

THE EVOLUTION OF OTTOMAN DIPLOMATIC TACTICS

FROM 1821 TO 1840

By

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A Thesis Submitted to The Honors College

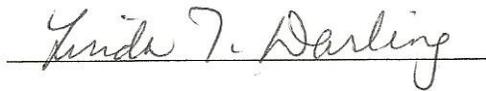
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Abstract: This thesis studies the diplomatic tactics that the Ottoman Empire utilized from 1821 to 1840 and argues that during this period Ottoman officials increased their diplomatic discourse with the European Powers in order to gain entrance into the Concert of Europe. Ottoman diplomatic tactics during this timeframe are then divided into two periods: March 1821 to December 1833 and December 1833 to July 1840. This thesis argues that in the former period the Ottoman Empire's primary diplomatic tactic was to incite British Russophobia by evincing Russia's desire for war with the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman officials hoped that British officials would thus be compelled to pressure Russia into preserving peace with the Ottoman Empire in order to maintain peace and the balance of power in Europe. Finally, this thesis argues that in the latter period, due to the earlier failures of Ottoman diplomacy as well as advice received from Great Britain, the Ottoman Empire incorporated promises to reform its government and military into its diplomatic discourse. These promised reforms were designed to convince the European Powers that the Ottoman Empire could be revitalized, and therefore deserved Europe's official recognition of the Ottoman Empire's administrative and territorial autonomy.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Since the 18th century, the European Powers had believed that the Ottoman Empire was on a decline that would inevitably lead to its speedy dissolution. The events of the early 19th century reinforced this view, as the Ottoman Empire was consistently attacked from within by its own subjects and externally from competing empires. The janissaries, who had once been an elite fighting force, had become undisciplined and rebellious. Because the janissaries' military skills had declined significantly, combined with acts of open rebellion against any attempt by the Ottoman government to instill modern discipline or military tactics into their ranks, the Ottoman Sultan's power waned. As a result, the Ottoman Empire was no longer strong enough to expand its frontiers, as the Sultan's lack of authority over the janissaries precluded him from maintaining factual control over many of his own provinces.

In recognition of the Ottoman Empire's diminished military power, Selim III, sultan from 1789 to 1807, sought to reform his military with western discipline, tactics, and dress. As a result of Selim III's reforms, the janissaries rebelled and deposed Selim III in 1807 and his successor, Mustafa IV, in 1808. It was Sultan Mahmud II, whose reign lasted from 1808 until 1839, who would succeed in enacting Selim III's desired reforms. While the European Powers viewed the Ottoman Empire as doomed to collapse, Mahmud II and his officials developed strategies designed to reverse the Empire's decline. Like his predecessors, Mahmud II recognized that although the Ottoman Empire was still a great power, Austria, France, Great Britain, and Russia had surpassed the Ottoman Empire militarily and politically in global influence. Consequently, under Mahmud II, the Ottoman Empire sought to maintain its territorial and political integrity

not with its armies, but by improving its relationship with the European Powers through diplomacy. To achieve this goal, Ottoman officials adopted new diplomatic tactics, including sharing more information with the other European Powers and soliciting foreign ambassadors' help in order to maintain peaceful relations between the Ottoman Empire and the rest of Europe.

While contemporary European governments and subsequent western historians interpreted this change in Ottoman diplomacy as the Ottoman Empire's acceptance of the European Powers' suzerainty over the sultan, the converse was true: the Ottoman Empire increased its use of diplomacy with Europe in order to prevent the other European sovereigns from interfering with internal Ottoman affairs. Therefore, by accepting the Ottoman Empire's weakness vis-à-vis the other European Powers, Ottoman officials actually demonstrated the Sultan's continued independence. Thus, in 1821, the first year of the Greek War of Independence, the Porte, the Ottoman imperial government, implemented the suggestions from Austria's and Great Britain's ambassadors that Ottoman officials believed would protect Mahmud II's autonomy. At the same time, Ottoman officials also shared internal intelligence with these ambassadors that the Porte believed would elicit both European sympathy with the Ottoman Empire and distrust of the other European Powers' intentions in Ottoman lands.

Because the janissaries had deposed the two previous sultans, Mahmud II did not immediately enact his desired military reforms upon ascending to the throne. Instead, Mahmud II waited until 1826, after the combined Egyptian and Ottoman forces had begun successfully reconquering Greece and the Ottoman Empire's new diplomatic tactics had seemingly prevented a war with Russia. While Mahmud II and his officials had adopted new diplomatic tactics to promote peace with the other European Powers, they still sought to strengthen the Ottoman

Empire from within through military reform. They waited, however, until they believed that they could safely destroy the janissaries without jeopardizing their efforts to subdue the Greek rebels. Therefore, in 1827 when France, Great Britain, and Russia responded to the Ottoman armies' successes in Greece by demanding the cessation of hostilities between the Ottoman Empire and the Greek rebels, the Porte refused the European Powers' overtures and in December 1827 declared war on Russia. That the Ottoman Empire would not only refuse European intervention in its internal affairs but also declare war on Russia is further evidence that the Ottoman Empire's new diplomatic tactics did not signal acceptance of European ascendancy over Mahmud II. The Porte had adopted these diplomatic tactics in its attempt to gain entrance into the Concert of Europe,¹ so that the other European Powers would respect the Ottoman Empire's borders and the Sultan's authority over his subjects, thereby enabling the Porte to focus on reforming its military without fear of war with a European Power.

During the Greek War of Independence, the Ottoman Empire had not conceived of using internal reforms as a component of its diplomatic discourse with the other European Powers. Rather, Mahmud II had reformed his military solely to strengthen the Ottoman Empire from within. In 1833, however, Great Britain advised the Ottoman Empire to reform both its military and administration in order to secure future British political and military support.² As a result of

¹ The Concert of Europe was the system that Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia developed after defeating Napoleon. It was designed to maintain the balance of power in Europe by compelling its members to seek diplomatic solutions to international conflicts and to resort to war only if all the signatory Powers agreed. Because Russia, and to a lesser extent Austria and France, had expansionist goals in Ottoman territories, the Ottoman Empire desired entrance into the Concert of Europe so that the other European Powers would officially recognize upholding the Ottoman Empire as an essential component of their efforts to maintain peace in Europe.

² While Great Britain feared Russian territorial gains at the expense of the Ottoman Empire – as these could upset the balance of power in Europe as well as harm Great Britain's interests in India and the Near East – British officials would not send military aid to the Ottoman Empire unless the latter demonstrated its ability to justly govern its subjects and the potential to avoid collapse.

this advice, the Porte realized that it could incorporate its desired internal reforms into its diplomatic discourse with Europe. Since this would support both of the Porte's primary tactics for reviving the Ottoman Empire – improved diplomatic relations with Europe to protect the Ottoman Empire's territorial and administrative integrity and internal reforms to strengthen the Ottoman Empire's military and government – Ottoman officials gladly accepted Great Britain's advice.

In this thesis, I will analyze the Ottoman Empire's diplomatic tactics from the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence in 1821 until the Treaty of London in 1840. It was during the Greek War of Independence that the Ottoman Empire first instituted these diplomatic tactics, thus representing a new period in Ottoman diplomacy that would last until 1840, with the signing of the Treaty of London. Although the Ottoman Empire's diplomatic tactics evolved over this period, especially after 1833, it represents a single period of Ottoman diplomacy because the goal remained the same: to convince the other European Powers to officially acknowledge the Ottoman Empire's right to territorial and administrative autonomy, preferably by admitting the Ottoman Empire into the Concert of Europe. The Ottoman Empire did not gain entrance into the Concert of Europe with the Treaty of London in 1840, but the signatory Powers – the Ottoman Empire, Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, and Russia – all agreed to protect the Sultan's authority.

Military and political developments in the early 19th century:

In order to understand why the Ottoman Empire adopted new diplomatic tactics in 1821, it is necessary to first acknowledge the major military and political events in the preceding decades. Although the Ottoman Empire had successfully navigated ruling several different

ethnicities and religious communities for centuries, in the 19th century, due to Ottoman misrule, growing nationalist sentiments, and foreign interference, the Porte struggled to maintain its political independence and territorial integrity.

First, in 1804 due to local janissary abuses, approximately 30,000 Serbs, led by George Petrović, formed an army to overthrow the local janissaries. Although the Ottoman governor of Nis had sanctioned the Serbian army's actions, the latter's successes discomfited the Porte. Consequently, the Porte sent Ottoman troops to subdue Petrović's army in late 1806. On 6 January 1807, however, the Serbian forces defeated the Ottoman army and gained control of the entire province of Serbia. Now in open rebellion against the Ottoman Empire, the Serbs sought military support from Russia, which was already at war with the Ottoman Empire over the control of the Principalities (Moldavia and Wallachia).³

In May 1807, the janissaries rebelled and deposed Selim III because the latter continued implementing his plan to create a regular army that could check the janissaries' power as well as contend with the other European Powers' militaries.⁴ The following year, the janissaries also deposed Selim III's successor, Mustafa IV, and replaced him with Mahmud II.⁵ Europe's supposition that the Ottoman Empire was posed to collapse seemed well-founded, as the janissaries, once the Sultan's loyal and elite soldiers, were now the biggest threat to the Sultan's throne and were actively working against the Ottoman Empire instituting the reforms it needed to regain its previous strength.

³ Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire 1300-1923* (New York: Basic Books, 2006) 403.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 416.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 422.

In 1812, the Ottoman Empire lost its war against Russia that had been ongoing since 1806. Serbia had requested Russian aid in its rebellion, but Russia had been preoccupied with its own war against the Ottoman Empire and failed to send any significant military aid. On 28 May 1812, the Ottoman Empire and Russia concluded the Treaty of Bucharest. This treaty restored the Principalities to the Ottoman Empire, but stipulated that Mahmud II reestablish the Principalities' privileges, "which existed and were observed until this war."⁶ Furthermore, while Russia had not been able to aid Serbia militarily, in the Treaty of Bucharest it succeeded in gaining Serbia its internal administrative autonomy and amnesty for all Serbian rebels.⁷ This course of events is exactly what the Ottoman Empire hoped to prevent by implementing its new diplomatic tactics in 1821: a war with Russia and foreign interference between the Sultan and his subjects, both of which resulted in the further constriction of Mahmud II's authority.

After losing its war with Russia in 1812, the Porte turned its attention to its ambitious Paşa of Albania, Ali. Worried about Ali Paşa's loyalty, Ottoman officials removed several of Ali's family members from their *paşalıklar*.⁸ In 1820 Ottoman troops attempted to depose Ali Paşa, but failed because the *armatoloi*, armed corps the Ottoman Empire used to patrol rural areas in Greece and Albania in exchange for tax exemptions, sided with Ali Paşa, in hopes of maintaining their position.⁹

⁶ "The Treaty of Bucharest, 28 May 1812," in *The Great Powers and the Near East 1774-1923*, ed. M.S. Anderson (London: Edward Arnold, 1970), 28.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁸ Frederick F. Anscombe, "The Balkan Revolutionary Age," *The Journal of Modern History* 34, no. 3 (2012): 590.

⁹ Panagiotis Stathis, "From Klephts and Armatoloi to Revolutionaries," in *Ottoman Rule and the Balkans, 1760-1850: Conflict, Transformation, Adaptation: Proceedings of an International Conference Held in Rethymno, Greece, 13-14 December 2003*, eds. Antonis Anastasopoulos and Elias Kolovos (Rethymno, Greece: University of Crete, 2007), 178.

In addition to seeking Czar Alexander I's support, Ali Paşa encouraged Greek notables to take advantage of the inundation of Ottoman troops in Greece to rebel.¹⁰ Prompted by Ali Paşa and his rebellion, in early 1821 the Greek nationalistic society, the Filiki Eteria (Society of Friends), launched the Greek rebellion. As they had in Albania, the *armatoloi* in Greece overwhelmingly sided with the rebels.¹¹ Having to simultaneously deal with both rebellions, the Ottoman Empire was unable to fully utilize its superior military strength, enabling Ali Paşa to withstand Ottoman attacks until 1822.¹² Even after ending Ali Paşa's rebellion, Ottoman forces entered a stalemate against the Greek rebels that lasted until 1824, with both sides massacring defeated soldiers and peaceful subjects respectively throughout Greece.

