly’s War*, 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Thomas Buzzard, *With the Turkish Army in the Crimea and Asia Minor: A Personal Narrative* (London: John Murray, 1915), 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Duberly, *Mrs Duberly’s War*, 68-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. William Howard Russell, *Russell’s Despatches from the Crimea, 1854-1856*, ed. Nicolas Bentley (London: Andre Deutsch, 1966), 124. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Keller, *The Ultimate Spectacle*, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. “*Little Hodge*,” 112. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. William Howard Russell, *Russell’s Despatches from the Crimea, 1854-1856*, ed. Nicolas Bentley (London: Andre Deutsch, 1966), 192. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. See Scott Hughes Myerly, *British Military Spectacle: From the Napoleonic Wars Through the Crimea* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 8; and Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975). [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. By contrast, I suspect that those hearing “La donna è mobile” played on a barrel organ on a London street could equally have been hearing a ballad or street cry, so far as their mode of listening or degree of attentiveness was concerned. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. John Harwood, *Stamboul and the Sea of Gems* (London: Richard Bentley, 1852), 54. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. *A Handbook for Travellers in Turkey: Describing Constantinople, European Turkey, Asia Minor, Armenia, and Mesopotamia* [3rd Ed.] (London: John Murray, 1854), 92. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. For the first quotation, see Keller, *The Ultimate Spectacle,* 251; for second, see Ian F.W. Beckett, *The Victorians at War* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2003), 162-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Edwin Galt, *The Camp and the Cutter; Or, a Cruise to the Crimea* (London: Thomas Hodgson, 1856), 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Didier Francfort, “La Guerre de Crimée, moment fondateur des musiques militaires européennes,” in Maag, Pyta and Windisch, eds., *Der Krimkrieg als erster europäischer Medienkrieg*, 163-172. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. “la Guerre de Crimée ne fut-elle pas, avant le remodelage de l’Europe dans les années 1870, une première expression musicale européenne du ‘concert des nations’?” Francfort, “La Guerre de Crimée, moment fondateur des musiques militaires européennes,” 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. *The Crimea: Its Towns, Inhabitants, and Social Customs. By a Lady Resident Near the Alma* (London: Partridge, Oakey, 1855), 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. David Edgerton, *The Shock of the Old: Technology and Global History Since 1900* (London: Profile, 2006), 139. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. “Music Really For the Million,” *Punch, or the London Charivari* 28 (1855), 251. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)