In 1824, Muhammad Ali, the Ottoman governor of Egypt, acceded to Mahmud II's request that he send his Egyptian fleet and armies to reconquer Greece.¹³ Although Muhammad Ali's armies, led by his son Ibrahim Paşa, looked on the verge of completely subduing the Greek rebels, in 1827 France, Great Britain, and Russia destroyed the Ottoman fleet and forced Ibrahim Paşa to agree to a temporary ceasefire.¹⁴ As the European Powers continued to hear reports of Ottoman troops massacring Greeks, the three Powers were determined to end hostilities between the Ottoman Empire and Greece, and to prevent future atrocities by guaranteeing Greek internal autonomy.¹⁵ Mahmud II continued to refuse European mediation, however, and in December

¹⁰ Theophilus C. Prousis, *British Consular Reports from the Ottoman Levant in an Age of Upheaval* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2008), 24; Anscombe, 590.

¹¹ Stathis, 178.

¹² Anscombe, 590.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 578.

¹⁴ M.S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923: A Study in International Relations* (New York: Macmillan, 1966), 67.

¹⁵ "The Anglo-Russian Protocol of 4 April 1826," in *The Great Powers and the Near East 1774-1923*, ed. M.S. Anderson, 32.

1827 declared war against Russia.¹⁶ The following April the two Powers began hostilities, and by September 1829 Russian forces had occupied Edirne and forced Mahmud II to agree to the Treaty of Adrianople, which stipulated that the Ottoman Empire agree to end hostilities with Greece and recognize its internal autonomy.¹⁷

Already only nominally subject to Mahmud II's sovereignty, in 1832 Muhammad Ali rebelled against the Ottoman Empire. Under the command of his son, Ibrahim Paşa, Muhammad Ali's armies soundly defeated the Ottoman forces and were positioned to march on Istanbul. Desperate to protect his throne, Mahmud II sought European protection from Muhammad Ali. Although the Porte attempted to gain British aid, Great Britain refused.¹⁸ Unable to convince Great Britain to send military aid, the Ottoman Empire instead accepted Russia's offer of protection by formally communicating their request for military support to the Russian minister Butenev.¹⁹ While Russian intervention prevented Ibrahim Paşa from marching on Istanbul, Czar Alexander I refused to withdraw his forces from Istanbul until the Porte agreed to the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi in 1833. This treaty practically established the Ottoman Empire as a protectorate of Russia, as it promised Russian military support for the Ottoman Empire in exchange for the latter closing the Dardanelles to foreign warships hostile to Russia.²⁰ Fearing that this treaty granted the Czar the ability to control the Straits and turned the Ottoman Empire into a dependency of Russia, Great Britain protested the treaty and advised Mahmud II to reform in

¹⁶ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 68.

¹⁷ A.L. Macfie, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923* (New York: Longman Group Limited, 1989), 17.

¹⁸ Miroslav Šedivý, "From Adrianople to Münchengrätz: Metternich, Russia, and the Eastern Question 1829-33," *The International History Review* 33, no. 2 (2011): 213-14.

¹⁹ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 81.

²⁰ "The Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, 8 July 1833," in *The Great Powers and the Near East 1774-1923*, ed. M.S. Anderson, 42-44.

order to improve its military and administration and enable the British government to ally with the Ottoman Empire without fear of British popular backlash.

In 1839, Mahmud II hoped to punish his nominal vassal Muhammad Ali and reconquer the Ottoman territories the latter had conquered in 1833. Despite Mahmud II's military reforms, however, Ibrahim Paşa again led Muhammad Ali's Egyptian forces to victory, and was poised to march on Istanbul uncontested.²¹ Mahmud II died shortly after his armies' defeat, leaving his son, Abdülmecid, to ascend the throne at only 16-years old. Unlike during the Greek War of Independence, the Porte welcomed, and actually requested, European mediation to settle its dispute with Muhammad Ali. Having followed Great Britain's advice to reform the Empire, the Porte believed that Great Britain and the other European Powers would grant the Ottoman Empire a favorable settlement. To further show that the Ottoman Empire was as committed as Muhammad Ali was to implementing western military and administrative reforms, on 3 November 1839 Sultan Abdülmecid promulgated the Hatt-ı Şerif of Gülhane, which promised to protect Ottoman subjects' life, fortune, and honor.²² As the Porte hoped, the European Powers welcomed the Ottoman Empire's continued efforts to reform, and in 1840 agreed to the Treaty of London, which satisfied all of the Porte's demands for its settlement with Muhammad Ali.²³

A brief overview of diplomatic developments from 1821 to 1840:

As a result of the Ottoman Empire's new diplomatic tactics, from 1821 until 1840 the Porte attempted to use diplomatic means rather than its military to solve international conflicts.

²¹ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 95.

²² "The Hatt-ı Şerif of Gulhané, 3 November 1839," in *The Great Powers and the Near East 1774-1923*, ed. M.S. Anderson, 59-62.

²³ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 101.

During the first year of the Greek War of Independence, the Porte's new diplomatic tactics almost failed as Russia nearly declared war on the Ottoman Empire. First, Russia was upset that the Ottoman Empire had publicly executed the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church on Easter Sunday. Although the Porte assured Russia that it had not intended to seize the Patriarch on Easter, it defended its decision to execute him because the Patriarch had encouraged the Greek rebellion.²⁴ Second, the Porte refused to reinstate the Greek *hospodars*, princes, in the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. The Porte did not deny that multiple treaties between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, including the Treaty of Bucharest 1812, required that they reinstate the *hospodars*; however, the Porte argued it would be impossible to place the Principalities under the control of Greeks with the ongoing Greek rebellion. Finally, Russia remonstrated Ottoman troops' massacres of Greek subjects. Consequently, Russia ended official diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire in June 1826. With the help of the British and Austrian ambassadors to the Ottoman Empire, however, the Porte succeeded in preventing war with Russia in 1821.

After the Battle of Navarino in October 1827, the Porte attempted to utilize the same diplomatic tactics it had in 1821 to prevent war. Recognizing that France, Great Britain, and Russia were determined to force Mahmud II to agree to end the Ottoman Empire's war against Greece and grants Greece its internal autonomy, the Porte instead declared war on Russia in December 1827. While Muhammad Ali's armies were reconquering Greece, Mahmud II had finally realized his plans destroy the rebellious janissaries and to institute a new regular army

²⁴ Lord Strangford, "No. 46, Strangford to Castlereagh, Constantinople, 10 March 1821," in *Lord Strangford at the Sublime Porte (1821): The Eastern Crisis*, ed. Theophilus Prousis (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2010), 99-102. Henceforth, Strangford's correspondence to Castlereagh will be referred to by noting Strangford, the number of the letter, its date, and finally, its page numbers.

organized and disciplined along western lines. With these superior troops, the Porte concluded that war with Russia was less of a threat to Mahmud II's sovereignty than accepting European interference in internal Ottoman affairs.

The Porte had supported reaching a diplomatic solution with Russia in 1821 because Russia's demands were restricted to the Ottoman Empire upholding its treaties, and thus were not a threat to Mahmud II's independence. In 1827, however, Europe sought to dictate the Sultan's control over his Greek subjects. Since the Porte failed to convince any European Power to mediate peace on the basis of Russia agreeing to refrain from interfering in Greece, the Ottoman Empire favored war over diplomacy. Ottoman troops withheld the Russian advance for the first year, but by mid-1829 Russian forces had occupied Edirne and were positioned to remove Mahmud II if he continued to refuse to reinstate the Ottoman Empire's treaties with Russia and to agree to Europe's demands to grant Greece its internal autonomy. Thus, in addition to losing the war with Russia, the Porte had damaged its diplomatic relations with France and Great Britain and by 1832 had acceded to Greece's complete independence.

Faced with Muhammad Ali's rebellion in 1832, the Porte again attempted to secure British support to protect Mahmud II's throne. Because of the Ottoman Empire's conduct during the Greek War of Independence, however, Great Britain refused to send aid. Only after Great Britain learned of the Ottoman Empire's new treaty with Russia in 1833, the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi, did British officials seek to improve Great Britain's relationship with the Ottoman Empire, and advised the Porte to reform its military and government in order to foster British goodwill and to prevent further rebellions. Still desirous of securing not only British support but also entering into the Concert of Europe and thus guaranteeing the Ottoman Empire's political

and territorial integrity from European, especially Russian, encroachment, in the 1830s Mahmud II expanded Ottoman diplomatic efforts and continued to reform his government.

After Great Britain advised the Ottoman Empire to reform if it desired European support for the Sultan's reign, the Porte incorporated promises to reform into its diplomatic strategy of fostering a better diplomatic relationship with the European Powers, especially Great Britain. During the Greek War of Independence (1821-1832) and the first Muhammad Ali crisis (1832-1833), the Porte had primarily attempted to garner British diplomatic support by inciting British Russophobia through sharing Ottoman intelligence of Russian threats to Ottoman autonomy. Once Lord Ponsonby, the British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, informed the Porte of Lord Palmerston's advice to reform in December 1833, however, the Porte recognized that it needed to give Great Britain further incentive to ally with the Ottoman Empire.²⁵ Therefore, while the Porte continued to employ warnings of Russian aggression to British officials, it also promised to reform and institute new systems of government based on European examples. Although the Porte would accept protection from any European Power, even Russia, if necessary, it preferred British support as Great Britain had the most incentive to maintain the Ottoman Empire.²⁶ Thus, the Porte's diplomatic efforts from 1821 to 1840 were primarily directed at securing Great Britain's help in gaining the Ottoman Empire entrance into the Concert of Europe in order to protect the Sultan's autonomy.

In this paper, I will first argue that the primary tactic the Ottoman Empire employed from the Greek War of Independence until it received Palmerston's advice in December 1833 was to

²⁵ G.H. Bolsover, "David Urquhart and the Eastern Question, 1833-37: A Study in Publicity and Diplomacy," *The Journal of Modern History* 8, no. 4 (1936): 447.

²⁶ See footnote 2.

attempt to incite British Russophobia in order to convince Great Britain to ally with the Sultan and prevent Russian encroachment on Ottoman autonomy and territory. Second, I will demonstrate that during the aforementioned period, the Porte viewed military and administrative reforms solely as a means to strengthening the Ottoman Empire, not a means to fomenting diplomatic rapport with Europe. Finally, I will show that after receiving Palmerston's advice in December 1833, the Porte incorporated reform into its diplomatic discourse with Europe in order to elicit European sympathy and support, which culminated in the Porte's promulgation of the Hatt-ı Şerif of Gülhane.

I will begin my analysis with the Greek War of Independence because it was during this crisis that the Porte first made serious attempts to gain entry into the Concert of Europe by improving its diplomatic relationship with the other European Powers. While the Ottoman Empire had engaged in diplomatic intercourse before Mahmud II, Ottoman officials informed Lord Strangford, the British diplomat to the Ottoman Empire, that the Porte had never before been so active in soliciting foreign diplomatic aid. Therefore, the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence in 1821 marks the beginning of a new era in Ottoman diplomacy. Throughout the Greek War of Independence, the Porte's primary diplomatic strategy in this new period of Ottoman diplomacy was to incriminate Russia as an agitator and to portray the Ottoman Empire as a peacekeeper in its diplomatic discourse with the other European Powers. Although Mahmud II reformed his military in 1826, this was not a part of the Ottoman Empire's diplomatic tactics but was solely intended to strengthen the Ottoman Empire from within.

As a result of the Greek War of Independence, however, the Porte had to significantly alter its diplomacy. Not only did the Porte believe it necessary to replace the Greek *dragomans*,

or interpreters, with more trustworthy subjects, but it also had to develop the means to elicit European sympathy. The Porte recognized that France and Great Britain had sided with Russia during the Greek War of Independence because the Ottoman Empire had fomented rebellion by misgoverning its subjects and that Ottoman troops had massacred innocent Greek *reaya*. Thus, after receiving Palmerston's advice in 1833, the Porte recognized that through actual and promised reforms combined with evidence of Russia's intentions to seize Ottoman territory, it could ensure Great Britain's diplomatic support. I will therefore examine Ottoman diplomacy from 1821 until the Treaty of London in 1840, as with the signing of this treaty, the Porte partially realized its diplomatic goals, and henceforth entered a new period of Ottoman diplomacy.

Historiography:

In order to analyze the Ottoman Empire's diplomatic tactics from 1821 until 1840, I have utilized British diplomatic correspondence dealing with the Ottoman Empire, biographies of Stratford Canning, the British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire multiple times in the 19th century, and finally, the text of the Ottoman Empire's treaties which have been translated into English. For my analysis of Ottoman diplomatic tactics in 1821, I relied almost exclusively on the correspondence of Lord Strangford, the British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire from 1820 to 1825. Because I am analyzing the Ottoman Empire's diplomatic tactics, I have focused on Strangford's correspondence that includes either information or quotes from Ottoman officials. While I hope to eventually incorporate Ottoman documents into my research, Strangford's correspondence revealed substantial insight into Ottoman diplomatic tactics.

Because Ottoman officials viewed Strangford as the European ambassador most sympathetic to Ottoman interests and Great Britain as the Power most concerned with maintaining Ottoman authority, Ottoman officials shared significant Ottoman intelligence and plans with Strangford. By analyzing the Ottoman officials' arguments and the intelligence they chose to share with Strangford, I was able to utilize Strangford's diplomatic correspondence to discern the Ottoman Empire's diplomatic stratagem.

For the remaining years I have analyzed, I used similar tactics as I elucidated in the previous paragraph to determine the Ottoman Empire's diplomatic tactics. First, I utilized two biographies of Stratford Canning. Second, I analyzed the treaties the Ottoman Empire signed during these years. Third, I used the narrative, and in some cases analysis, of other historians. Finally, I examined the political testament of Ali Paşa, an Ottoman official who served in many government positions – including ambassador, Foreign Minister, and Grand Vizier – which further supported my arguments about Ottoman diplomatic tactics.

Although western historians have thoroughly studied the diplomacy revolving around the “Eastern Question,” most of the historiography examines the topic from a Eurocentric point of view, and consequently treats the Ottoman Empire as essentially a subject kingdom to a European Power, rather than a weaker, yet still autonomous empire. Furthermore, even the historians that have analyzed the “Eastern Question” from an Ottoman perspective have practically ignored the diplomatic tactics the Ottoman Empire employed from 1821 until 1840, instead usually focusing on Ottoman diplomacy during the Tanzimat Era. Even Roderic H. Davison, in his book *Nineteenth Century Ottoman Diplomacy and Reforms*, did not sufficiently expound on Ottoman diplomatic tactics from 1821 until 1840. So while Davison noted that in

1835 Mahmud II created permanent diplomatic positions abroad, he did not expound sufficiently on the events that convinced the Sultan to create these positions nor trace how Ottoman diplomatic tactics evolved from 1821 until the Tanzimat Era. This thesis was therefore designed to fill this gap in Ottoman diplomatic historiography.

Chapter 2: The Porte's Use of Russophobia as a Diplomatic Tactic

From the outbreak of the Greek rebellion in March 1821, the Ottoman Empire recognized Russia's role in fomenting the insurrection. Despite this, the Porte still sought to maintain peace with its rival Empire. In order to prevent Russia from attacking or demanding concessions for the Greek rebels as it had for Serbia in the Treaty of Bucharest, the Porte attempted to solicit British diplomatic support to prevent Russian interference by informing Lord Strangford of the actions of Russian provocateurs in Greece. Furthermore, the Porte revealed Russia's continued demands of the Sultan in an attempt to convince Strangford that Russia was looking for a pretext to invade. Finally, the Porte emphasized its desire to implement Great Britain's suggestions in order to satisfy Russia's demands without infringing upon Mahmud II's authority. The Porte thus demonstrated its willingness to adhere to the Concert of Europe's policy to secure peace through diplomacy and simultaneously evidenced Russia's intention to threaten European peace by seeking war with the Ottoman Empire. However, in order to convince Great Britain to support the Ottoman Empire diplomatically, the Porte had to: first, convince Strangford that Russia had incited the Greek rebellion; second, that the Russian ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, the Baron de Stroganoff, hoped to provoke the Ottoman Empire into declaring war on Russia; and finally, that the Ottoman Empire would henceforth prosecute its war against the Greek rebels in a just and humane manner.

Russia's role in inciting the Greek rebellion:

When the Greek War of Independence erupted in March 1821, it was not difficult for the Ottoman Empire to connect its rebellion to Russian intrigues. The Filiki Eteria, the secret Greek nationalist group that started the rebellion, was founded in Odessa in 1814 under the imagined leadership of Czar Alexander I.²⁷ The Filiki Eteria believed their rebellion would succeed because Russia had promised to lend support against Ottoman armies.²⁸ Furthermore, in 1820 Prince Alexander Ypsilanti, a general in the Russian army and son of a former Wallachian *hospodar*, assumed command of the Filiki Eteria, and started the insurrection by leading approximately 3,000 men across the Pruth to invade the Principalities in the hope that they too would rebel against Ottoman rule.²⁹ Theodoros Kolokotronis, another leader in the Greek armies, had also served in Russia's army and claimed that the Czar sanctioned their revolt, although Russia denied this assertion to the Porte.³⁰

Although the Porte claimed to have accepted Russia's promise that it did not sanction the Greek rebellion, Ottoman officials remained skeptical, especially of Stroganoff. In his memoirs, the British vice-consul of Izmir, Nathaniel Werry, wrote that he believed Stroganoff had instigated the insurrection.³¹ The Porte either shared his view that Russia was responsible for the

²⁷ Fatma Müge Göçek, "Decline of the Ottoman Empire and the Emergence of Greek, Armenian, Turkish, and Arab Nationalisms," in *Social Constructions of Nationalism in the Middle East*, ed. Fatma Müge Göçek (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002), 48; in Anscombe, "The Balkan Revolutionary Age," 600-601, Anscombe argued that the Filiki Eteria was the only nationalist group to play a significant role in the revolutions in the Balkans during the 19th century.

²⁸ Christine Philliou, "Breaking the Terarchia and Saving the Kaymakam: To Be an Ambitious Ottoman Christian in 1821," in *Ottoman Rule and the Balkans, 1760-1850*, eds. Antonis Anastasopoulos and Elias Kolovos (Rethymno, Greece: University of Crete, 2007), 181-182.

²⁹ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 52-53.

³⁰ Strangford, "No. 5, 10 March 1821," 47-48.

³¹ Nathaniel Werry, "Memoir," in *British Consular Reports from the Ottoman Levant in an Age of Upheaval*, ed. Theophilus C. Prousis, 161-169.

rebellion or at least sought to convince Strangford of its truth. The *reis efendi*, a position similar to that of foreign minister for the Ottoman Empire, informed Strangford that Ottoman agents had intercepted correspondence between Ypsilanti and the Moldavian *hospodar*, prince, Michael Soutso, suggesting that the Russian foreign minister Count John Capo d'Istria had suggested the idea of a universal Greek rebellion.³²

Within the first month of the Greek rebellion, Ottoman officials had begun the process of implicating Russia as the rebellion's instigators to Strangford. On 31 March 1821, the *reis efendi* asked Strangford whether the ambassador believed that Russia supported and actually fomented the Greek insurrection; in that same meeting, the *reis efendi* advised Strangford that in its plan to liberate Greece, Russia intended to separate the Ionian Islands from Great Britain.³³ Because the Russian governor of Odessa had not interceded when Ypsilanti retreated to Odessa to purchase arms and ammunition as well as recruit rebels amongst the city's Greek population, the Porte was even more suspicious of Russia's involvement in the rebellion.³⁴ Consequently, although the Porte hoped to prevent war with Russia, it also believed that Russian officials had instigated the Greek rebellion, despite Russia's protestations to the contrary. Therefore, the Porte's attempts to implicate Russia to Strangford as the cause of the Greek insurrection should be interpreted as both a diplomatic tactic to gain British support for the Ottoman Empire and evidence that Ottoman officials genuinely believed Russia was hoping for a pretext for war.

³² Strangford, "No. 7, 24 March 1821," 50-52.

³³ Strangford, "No. 14, 31 March 1821," 57-59.

³⁴ Strangford, "No. 13, 31 March 1821," 55-57.

The Porte's war with the Baron de Stroganoff:

Further complicating the Porte's attempts to secure a diplomatic solution to prevent war with Russia was Stroganoff's seeming desire to antagonize the Sultan. As the rebellion continued, the Porte grew increasingly frustrated with Stroganoff's actions. Despite originally advising the Porte to send troops to the Principalities to suppress the rebellion, in May 1821 Stroganoff informed the Porte that since Soutso had retreated and Ypsilanti was relegated to a fort with only 400-500 men, Russia would not allow Ottoman armies to enter the Principalities.³⁵ Later that month, the *reis efendi* told Strangford that Stroganoff needed to remember that Mahmud II was an independent sovereign, just like Alexander I.³⁶ That the *reis efendi* was so candid with Strangford is especially telling. Ottoman officials would naturally have been upset with any foreign official interfering with the Sultan's authority over his subjects, but the *reis efendi's* wording would have been of special concern to Great Britain, which feared that Russian ascendancy in Ottoman lands would threaten British interests in India. From these remarks as well as the *reis efendi's* earlier warning that Russia intended to separate Great Britain from its Ionian Islands holdings, it is clear that the Porte sought to foment distrust of Russia in Strangford and the British Foreign Office.

In June 1821, a Russian envoy arrived in Istanbul to support Stroganoff's earlier threat that Russia would not allow Ottoman armies to freely subdue the Principalities. The envoy carried two notes, the first of which formally protested the Ottoman Empire's military actions in the Principalities and prescribes the conduct they must henceforth take; the second note ordered Stroganoff to convey Alexander I's negative response to the Porte's request for the extradition of

³⁵ Strangford, "No. 7, 24 March 1821," 50-52; Strangford, "No. 31, 10 May 1821," 80-82.

³⁶ Strangford, "No. 37, 25 May 1821," 86-87.

the Greek rebels who had fled from the Ottoman Empire to Russia, as the Czar would not refuse asylum to any Christian. Additionally, Stroganoff accused the Ottoman government of planning “to strike dead and exterminate anyone who bears a Christian name in Turkey.”³⁷ Whatever Alexander's wishes were, Stroganoff's response appeared designed to anger Mahmud II and his officials. Rather than restricting himself to presenting his government's objections to the Ottoman Empire's military proceedings and declining the Porte's request for the Greek rebels, Stroganoff accused the Sultan of premeditating the destruction of one of the largest *millets* in the Ottoman Empire. Additionally, his remarks could foment further rebellion amongst Christians in the Ottoman Empire, as they implied that Ottoman Christians needed Russian protection from Mahmud II's wrath.

Just two days after this incident, the Porte exacerbated its conflict with Stroganoff by informing him that unless the Russian packet anchored across from his house in Büyükdere left within two days, the Porte would use force to expel it. In response, Stroganoff, along with his legation and families of principal Russians, left for his house in Büyükdere, while his secretary notified the Porte that Stroganoff had suspended official relations between Russia and the Ottoman Empire.³⁸ The Porte interpreted this move as yet another insult directed at the Sultan's authority, and planned to have the Ottoman navy seize Stroganoff's ships. Although Strangford strongly protested this plan, the *reis efendi* informed him that Mahmud II was set on this course of action in order to protect his dignity and authority. However, Strangford also sent M. Chabert, a *dragoman*, interpreter, to warn the Porte that if Ottoman forces seized Stroganoff's ships,

³⁷ Strangford, “No. 44, 12 June 1821,” 95-97. Stroganoff also informed the Porte that he was ordered to leave Istanbul when he judged necessary, either on a Russian public vessel or merchant ship.

³⁸ Strangford, “No. 45, 12 June 1821,” 97-99.

Strangford would report this event to his own government and request their aid in settling the issue. Chabert also informed the Porte that if Strangford was not satisfactorily assured by the *reis efendi* that the Porte would adhere to his conditions, he would demand an audience with the Grand Vizier. Despite Mahmud II's intention to exhibit his authority, Strangford's threats worked and the Porte promised not to seize Stroganoff's ships.³⁹

That Strangford was successful at preventing the Porte from seizing Stroganoff's ships is not surprising; the Porte was determined to convince Strangford and Great Britain that Russia, not the Ottoman Empire, had caused the current conflicts. Before Stroganoff had even retired to *Büyükdere*, the *reis efendi* felt compelled to assure Strangford that the Porte did not desire another war with Russia:

Is it to be supposed that we should be so utterly destitute of common sense, as to seek a rupture with Russia, at a moment when the latter has a vast disposeable [sic] army on our very frontiers – when we are harassed with rebellions and insurrections in every part of our dominions – when our means of equipping the fleet are so limited and so precarious, that we had the utmost difficulty in preparing a small squadron to defend our navigation in the Archipelago – and when, in addition to these circumstances, we have the conviction that there is not a power in Europe (fatigued and exhausted as they all are, by a long war), even among those who are most friendly to us, who would fire a single shot on our behalf?⁴⁰

Once again, the *reis efendi's* language suggested his motives for this meeting with Strangford. While assuring Strangford of the Ottoman Empire's peaceful intentions, he also referenced Russia's armies along the Ottoman Empire's borders as well as the rebellions plaguing Greece and the Principalities. Considering that the *reis efendi* had already been passing Strangford selected Ottoman intelligence which implicated Russian officials as the instigators of these

³⁹ Strangford, "No. 65, 10 July 1821," 130-131.

⁴⁰ Strangford, "No. 47, 12 June 1821," 104.

rebellions, their mention beside the reference to Russian armies along Ottoman frontiers was yet another tacit suggestion that the Ottoman Empire would soon be the victim of premeditated Russian aggression.

In mid-July 1821, Stroganoff received a new note from Russia to present to the Porte, which stated that if the Ottoman Empire did not comply with its demands within eight days, Stroganoff and his staff would withdraw from the Ottoman Empire. Strangford divided the note's contents into three parts: first, Russia claimed that Europe had endured the Ottoman Empire's existence based solely on the tacit agreement that the Sultan would treat his Christian *reaya* with indulgence, and that if Russia judged the Ottoman Empire to be mistreating its Christian *reaya*, it would amass the forces of Christendom against the Sultan; second, Russia accused the Ottoman Empire of intending to exterminate all of its Christian *reaya*, not just to suppress the rebels; and third, Russia demanded that the Porte pay to rebuild any churches Ottoman forces had damaged or destroyed, to guarantee the protection of Greek Orthodoxy, and for Ottoman officials to protect innocent Christians and to punish only those in rebellion.⁴¹

That the Porte shared this note as well as their outrage at its tone with Strangford is further evidence that Ottoman diplomacy during the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence was primarily concerned with fostering Russophobia in Great Britain. In order to show how reasonably they were acting, Ottoman officials passed along information to Strangford that would demonstrate Russia was making unreasonable demands as a pretext for war. In this case, Strangford strongly disagreed with several of the note's points: as he wrote to Lord Castlereagh, the British Foreign Secretary, Greeks throughout the Ottoman Empire were rebelling, the Sultan

⁴¹ Strangford, No. 71, 23 July 1821," 137-142.

had already invested a new Greek Orthodox Patriarch, the Porte had given permission to rebuild the damaged churches, and recent *fermanlar* and *hatt-ı şerifler*, imperial edicts, showed that the Porte desired to punish only its rebellious subjects. Therefore, there was little evidence to support Russia's claim that the Ottoman Empire intended to exterminate its Christian *reaya* and plenty to justify the Porte's actions. Strangford did admit, however, that the treaties between Russia and the Ottoman Empire supported Russia's claim to the right to interfere in the Principalities, but he also recognized that these treaties infringed on Mahmud II's sovereignty. As the Porte desired, this note worried Strangford, who suspected that Russia had issued it in order to gain further influence over Greece.⁴²

On 26 July 1821, Strangford again met with the *reis efendi*, who continued in his efforts to convince Strangford that not only were Russia's demands unreasonable for an independent sovereign, but they were merely a pretext to declare war against the Ottoman Empire. First, the *reis efendi* asked Strangford if Great Britain was prepared to go to war against the Ottoman Empire as the Russian note promised.⁴³ By once again referencing Russia's threat, the *reis efendi* reminded Strangford that Russia had, in official correspondence with another ruler, claimed the prerogative to speak for all of Europe, including Great Britain, without consultation. This would suggest that if Russia was preparing to attack the Ottoman Empire, its government did not feel compelled to confer with other European powers beforehand, further crediting the Porte's warnings that Russia desired war. Second, the *reis efendi* reiterated that the Sultan had already suffered through insults no independent sovereign should. Third, the *reis efendi* told Strangford that Russia used religion solely as an excuse to attack the Ottoman Empire. Finally, the *reis*

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Strangford, "No. 76, 26 July 1821," 146-150.

efendi posed this hypothetical to Strangford of what would happen if the Porte informed Russia that:

The Greeks, who profess the same faith as you do, have destroyed (as is the fact) many of our mosques – have murdered our clergy, with the most dreadful tortures – have violated their wives, and abused their children – and unless you rebuild these mosques and make reparations for these insults in eight days, we will declare that your existence is incompatible with the safety of our religion – we will make war upon you – and we will call upon all the Mussulman [sic] states in the world, to make common cause with us against you.⁴⁴

Although the *reis efendi* and other Ottoman officials had clearly implicated Russia in the Greek rebellion and suggested that Russia was preparing for war, none had spoken so bluntly with Strangford before this meeting. Taken on their own, the *reis efendi's* remarks in this conference would suggest he hoped that Strangford could elicit British military support; however, as the *reis efendi* had already assured Strangford that the Porte recognized that even its staunchest allies would not be able to “fire a single shot on our behalf,”⁴⁵ it is more likely that he merely hoped Great Britain would pressure Russia to adopt a more conciliatory approach with the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, Lord Strangford interpreted the *reis efendi's* remarks as an expression of confidence that either Ottoman armies could repel a Russian attack or one of its allies would lend military support. That the *reis efendi* had also suggested imprisoning Stroganoff should he try to leave the country certainly did not assuage Strangford's worries,⁴⁶ as such an act would have certainly provoked a Russian attack.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 148.

⁴⁵ Strangford, “No. 47, 12 June 1821,” 104.

⁴⁶ Strangford, “No. 76, 26 July 1821,” 146-150. Strangford reminded the *reis efendi* that in all previous wars against the Ottoman Empire, Russia had only deployed 70-100 thousand men, but in this case they could easily quadruple that number.

Despite Strangford's fears, it is clear that the Porte hoped to avoid war with Russia. Even its suggestion to imprison Stroganoff could have been calculated to convey how dire the situation was, as well as its displeasure at Stroganoff's continued disrespect for the Sultan. Furthermore, that Ottoman officials had refrained from seizing Stroganoff's ships or imprisoning Stroganoff despite their anger evidenced how valuable they held Strangford's advice and good will. When the Porte did respond to Russia's demands, although they did not fully satisfy Alexander I's stipulations, they nevertheless adopted a conciliatory attitude. In his note to Russia, the *reis efendi* promised the following: first, that the Sultan had no intention to persecute Greeks for being Christian, let alone any desire to exterminate them; second, that as soon as Ottoman forces reestablished peace, they would allow the Greeks to rebuild their churches; third, that the Porte always sought to punish only those in rebellion; finally, that once the Principalities were pacified, the Porte would withdraw the Ottoman troops which Russia had originally demanded and thus reestablish the Greek *hospodars* and all of the Principalities' privileges stipulated in the Ottoman Empire's treaties with Russia. Because the Porte did not fully satisfy Alexander I's demands within the prescribed time, however, Stroganoff demanded his passport and prepared to leave the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁷

As he had repeatedly done since the outbreak of the Greek rebellion, the *reis efendi* had designed his response to Russia not only to prevent war while also upholding the Sultan's authority, but also to encourage British Russophobia. By affirming that the Sultan had no intention to punish his faithful Christian *reaya* and would restore all privileges to the rebellious provinces once Ottoman armies reestablished peace, the *reis efendi* exhibited two of the qualities

⁴⁷ Strangford, "No. 79, 30 July 1821," 156-159.

Great Britain most desired to see in the Ottoman Empire: just treatment of its Christian subjects and a firm, yet conciliatory approach to Russia. Great Britain hoped to prevent war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, but it did not want to achieve this by placing the Ottoman Empire under the Czar's influence. Strangford and the Austrian *internuncio*, the title of Austria's ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, both agreed that the *reis efendi's* note could satisfy all of Russia's demands, or at least serve as a basis for negotiation. However, both feared that Russia was simply looking for a pretext for war and would reject the *reis efendi's* note as well as the Porte's request that Russia adhere to Article II of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca and return the Greek insurgents who had fled to Russia to Ottoman custody.⁴⁸

The reason the Porte exerted so much effort to convince Strangford of Russia's duplicitous actions is likely the same reason that Stroganoff so resented Strangford: the latter had refused to sign Stroganoff's collective note, and Stroganoff interpreted this refusal as a plot designed to upset Russian interests in the Ottoman Empire, as he believed that all Russian influence with the Porte had ended that day.⁴⁹ Strangford vehemently denied Stroganoff's charges in his correspondence with Castlereagh, but regardless of Strangford's intentions, his actions convinced both Stroganoff and the Porte that he was working in opposition to his Russian counterpart. Consequently, on 10 August 1821, Stroganoff, along with five ships and many Greek fugitives, sailed to Odessa without the Ottoman navy interfering.⁵⁰ The Porte had declined to satisfy all of Russia's demands, and Stroganoff, believing that Strangford was primarily at fault for their steadfast refusal, had no recourse but to leave Ottoman territory. Although the

⁴⁸ Strangford, "No. 81, 6 August 1821," 159-161.

⁴⁹ Strangford, "No. 82, 6 August 1821," 161-164.

⁵⁰ Strangford, "No. 87, 10 August 1821," 169-170.

Porte grew tired of Stroganoff's disrespectful actions, it still had hoped to maintain official diplomatic relations with the embittered Russian ambassador. While Stroganoff's decision to suspend diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire supported the Porte's contention to Strangford that Stroganoff and Russia sought a pretext for war, the Porte feared that Russia would in fact attack before it could secure British intervention to maintain peace between the Sultan and the Czar.

The Ottoman Empire and Russia prepare for war:

Despite the Porte's diplomatic efforts to prevent a war with Russia, both the Ottoman Empire and Russia began preparations for another war between the Sultan and Czar. Even with Stroganoff in Odessa, there were plenty of other Russian officials involved in fomenting attacks against the Ottoman Empire. Writing from Izmir, Mr. Werry informed Strangford on 25 May 1821 that the Russian vice-consul of Chios had left the island in order to aid and direct the equipment of the Greek Psariote squadron.⁵¹ Another Russian vice-consul, this time a man named Avierino, was attempting to recruit troops at Scala Nuova for the Greek armies.⁵² Additionally, Davud Paşa, the Ottoman governor of Baghdad, sent two agents to the Porte to inform the Sultan that he expected Persia to attack Baghdad due to a Russian agent's provocations in Tehran.⁵³ Despite this warning, the Porte did not have any conclusive evidence that these men were following official orders from Russia. Since they were Russian officials, however, the Czar was at least partially responsible for their actions even if they went against his

⁵¹ Strangford, "No. 40, 25 May 1821," 90-92.

⁵² Strangford, "No. 83, 6 August 1821," 164-165.

⁵³ Strangford, "No. 85, 6 August 1821," 165-168.

instructions. Furthermore, while both the Czar and Count Karl V. Nesselrode, a Russian foreign minister, had repudiated Ypsilanti's rebellion, Russia's recent conduct towards the Ottoman Empire suggested that the Czar no longer sided with the Sultan against the rebels.⁵⁴

In addition to these Russian agitators' actions, on 29 July 1821, Russia mobilized a large number of its troops towards the Pruth and Dniester, who within days would number approximately 118,000 men with more to come.⁵⁵ In response to this, on 31 July 1821, the Porte held a council regarding Russia. Due to the seriousness of the Russian threat, the janissary leaders present promised they would institute the new system of discipline Mahmud II desired.⁵⁶ That the janissary leaders would consent to Mahmud II's military reforms shows that the Porte recognized Russia's military superiority. They would fight Russia if necessary, but in recognition of the danger of this war, they hoped to use diplomatic means to convince Great Britain to pressure Russia to agree to peace.

Approximately a week after this council meeting, Strangford's *dragoman* notified him that the *reis efendi* planned to invite Strangford to a conference to inform him that the Ottoman Empire had restored peace to the Principalities, and would withdraw its troops if Great Britain and Austria assured the Porte that Russia would not use the Ottoman troops' retreat as an invitation to invade. Strangford believed that the *reis efendi* really intended to make this overture because Ottoman troops were already deserting in vast numbers, but since this would satisfy one of Russia's demands, Strangford hoped to use it to negotiate peace between the two Empires.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Strangford, "No. 23, 21 April 1821," 66-67: Stroganoff showed Strangford a letter from Ypsilanti in which Ypsilanti offered to submit to the Porte because he was aware that the Czar disapproved of his actions; Strangford, "No. 24, 25 April 1821 – Extract from James Yeames' recent letter from 10 April 1821," 67-68.

⁵⁵ Strangford, "No. 84, 6 August 1821," 165.

⁵⁶ Strangford, "No. 85, 6 August 1821," 165-168.

⁵⁷ Strangford, "No. 98, 18 August 1821," 183-185.

Contrary to Strangford's suspicions, however, on 17 August 1821 the Porte convened a general council at the *Şeyhülislam's* house and approved measures to maintain 40,000 troops along the Russian frontier.⁵⁸

Nevertheless, the Porte still desired to remove these troops from the Principalities. By 25 August 1821, the Porte had intimated to both Strangford and the *internuncio* its willingness to withdraw its troops from the Principalities in exchange for a joint British and Austrian guarantee that Russia would not invade. While neither Strangford nor the *internuncio* had the authority to guarantee Russia's actions, they refused to outright reject this proposal either.⁵⁹ They both saw this as an opportunity to create a new dialogue between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, and thus give the anti-war coalition in the Russian government, in which they included Alexander I, the chance to prevent war.⁶⁰

Although the Porte had already offered to withdraw its troops from the Principalities to fulfill its obligations to Russia, the *reis efendi* continued to complain to Strangford that Russia had no right to protest Ottoman troops' presence. Russia was correct that maintaining the troops in the Principalities violated the Ottoman Empire's treaties with Russia, yet by those same treaties Russia was required to turn the Greek rebels over to Ottoman authorities. The *reis efendi* argued that Russia's status as a Christian empire did not give it the right to ignore its treaties, nor should it complain about Ottoman soldiers in the Principalities when Russia had requested that the Porte send them. Finally, the *reis efendi* reiterated that despite Russia's obstinacy, the Porte

⁵⁸ Strangford, "No. 104, 25 August 1821," 192-193.

⁵⁹ Strangford, "No. 105, 25 August 1821," 193-195.

⁶⁰ In Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 61, Anderson points out that when Alexander heard about the rebellion, he actually deprived Ypsilanti of his commission. Although Alexander objected to how the Porte was treating his coreligionists, he did not want a war with the Ottoman Empire as it might give the impression that he encouraged rebellion.

would withdraw the troops with the British and Austrian guarantee.⁶¹ Though Russia, unlike the Ottoman Empire, was in the Concert of Europe at this time, in this meeting with Strangford, the *reis efendi* used language and arguments that would appeal to a European diplomat. He both castigated Russia's actions and justified the Porte's based on the treaties between the two Empires, while also encouraging outside mediation to settle the dispute peacefully. While the *reis efendi* contrasted the correct actions of his Empire to the improper actions of Russia, he also tacitly reminded Strangford that whereas the Ottoman Empire sought out and would accept Great Britain's influence in international disputes, Russia had unilaterally threatened the Ottoman Empire on behalf of all of Christian Europe.

Because Great Britain had not offered the Porte the guarantee it sought, Ottoman officials continued to try and convince Strangford of the Ottoman Empire's peaceful intentions and Russia's unjust aggression. On 25 September 1821, Ismail Efendi, the former Ottoman ambassador to Great Britain, visited Strangford on behalf of Ismail's friend Halet Efendi, Mahmud II's chief councilor and current favorite. That the Porte would send Ismail on an unofficial visit to Strangford reveals the Porte's hopes for the meeting: to determine whether Strangford favored the Porte's plan to withdraw Ottoman troops from the Principalities with Great Britain's and Austria's guarantee that Russia would not invade. Strangford had refrained from either accepting or rejecting the Porte's proposal as he had neither the power nor the desire to unilaterally promise British protection in case of a Russian attack. In a more relaxed and unofficial meeting, however, the Porte hoped that Strangford would reveal whether he would support such a plan to his government.

⁶¹ Strangford, "No. 110, 10 September 1821," 206-209.

During the meeting, Ismail assured Strangford that the Sultan's greatest desire was to avoid another war with Russia, but that it might be impossible unless they took sufficient measures to prevent Russia, acting on behalf of their coreligionists, from supporting Greek rebels. Strangford advised Ismail that in order to prevent war, the Ottoman Empire should seek to invoke its friendship with the other European Powers. To accomplish this, Strangford suggested that the Porte should uphold its treaties by recalling the Ottoman troops stationed in the Principalities and reestablishing the *hospodars*. In response, Ismail confided to Strangford that the Porte feared that the rest of Europe had created a secret league against the Ottoman Empire, as Russia had intimated in its earlier note to the Porte.⁶² Because the British embassy had not adopted the same language as the other Powers, however, the Porte believed Great Britain had not joined this alliance. Therefore, the Porte trusted Great Britain's advice above all the other Powers', which is why the *reis efendi* had confided so much of Ottoman intelligence regarding Russia's plans and actions to Strangford.⁶³

Ismail also stated that as other Powers had adopted Great Britain's language and advice, the Porte had begun confiding in them as well. He cited the Porte's more lenient policy regarding the Greeks as proof of these improved relations. Ismail also denied the notion that the Ottoman Empire refused any European interference within its realm. The Sultan could not publicly admit to accepting such interference as it would negatively impact his authority; however, Ottoman officials solicited advice from their most trusted allies, and shared these suggestions with the Sultan, so that Mahmud II could institute them seemingly spontaneously. Finally, to end the

⁶² See footnote 37.

⁶³ Strangford, "No. 123, 25 September 1821," 229-236.

meeting in a conciliatory fashion, Ismail assured Strangford that he would advise Halet to let the European Powers collectively decide the fate of the Greek rebels who had fled to Russia.⁶⁴

The Porte's overtures to Great Britain and Austria had little influence on Russian opinion over the next month. Because Russia still refused to respond to the Grand Vizier's communications, the Porte refused to accede to any more of Russia's requests, as it would demonstrate weakness and encourage Russia to make greater demands on the Sultan.⁶⁵ Despite this, the Porte still remained eager to negotiate a settlement with Russia, and agreed that the treaties between the two Powers should serve as the sole basis for negotiation.⁶⁶ However, the Porte had not given up its demand for Russia to turn over the Greek rebels that had fled to the Czar's dominions, prompting the *internuncio* to inform the new *reis efendi*, *kadiasker* of Rumelia, and Canib (Gianib) Efendi, a friend of Ismail Efendi, that if the Porte maintained this stance, Russia would inevitably declare war. This statement worried the Ottoman officials enough that they promised to report the conference to the Sultan.⁶⁷

The same day that Strangford sent this report to Castlereagh he also received a communication from Ismail Efendi. Ismail informed Strangford that the Porte would adopt Strangford's advice, but only if it would receive concessions to avoid displaying weakness. The Porte would withdraw all of its military stores and troops from the Principalities – except for 200-300 men to serve as police. Additionally, Ismail promised the Porte would elect a *kaymakam*, sub-governor, from the elders of the native *boyars*, nobles, to govern the

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Strangford, "No. 137, 25 October 1821," 249-250.

⁶⁶ Strangford, "No. 151, 25 November 1821," 268-270. While the Porte would have had to agree to reinstate the *hospodars* in the Principalities immediately, it would also have pressured Russia to return the Greek rebels. Strangford believed that the Porte would not demand the rebels, however, but would instead use them to gain leverage in the negotiations.

⁶⁷ Strangford, "No. 155, 26 November 1821," 272-274.

Principalities until the *hospodars* could be reinstated. In order to satisfy Russia's demands, Ismail further guaranteed that the *kaymakam* would have the authority of a *hospodar*, including the ability to command the paşa of the remaining Ottoman troops. All Ismail asked in return was for Russia to promise to either confine Prince Soutso or to send him to a remote part of Russia.⁶⁸

Despite Ismail's promise that the Porte was prepared to follow Strangford's advice, in a meeting with the *reis efendi*, *kadiasker* of Rumelia, and Canib Efendi, Strangford informed the Ottoman officials that the Ottoman Empire had made little progress on fulfilling his recommendations. Canib then responded by asking:

Do you consider it then as nothing, that notwithstanding the ungracious treatment...from Russia, we still proclaim the most earnest desire to be on amicable terms with her; that we have now for the first time, declared our adherence to the system of universal peace established by the great powers of Europe, and our determination not to act independently of that system; and finally, that we have...not hesitated to let foreign states into the secret of our domestic embarrassments and dangers, earnestly entreating them...to come forward to our assistance, not with men, nor money, nor arms, but by friendly arguments...which Russia cannot refuse to admit, unless she is resolved to shut her ears equally to the voice of justice, and to the opinions of her allies?

Canib also defended the Porte's attempts to convince Great Britain and the other Powers of the dangers of following Russian policy. Finally, he reaffirmed the Porte's peaceful intentions by stating that the Porte had permanently and unconditionally given up its demand for the Greek rebels, that they had already begun withdrawing troops from the Principalities, and promised that the Sultan would issue *fermanlar* to to elevate the *kaimakam's* administration as equal to that of *hospodars*'.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Strangford, "No. 157, 26 November 1821," 274-276.

⁶⁹ Strangford, "No. 166, 10 December 1821," 286-290.

In this one meeting with Strangford, Canib Efendi succinctly laid out the Ottoman diplomatic strategy since the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence. As the Ottoman Empire was no longer militarily superior or even equal to the other European Powers, it instead sought to protect its territory and internal autonomy by becoming a member of the Concert of Europe. To achieve this, Ottoman officials encouraged mediation between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, because as an international conflict, this would not infringe upon the Sultan's authority over his subjects. By showing their willingness to accept British mediation while also arguing Russia's duplicity, Ottoman officials attempted to prove to Great Britain that to accept Russian policy would be to accept war. Furthermore, in asking for British mediation, the Porte showed that unlike Russia it would attempt to solve international disputes through diplomacy with the other European Powers. Finally, the Porte emphasized its desire to seek out and implement Great Britain's advice, which appealed to British interests as this would simultaneously increase British influence within the Ottoman Empire and curb Russia's.

Although the Ottoman Empire and Russia did fight a war during the Greek War of Independence, the Porte's willingness to adhere to most of Strangford's advice enabled the Ottoman Empire to avoid a war during this diplomatic crisis with Russia. To achieve this, the Porte shared Ottoman intelligence with Strangford that evidenced Russia's role in fomenting the Greek rebellion, suggested to Strangford that Stroganoff's and Russia's antagonistic actions were designed to provoke war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, and finally, assured Strangford and the *internuncio* of the Ottoman Empire's desire to reach a peaceful settlement through diplomacy. Therefore, in 1821, the Porte adopted new diplomatic tactics designed

primarily to elicit British support by inciting the latter's Russophobia and demonstrating the Ottoman Empire's desire to enter into the Concert of Europe.

Chapter 3: The Effect Ottoman and Greek Atrocities had on Ottoman Diplomacy

In addition to the aforementioned challenges of convincing Great Britain to support the Ottoman Empire diplomatically during the Greek War of Independence, the Porte also had to overcome its own decision to publicly execute Greek leaders as well as Ottoman troops' massacres of peaceful Greek *reaya*. Because Greeks were Christians, the Porte recognized that British sympathy would naturally be for the Greeks. Since the Porte sought to gain British diplomatic support, however, the Porte had to assuage British fears that the Ottoman Empire was mistreating its Greek *reaya*. Consequently, in 1821, faced with the threat of a Russian attack – due in part to Russia's purported belief that the Sultan intended to massacre the Greek *reaya* – the Porte accepted Great Britain's advice to henceforth prosecute the subduing of the Greek rebels in a more compassionate manner, thereby gaining British diplomatic support and denying Russia a pretext for war.

Despite this change in tactics, however, the Porte continued to defend the executions it had carried out by arguing that the Greek rebels' massacres of peaceful Turks mitigated the atrocities that Ottoman troops had committed. Because the Porte did not believe that Great Britain would cooperate with Russia, it viewed a unilateral attack from Russia as the only threat to successfully suppressing the Greek insurrection. Ottoman officials therefore exerted little effort to demonstrate why British officials should desire the Sultan to be victorious over Greece, believing that British Russophobia would prevent Great Britain from ever cooperating with Russia against the Ottoman Empire. Thus the Ottoman Empire only promised to adopt a conciliatory approach to its Greek rebels because otherwise Russia appeared ready to invade the

Principalities. Even after the Porte adopted the Great Powers' suggestion to show leniency to the rebels and to protect innocent Greeks, Ottoman officials made no attempt to punish the troops who had already committed atrocities. Instead, the Porte adopted these conciliatory measures as a means to undercut Russian charges that the Porte was targeting its Christian *reaya*, which the Porte viewed as a pretext to declare war.

After 1821, the threat of war with Russia had dissipated and the Porte stopped preventing Ottoman troops from committing atrocities against Greeks in retaliation for the Greek rebels' massacres of Turkish subjects and Ottoman soldiers. The Porte's decision to no longer uphold its promise to show leniency to the Greek rebels guaranteed that the European Powers would sympathize with the Greek rebels. In 1824, Mahmud II requested Muhammad Ali's help to subdue the Greek rebels. The latter sent his son, Ibrahim Paşa, to lead his Egyptian armies and reconquer Greece for Mahmud II. By 1827 the combined Ottoman and Egyptian forces had nearly defeated the Greek rebels. Because Ottoman troops had continued to massacre Greek *reaya*, however, France, Great Britain, and Russia agreed to intercede on behalf of the Greek rebels with Mahmud II before Ottoman forces could commit further atrocities. Since the Ottoman Empire looked poised to finally defeat the rebels, however, Mahmud II refused European mediation even after a combined French, British, and Russian fleet had practically annihilated the Ottoman fleet in October 1827. In December 1827, Mahmud II declared war on Russia. As expected, by mid-1829 Russian armies had defeated their Ottoman counterparts, and forced the Sultan to agree to a treaty ending the war and reestablishing peace with Greece as well as the latter's internal autonomy. Whereas in 1821 the Porte utilized diplomacy in order to

prevent war with Russia, in 1827 it declared war rather than accept European diplomacy that interceded between the Sultan and his subjects.

The Porte's executions of Greek leaders:

In the early months of the Greek War of Independence, the Porte frequently publicly executed Greek rebels. The first case that Strangford wrote to Castlereagh about occurred late in March 1821, when Ottoman authorities executed four Greek leaders related to families that had fled Istanbul upon receiving news of the Greek rebellion. As the Porte deposed the *Şeyhülislam* at approximately the same time, Strangford hypothesized that he had been removed due to his refusal to authorize a proscription against the Greek *reaya*.⁷⁰ On 16 April 1821 the Porte also executed Prince Constantine Mourousi, an Ottoman *dragoman*, apparently for mistranslating a letter from Ypsilanti in order to avoid incriminating a foreign power. While Mourousi's mistranslation, if intentional, could certainly be interpreted as treason, the Porte later executed the Greek Orthodox Bishop of Ephesus for helping the family of Mourousi's brother, Prince Demetrius, flee from Ottoman lands.⁷¹ That the Prince's family believed it was necessary to flee the Ottoman Empire before they could be arrested as rebels, however, supported the Porte's decision to distrust the bishop.

On Easter Sunday in 1821, the Ottoman Empire further antagonized Christian Europe, especially Russia, by having Ottoman troops seize the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church in Istanbul just after he had finished performing the Easter festival. Ottoman troops then

⁷⁰ Strangford, "No. 15, 31 March 1821," 59-60. It should be noted, however, that Strangford did not include sufficient evidence for this supposition.

⁷¹ Strangford, "No. 19, 21 April 1821," 62-63; Strangford, No. 25, 25 April 1821," 68-70.

proceeded to execute him alongside three bishops: the aforementioned Bishop of Ephesus as well as bishops from Derkon and Anchialos.⁷² In a later meeting with the *reis efendi*, the latter assured Strangford that the Porte had not meant to execute the Greek Patriarch on Easter Sunday.⁷³ However, as this statement came at roughly the same time that Stroganoff officially suspended diplomatic relations between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, the *reis efendi*'s assurances should be viewed as most likely being ex post facto explanations meant to assuage European fears that the Sultan intended to punish all Ottoman Christians. That no Ottoman official aware of the order to execute the Greek Patriarch realized that it was Easter Sunday is implausible. Rather, the decision to publicly execute the Greek Patriarch on Easter Sunday appears to have been a calculated warning to all Greeks that no matter their social status, they would be punished severely if they rebelled. The Porte did not distance itself from the decision to execute the former Greek Patriarch, however, and offered both Strangford and the *internuncio* proof that the former Greek Patriarch had supported the Greek rebellion in letters to Greek Orthodox clergy in the Morea.⁷⁴ While this demonstrated that the Porte felt it necessary to deny the charges that it intended to destroy both its peaceful and rebellious Christian *reaya*, it also showed that the Porte believed that if a Greek was a rebel, it had the right to level any punishment it saw fit.

Even after the execution of the Greek Patriarch, the Porte continued to publicly execute Greeks. Moreover, in early May janissaries plundered and destroyed five Greek Orthodox churches, and Strangford believed that the Porte must have consented to their actions.⁷⁵ Although

⁷² Strangford, "No. 25, 25 April 1821," 68-70.

⁷³ Strangford, "No. 47, 12 June 1821," 102-105. The *reis efendi* also felt the need to remind Strangford that the Porte had recently executed several Muslims, evidence that they were not targeting Christians.

⁷⁴ Strangford, "No. 46, 12 June 1821," 99-102. Oddly, Strangford refused to view the evidence.

⁷⁵ Strangford, "No. 30, 10 May 1821," 77-79.

Austria, Great Britain, and Russia deplored the extreme measures the Porte took against the Greeks, Ottoman officials still defended the executions. Ottoman officials had not yet conceived of treating rebels with leniency to foster goodwill between the Ottoman Empire and the other European Powers.

The Porte did not recognize the need to treat the Greek rebels leniently because although Strangford desired to convince the Porte to adopt a more conciliatory approach towards the rebels, he also believed that the Ottoman Empire, as an independent empire, had the right to decide how to punish its own rebels. Therefore he did not protest the Porte's executions, nor did he even accept their offer to see the proof of the Greek Patriarch's guilt. The *internuncio*, however, supported by orders from the Austrian Foreign Minister, Prince Metternich, worked to show Ottoman officials that it would be in the Ottoman Empire's best interests to offer leniency and protection to rebellious and innocent Greeks respectively. The *internuncio* warned the Porte that its mistreatment of its Christian *reaya*, especially its execution of the Greek Patriarch on Easter Sunday, had convinced Christendom that the Ottoman Empire was hostile towards all Christians.⁷⁶

Ottoman and Greek massacres in 1821:

Although both Ottoman troops and Greek rebels massacred defenseless subjects, it was the Ottoman soldiers' conduct that the European Powers most vehemently castigated. As with the public executions, the Porte neither denied the atrocities nor made any promises to the European powers to punish the perpetrators. As an independent sovereign, the Porte believed that

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Mahmud II could levy whatever punishment he chose against rebels, especially when these rebels had massacred peaceful Turks. Most of the reports Strangford received confirmed the Porte's argument that both sides had massacred defenseless subjects. On 25 May 1821 Strangford wrote to Castlereagh to inform him that after retaking the town of Prevesa in northwest Greece, Ottoman troops had slaughtered many of the Greek inhabitants; in that same dispatch, Strangford recounted the firsthand account of two English gentlemen who had witnessed Greek rebels massacre the Turks on the island of Zea. Strangford then added that after taking Tinos, the insurgents celebrated their victory with religious ceremonies as well as murdering the local Turks.⁷⁷

While the Ottoman Empire believed its military's conduct was therefore justifiable, Russia fervently opposed its conduct. Just before breaking off official diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire by retiring to Büyükdere, Stroganoff presented a note to the Porte protesting Ottoman troops' conduct in the Principalities and prescribing the conduct the Porte must force its soldiers to follow. Contrary to the treaties between the two Empires, Stroganoff also argued that because of the cruelty of the Ottoman Paşa of Braila, the Porte should allow the Greek rebels to retire into either Russia or Austria.

In a meeting with Strangford, the *reis efendi* denied Stroganoff's charges that Ottoman troops had acted unjustly; to the contrary, the *reis efendi* asserted that the locals welcomed Ottoman troops as deliverers from the Greek rebels. The *reis efendi* then informed Strangford that the Porte had even executed a high-ranking Ottoman officer for plundering a Wallachian farmer's house, proof that the Porte would not tolerate its soldiers harassing innocent Ottoman

⁷⁷ Strangford, "No. 40, 25 May 1821," 90-92.

reaya. Finally, the *reis efendi* defended earlier Ottoman massacres by arguing that they were in retaliation for the Greeks massacring peaceful Turks.⁷⁸ These remarks from the *reis efendi* to Strangford illuminate the difficult position the Porte was in defending Ottoman troops committing atrocities. Because Russia had broken off diplomatic relations in part due to the supposed misconduct of Ottoman troops in the Principalities, the Porte felt the need to categorically reject these charges in order to deny any Russian pretext for invasion. Although Ypsilanti's troops had infiltrated the Principalities, the locals did not rise en masse to support him as they had in much of Greece. Therefore, while the Porte continued to defend the massacres in Greece as just punishment for an independent ruler to dole out to rebellious subjects, they could not apply this justification to mistreatment of the *reaya* in Wallachia and Moldavia without legitimizing Russia's charges.

As the relationship between Stroganoff and the Porte deteriorated in June 1821, the Porte recognized it was in danger of being forced to accept either another war with Russia or impugning the Sultan's autonomy by accepting Russia's stipulations. Instead, the Porte adopted the *internuncio*'s advice from early June 1821 to take a more moderate approach to both Greece and Russia for the sake of the Ottoman Empire's own interests. As the Porte had already worked to convince Strangford and the other European ambassadors that Russia was bent on war while the Sultan intended to uphold his treaties, the Porte readily adopted this approach to further demonstrate its desire for peace. Consequently, writing from Izmir in early June, Werry informed Strangford that Ottoman troops had intended to massacre the local Greek population, but the

⁷⁸ Strangford, "No. 44, 12 June 1821," 95-97.

local Ottoman officials prevented this due to the Sultan's recent orders to protect innocent inhabitants.⁷⁹

Even in cases where Ottoman troops still committed atrocities, the Porte now felt the need to simultaneously defend these actions while also distancing themselves from the decision. In late June, the Greek populace of Ayvalık rebelled. Werry claimed that Osman Paşa received orders to kill the entire population but accepted their surrender instead. The *reis efendi* denied Werry's claim, stating that such an order would be contrary to both the precepts of the Qur'an and the Sultan's instructions. However, the *reis efendi* subsequently confirmed to Strangford that Ottoman troops had later massacred the male population of Ayvalık and sold its women and children into slavery because the Greek populace rose en masse to aid some recently arrived insurgents and killed approximately 1,500 Turks in the process.⁸⁰ While acknowledging and defending that once again Ottoman troops had massacred a Greek village, the *reis efendi* nevertheless distanced the Porte from this act in order to appear to adhere to the new Ottoman policy of extending leniency.

Over the next two months, Ottoman officials consistently espoused and enforced this policy. Despite Greek rebels in Thessaly massacring every Turkish village they could, Ottoman troops levied no reprisal to either the defeated Greek troops or locals in Livadia.⁸¹ In fact, the *reis efendi* boasted to Strangford of the restraint Ottoman troops had showed, stating that “the Turkish commanders knew how to act with mercy and moderation, and that they did not refuse to spare a vanquished army.”⁸² The *reis efendi* also worked to discredit Russia's charges that the

⁷⁹ Strangford, “No. 55, 25 June 1821,” 113-117.

⁸⁰ Strangford, “No. 57, 26 June 1821,” 118-120.

⁸¹ Strangford, “No. 77, 26 July 1821,” 150-154; Strangford, “No. 83, 6 August 1821,” 164-165.

⁸² Strangford, “No. 83, 6 August 1821,” 165.

Ottoman Empire had targeted all of its Christian *reaya*. Not only did he again defend the decision to execute Greek Orthodox leaders by stating that they had fomented and supported the Greek rebellion, but he also pointed out that Ottoman authorities had not targeted any Catholics, Protestants, or Armenians. Moreover, although the Porte had executed Greek Orthodox leaders, Greeks could still freely practice their religion.⁸³

The *reis efendi*'s arguments seem to have resonated with Strangford, and the latter communicated to Castlereagh on 10 August 1821 the proofs that the Porte had provided him demonstrating its determination to offer mercy and leniency towards its Greek subjects. Although Strangford seemed convinced of these arguments, he still advised that the Sultan issue a *hatt-ı şerif* extending amnesty to all Greek rebels who asked for clemency within a prescribed time. While Strangford hoped to improve the status of both rebel and peaceful Greek Ottoman subjects, he defended this suggestion to the Porte as proof to Russia that the Ottoman Empire would not mistreat its Christian *reaya*.⁸⁴ In August 1821, in partial fulfillment of Strangford's suggestions, the Sultan issued a *hatt-ı şerif* to all of his European and Asiatic provinces declaring that the Ottoman Empire had adopted a more mild and merciful response to deal with the Greek insurrection. However, the *hatt-ı şerif* did not follow Strangford's advice to promise amnesty to any rebels that sought clemency.⁸⁵

The Porte encouraged Mahmud II to issue this edict as it supported the diplomatic strategy Ottoman officials had already employed. The Ottoman Empire sought to protect its territorial and administrative integrity from Russian encroachment by entering into the Concert

⁸³ Strangford, "No. 76, 26 July 1821," 146-150.

⁸⁴ Strangford, "No. 88, 10 August 1821," 164-165.

⁸⁵ Strangford, "No. 93, 18 August 1821," 177-178.

of Europe. To achieve this, Ottoman officials repeatedly demonstrated to Strangford what they believed to be proof that Russia had fomented the Greek insurrection and was seeking a pretext to invade Ottoman territories. In addition to inciting British Russophobia, the Porte also showed its willingness to accept European mediation to prevent war. Thus, this *hatt-ı şerif* satisfied all of the Porte's diplomatic goals. It increased the likelihood that Russia would agree to peace, either because they were satisfied by the Sultan's promises to treat his Christian *reaya* justly or because Great Britain and the other Powers would pressure Russia not to invade. Just as important, however, was that the Porte could claim that the Sultan chose to issue it on his own initiative, thereby negating any question that Russia had subverted his autonomy. Finally, the decision not to promise amnesty left the Porte with options on how to deal with the rebels while still accepting European advice. This last point would have been especially important to the Porte. If public opinion amongst the Sultan's Muslim *reaya* precluded adopting a too lenient stance with the Greek insurgents, the Sultan could still punish the rebels without having to break a promise and damage his reputation.

However, this edict did not fulfill all of Russia's demands. The Porte had continued to demand that Russia execute its obligations by returning the Greek rebels to Ottoman authorities, as the treaties between the two Powers stipulated. Similarly, Russia demanded that the Ottoman Empire adhere to those same treaties by immediately withdrawing Ottoman troops from the Principalities and reinstating the *hospodars*.⁸⁶ After the *internuncio* warned the Porte that

⁸⁶ Strangford, "No. 67, 10 July 1821," 134-135; Strangford, "No. 123, 25 September 1821, 229-236." The Porte sent Prince Callimachi, the *hospodar* of Wallachia, into exile in July 1821. However, Ismail Efendi assured Strangford on 25 September 1821 that Callimachi had requested his exile out of fear for his own safety, so the Porte then invented its displeasure with him in order to explain the exile. Ismail thus assured Strangford that the Porte did not intend to change the administration of the Principalities, and would reinstate Callimachi along with the normal Wallachian administration after Ottoman forces had subdued the rebellion.

continuing in this demand would guarantee war, however, the Porte consented to allow the rebels to remain in Russia. The Porte continued to argue it could not immediately remove all Ottoman troops from the Principalities or reinstate Greek *hospodars* when most of Greece was in rebellion, lest the Principalities become an asylum for Greek rebels. The Porte therefore asked Russia to recognize that the crisis facing the Ottoman Empire was the sole cause of the Porte's failure to adhere to the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca and the Treaty of Bucharest. Finally, the Porte requested that Great Britain and Austria encourage Russia to accept these allowances.⁸⁷

Ultimately, in late December 1821, Mahmud II issued a *ferman* to the Ottoman commanders in the Principalities, which in Strangford's opinion, would successfully prevent the troops from oppressing the Wallachians and Moldavians.⁸⁸ This served to temporarily preserve peace between the Ottoman Empire and Russia as the Czar was unwilling to go to war to directly aid the rebels once the Ottoman Empire had satisfied his immediate concerns.

Ottoman armies revert to retaliating against the Greeks:

Having prevented war with Russia the previous year, in 1822 the Porte believed that the threat of European intervention between the Sultan and his subjects had passed. Consequently, the Porte reverted to its earlier tactic of justifying Ottoman troops' massacres of Greeks as retaliation for the atrocities Greek rebels committed against Turks. In 1821 the Porte had worked closely with Strangford to find a diplomatic solution that would meet Russia's demands without infringing upon Mahmud II's authority. Taking the *internuncio*'s advice, the Sultan issued edicts ordering his troops to treat the defeated Greek rebels with leniency and not to harm peaceful

⁸⁷ Strangford, "No. 165, 10 December 1821," 282-286.

⁸⁸ Strangford, "No. 173, 24 December 1821," 298-299.

Greek *reaya*. Though the Porte had thus adopted a more conciliatory manner, it did not repudiate the earlier public executions Ottoman officials had carried out or Ottoman troops' massacres of Greek rebels and *reaya*. Ottoman officials viewed these events as justifiable punishment for an independent ruler to levy against rebellious subjects. Once the Sultan urged leniency, however, Ottoman officials disavowed their soldiers' excesses, because to do otherwise would have undermined the Sultan's authority and complicated the Porte's attempts to secure British and Austrian mediation to preserve peace between the Ottoman Empire and Russia.

After the Porte adopted the *internuncio*'s advice, Ottoman officials had mostly prevented their troops from massacring peaceful Greeks for the remainder of 1821. However, in April 1822, Ottoman forces massacred the Greek inhabitants of the island of Chios, which guaranteed that Western Europe's sympathy would remain with the Greek rebels.⁸⁹ In March 1822, Greek rebels from Samos landed in Chios and declared the island's liberation from the Ottoman Empire. When the Ottoman fleet approached the following month, the rebels fled to the mountains, but only after having mutilated and killed many of their Turkish prisoners within sight of the Ottoman garrison. In response, rather than immediately pursuing the rebels, the Ottoman troops plundered Chios and slaughtered or enslaved thousands of Greeks. As a result of the massacre, the British Consul, Francis Werry, reported that the Greek population in Chios had declined from approximately 120,000 before the attack to 20,000 after.⁹⁰ That Western Europe would look upon the reports of the Chios massacre with such revulsion is not surprising. While the Ottoman

⁸⁹ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 57.

⁹⁰ Consul Francis Werry, "To the Levant Company, 2 May 1822," in *British Consular Reports from the Ottoman Levant in an Age of Upheaval*, ed. Theophilus C. Prousis, 157. It is not clear how many of the 100,000 missing Chios residents were killed or enslaved by Ottoman troops and how many had fled to other lands or were hiding elsewhere on the island. Werry's report is still useful, however, as it demonstrated at least the degree of destruction on Chios as well as the reports that Europe received on the massacre.

troops' anger at the atrocities the Greek rebels committed is understandable, their brutal retaliation only served to elicit European sympathy for the Greek cause and anger at the Ottoman Empire. Because of the Ottoman armies' massacres, especially on Chios, British officials could not countenance supporting a government that either would not or could not prevent these atrocities.

Due to the Chios massacre, European Philhellene committees evolved from a movement aimed primarily at reviving Greek historical sites and literature to a nationalist organization determined to secure Greece's independence.⁹¹ After news of the Chios massacre spread, these committees, already established in major cities throughout much of Europe, gained further support, funding, and new volunteers for the Greek armies.⁹² In addition to the already established committees, Philhellene supporters established new committees in Madrid, Munich, Zurich, Genoa, Paris, and Marseilles with the explicit goal of raising money for the Greek War of Independence. In 1823, the London Greek Committee was established, and purchased two sailing ships from America to supplement the Greek fleet. One of the two ships, renamed the *Hellas* by the Greek rebels, actually became the flagship of the Greek fleet.⁹³

Despite the increase in European support of the Greek rebels, the conflict between the Ottoman Empire and the Greek revolutionaries remained in a stalemate until 1824 when Muhammad Ali began his systematic reconquering of Greece for Mahmud II.⁹⁴ Desperate to finally quash the rebellion, in February 1824 Mahmud II had asked his nominal vassal Muhammad Ali Paşa of Egypt to take command in the Morea. That July, sailing under the

⁹¹ Göçek, 45.

⁹² Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 57.

⁹³ Göçek, 45.

⁹⁴ Anscombe, 578.

command of Muhammad Ali's son, Ibrahim Paşa, the Egyptian fleet landed in Crete. By the following February, Ibrahim's forces had defeated the Cretan rebels and set sail for the Greek mainland.⁹⁵

By the end of April 1826, Ibrahim Paşa's forces had destroyed the Greek fortress at Missolonghi, killing between 2,000-3,000 men in the process as well as capturing several thousand women and children. Not only did the capture of this fortress and city represent a severe blow to the rebels, once Ottoman engineers rebuilt the fortress it also housed a permanent garrison of Ottoman troops deep in Greek territory. Although this fortress had withstood an earlier siege in 1822, it could not hold out for long once Ibrahim Paşa's armies arrived.⁹⁶

Muhammad Ali's westernized, well-trained, and well-disciplined Egyptian armies had succeeded where Mahmud II's other armies had failed. Because Ottoman armies from 1822 to 1826 had continued to massacre peaceful Greek *reaya*, however, France, Great Britain, and Russia were determined not to let Ibrahim Pasha reconquer all of Greece unimpeded.

The effects Ibrahim Paşa's reconquest of Greece had on Europe:

While Mahmud II viewed Ibrahim Paşa's successes in Greece as an opportunity to reform his own military, Europe looked at the Ottoman armies' victories with fear and revulsion. Already in 1824, Russia had invited representatives of the other Powers in St. Petersburg to a conference to develop a plan for pacifying Greece and restructuring its administration so that Greece would remain subject to the Ottoman Empire but gain control of its internal

⁹⁵ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 57.

⁹⁶ Consul-General William Meyer, "To John Bidwell, Superintendent of the Consular Service in the Foreign Office, from Prevesa, 26 April 1826," in *British Consular Reports from the Ottoman Levant in an Age of Upheaval*, ed. Theophilus C. Prousis, 89-90.

government.⁹⁷ Russia thus hoped to develop a plan that would satisfy the demands of both the Sultan and the Greek rebels, so that the two sides could reestablish peace and Ottoman forces would not commit any more atrocities. Because of Ibrahim Paşa's successes against the Greek rebels, however, the Porte – opposed to any foreign intervention between the Sultan and his subjects – would be even more resolute not to accept Russia's forced peace settlement since it would limit Mahmud II's authority over Greece and encourage further European interference in internal Ottoman affairs. Thus, Ibrahim Paşa's successes in Greece actually caused a larger problem for the Ottoman Empire: Europe feared that Ottoman armies would practically annihilate the Greek *reaya* if Europe did not intercede on behalf of the Greek rebels.

In 1826, already sympathetic to the Greek cause, the new British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Stratford Canning, met with two leaders of the Greek rebellion, Prince Alexander Mavrokordatos and Zographos, before reaching his post in Istanbul. During this meeting, the two Greek leaders intimated their despair and informed Canning that they would even consent to remaining subject to the Sultan as long as the Morea gained autonomous local administration. As this was the first time that any Greek leaders had admitted to outsiders that they would accept an agreement with the Ottoman Empire short of complete independence, Canning hoped he would be able to convince the Porte to accept European mediation between the Sultan and the Greek rebels.⁹⁸

In February 1826, Great Britain sent the Duke of Wellington on a special mission to St. Petersburg to reach an agreement on how to settle the Greek rebellion. On 4 April 1826, the two

⁹⁷ Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Life of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe K.G.* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1890), 110-111. As Great Britain had done in 1821, Great Britain convinced the Porte it opposed Russia's plan because it had abstained from sending a representative to Russia's conference.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 128-129.

Powers agreed to the St. Petersburg Protocol, which they would propose to the Porte to reconcile the Sultan with his rebel subjects. Great Britain and Russia agreed that “Greece should be a dependency of [the Ottoman] Empire, and the Greeks should pay to the Porte an annual tribute...They should be exclusively governed by Authorities to be chosen and named by themselves, but in the nomination of which Authorities the Porte should have a certain influence. In this state, the Greeks should...conduct their own internal government.”⁹⁹

When Canning actually broached the subject of European mediation, the *reis efendi* informed him that the Sultan could not even reply to such a proposal as it would be contrary to both *Şeriat* and his own dignity.¹⁰⁰ The *reis efendi* implored Canning to simply “let [The Ottoman Empire] put down [its] rebellious rayas in Greece, without any more of this foreign meddling and disavowed support of the rebels.”¹⁰¹ The *reis efendi* also justified recent Ottoman atrocities against Greek *reaya* because Greek rebels had done the same to peaceful Turks.¹⁰² That the *reis efendi* even felt the need to comment on Ottoman massacres evidences Europe's growing public discontent with the conduct of Ottoman troops. Sir Richard Church, the Generalissimo of Greece's land forces from March 1827 to June 1829, even impugned Ibrahim Paşa's military successes, claiming that all he had accomplished was to enslave women and children and to destroy villages.¹⁰³ Without the threat of a war with Russia, however, Ottoman officials were no longer as concerned with bolstering their diplomatic relationship with Great Britain. Whereas in

⁹⁹ “The Anglo-Russian Protocol of 4 April 1826,” in *The Great Powers and the Near East 1774-1923*, ed. M.S. Anderson, 32.

¹⁰⁰ Lane-Poole, 133.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 134.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ F.H. Marshall, “Reminiscences of the Greek War of Independence. From the Papers of Sir Richard Church,” *The Slavonic Review* 5, no. 15 (1927): 555. That a knighted Englishman led the Greek rebels' armies should also be noted for understanding how sympathetic Great Britain as a whole was to the Greek cause.

1821 the Porte had promised to execute a more humane campaign against Greece in order to prevent a war with Russia, in 1826 it resorted to its earlier tactic of mitigating the atrocities that Ottoman troops had committed by arguing that Ottoman soldiers had retaliated for the Greek rebels' massacres.

In the new spirit of cooperation between the Great Powers, France, Great Britain, and Russia agreed to the Treaty of London on 6 July 1827. This treaty was just the St. Petersburg Protocol that Great Britain and Russia had agreed to the previous year, but with the additional French signatory as well as the understanding that the Powers would compel its acceptance on both the Porte and the Greeks. To give the treaty force, the signatories sent three squadrons – one each from France, Great Britain, and Russia – to protect Greece from further naval invasions and ensure that Ottoman and Greek armies were following the Powers' demand for a cessation of hostilities.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, to pressure the Porte into ending the war, the three signatory governments ordered their naval commanders in the Mediterranean to blockade the Dardanelles without engaging in hostilities if the Sultan refused their demands.¹⁰⁵

Despite the signatory Powers' actions, Mahmud II refused to end the war and promised that “he would never allow the interference of foreign powers in his relations with his own subjects.” Bolstered by Ibrahim Paşa's armies, Ottoman forces had conquered Athens in June, making Ottoman victory seem imminent. However, because the signatory Powers feared to allow Ottoman troops to commit any further atrocities or to allow the Porte to set the conditions for the Greeks' surrender, in September 1827 the Powers sent their squadrons to the Porte of Navarino to

¹⁰⁴ Michael Warr, *A Biography of Stratford Canning: Mainly His Career in Turkey* (Oxford: M. Warr, 1989), 65.

¹⁰⁵ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 67.

blockade the Ottoman fleet. Surrounded by superior forces, on 25 September Ibrahim Paşa agreed to suspend hostilities for 21 days or until he received new orders from the Porte.¹⁰⁶

Although the signatory Powers hoped to avoid actually fighting with the Ottoman Empire, Canning authorized Admiral Edward Codrington, in charge of the British fleet, to use cannon-shot if he had exhausted all other means of subduing the Ottoman fleet.¹⁰⁷ On 20 October 1827, Ottoman troops fired on a British flag of truce, prompting the allied fleet to return fire.¹⁰⁸ Of the 126 Ottoman ships at Navarino, only 29 ships survived, and over 16,000 Ottoman sailors lost their lives.¹⁰⁹ Despite the near total annihilation of his navy, Mahmud II still refused to accept European mediation or to recognize Greece's internal autonomy, which prompted both Canning and his French counterpart to leave Istanbul on 8 December 1827.¹¹⁰ Rather than improve the Ottoman Empire's position in regard to the other Powers, Ottoman troops' successes and excesses against Greece convinced France, Great Britain, and Russia of the necessity to intervene between the two parties to protect the Greeks from further massacres. While the Porte would seek out European mediation to settle conflicts with another Power, it refused to accept any interference in a conflict with its own subjects. Because the Porte refused the signatory Powers' demands to end hostilities with Greece, the ambassadors for these Powers ended official diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Lane-Poole, 145.

¹⁰⁸ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 67.

¹⁰⁹ Roderic H. Davison, *Nineteenth Century Ottoman Diplomacy and Reforms* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 1999), 156; Warr, 66.

¹¹⁰ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 67.

The war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia:

Although the Porte had utilized diplomacy to prevent a war with Russia in 1821, in 1827 the Porte preferred war to diplomacy since the diplomatic solution the signatory Powers offered would abrogate Mahmud II's authority over his subjects. As the Treaty of London necessitated that France, Great Britain, and Russia force a peace settlement between the Ottoman Empire and Greece, Mahmud II's refusal to end hostilities essentially guaranteed a war with Russia. In November 1827, Mahmud II repudiated the Convention of Ackerman, which he had signed 7 October 1826. As the convention finally settled the ongoing dispute between the Ottoman Empire and Russia over the administration and presence of Ottoman troops in the Principalities, Mahmud II's renunciation was yet another sign he was determined to prosecute his war against Greece without concern for the signatory Power's views.¹¹¹ The month after renouncing the Convention of Ackerman, Mahmud II called upon all Muslims to aid in the Holy War against Russia, and in February 1828 the Porte had closed the Dardanelles to all foreign ships.¹¹²

Despite the Porte's actions, the Ottoman Empire and Russia did not engage in combat until April 1828.¹¹³ Although Stanley Lane-Poole, in his biography of Stratford Canning, accused Russia of declaring war and breaking the terms of the Treaty of London, neither accusation was true.¹¹⁴ Mahmud II declared a Holy War against Russia in December 1827, and had unilaterally nullified an agreement between his government and Russia's. As for Lane-Poole's second claim, he believed that the Treaty of London precluded any of the signatories enforcing the Treaty independently. However, Article III of the St. Petersburg Protocol, which

¹¹¹ Macfie, 17.

¹¹² Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 68.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 69.

¹¹⁴ Lane-Poole, 149.

formed the text of the Treaty of London, stated that: “If the Mediation...should not have been accepted by the Porte... [Great Britain] and [Russia] will still consider the terms of the arrangements specified in Article I...as the basis of any reconciliation to be effected by their intervention, *whether in concert or separately* [emphasis mine], between the Porte and the Greeks.”¹¹⁵ As Mahmud II had rejected European mediation, repudiated the Convention of Ackerman, and finally, declared war against Russia, it is clear that the Ottoman Empire was responsible for this war, and that Russia had not broken its treaty with Great Britain or France by invading Ottoman territory.

That the Ottoman Empire, not Russia, decided on war showed the Porte's limits for seeking diplomatic solutions to maintain peace with its powerful neighbors as well as the Ottoman Empire's continued independence, despite its military weakness vis-à-vis the other European Powers. After Mahmud II had declared war against Russia, the *reis efendi* still attempted to separate Great Britain from Russia and France and to create a close alliance between the Ottoman Empire and Great Britain. All that the Porte required, the *reis efendi* told British officials, was for Great Britain to renounce the Treaty of London. Once Great Britain refused his overtures, however, the *reis efendi* reiterated that only the Greeks' total submission would enable the Porte to restore peace.¹¹⁶

While the Porte still sought to use Great Britain as either an ally or intermediary in its international conflict as it had in 1821, it was conditional upon Great Britain renouncing Europe's right to intercede between the Sultan and his subjects. In 1821, the Porte had readily

¹¹⁵ “The Anglo-Russian Protocol of 4 April 1826,” in *The Great Powers and the Near East 1774-1923*, ed. M.S. Anderson, 32-33.

¹¹⁶ Lane-Poole, 147.

accepted Strangford's and the *internuncio*'s advice because they advised the Porte to adhere to the Ottoman Empire's existing treaties. The Porte even accepted the *internuncio*'s advice to treat Greek rebels with more leniency and to seek to protect innocent Greek *reaya* because it could present this policy as a spontaneous decision of the Sultan, and thus not a threat to his authority. To accept European mediation between the Sultan and the Greek rebels, however, would be to admit that the Sultan did not have absolute autonomy, and that his authority was subordinate to the desires of the other European Powers. That the Porte steadfastly refused to accept any diplomatic solution to end the Greek rebellion shows that the Porte viewed the use of diplomacy solely as a means to protect the Sultan's authority. The Porte therefore expressed the Ottoman Empire's complete independence through diplomacy, and its diplomatic tactics should be analyzed as having been developed by Ottoman officials in order to benefit the Ottoman Empire.

Even though Mahmud II had rejected the Powers' mediation attempts and had declared war on Russia, representatives for France, Great Britain, and Russia continued to meet to settle the Greek problem. As Ottoman troops halted the Russian advance at Braila, an Ottoman fortress on the Danube, the Signatories agreed on 19 July 1828 that a French force should occupy the Morea as proof that Greece would not return to direct Ottoman rule.¹¹⁷ France then sent 20,000 soldiers to the Morea under the command of Marshal Maison to protect Greece from a new Ottoman invasion.¹¹⁸ In order to further assure Greece that they would not allow the Ottoman Empire to dictate peace terms, in November 1828 France, Great Britain, and Russia signed a new protocol which placed the Greek islands under provisional control of the three Powers until they

¹¹⁷ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 70. This did not mean that the Signatories yet intended to create a wholly independent Greece, however. The St. Petersburg Protocol stipulated that Greece would gain internal autonomy but remain subject to the Sultan.

¹¹⁸ Lane-Poole, 150.

had reached an agreement with the Porte.¹¹⁹ In December 1828, the representatives for the three Powers – Guilleminot, Canning, and Ribeaupierre – agreed to recommend to the Porte that it should accept Greece as an autonomous state ruled by a hereditary prince whom the Sultan would invest in office in exchange for an annual tribute to the Porte.¹²⁰

Due to its military's successes against Russia, however, the Porte still refused to treat for peace with Russia unless Austria and Prussia guaranteed Russia would agree not to interfere in Greece.¹²¹ Because Great Britain had rebuked the *reis efendi's* efforts to separate Great Britain from Russia, the Porte sought the help of the only Powers that had not signed the Treaty of London but could potentially pressure Russia into agreeing to peace: Austria and Prussia. As it had with Great Britain, however, the Porte would only accept their mediation if they removed the Greek question from the peace talks. The Porte had some hope that Austria at least would agree to this stipulation. Not only had Austria helped the Ottoman Empire repair its relations with Russia in 1821, but Metternich opposed the Greeks for rebelling, Austrian ships regularly transported Ottoman troops and arms, and the Greek navy had sunk over 100 Austrian ships by 1826.¹²² Furthermore, the Ottoman Empire was convinced that Russia had fomented the rebellion, and in 1821 Ottoman officials had worked tirelessly to convince the other European Powers, including Austria, of Russia's culpability for the insurrection.

Ironically, it was the Ottoman Empire, not Russia, which was actually adhering to the strictures of the Concert of Europe, while the latter was a member and the former was not. The

¹¹⁹ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 70.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 73. Negotiations over Greece's future borders were much more protracted and contentious, however. Despite their cooperation with Russia, Anderson argued that both Wellington and Foreign Secretary Lord Aberdeen feared creating too powerful of a Greek state lest it become yet another Russian satellite. In March 1829, they therefore reduced the previously agreed upon borders.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 58-59.

Porte sought a diplomatic solution for its international conflicts so that it would be free to govern its own subjects without foreign interference. The Porte did not seriously expect either Austria or Prussia to be able to convince Russia to agree to let the Ottoman Empire deal with the Greek rebels because the Porte was convinced that Russia had orchestrated the rebellion as a pretext for Russia's eventual interference in internal Ottoman affairs. Rather, the Porte hoped to again demonstrate that it was ready to enter into the Concert of Europe, and that it was the Czar, not the Sultan, that threatened peace and the balance of power in Europe.

Although the Porte had hopes that Austria would be sympathetic to its arguments, Metternich desired to improve Austria's relationship with Nicholas I. Consequently, he refused to challenge France, Great Britain, or Russia on interceding on behalf of the Greek rebels because he believed that Greece's emancipation was a *fait accompli*. Despite the ongoing war against a militarily superior Power, the Porte still viewed European intercession between the Sultan and the Greek rebels as a greater threat to Mahmud II's authority than Russian troops, and thus did not seek Austrian or Prussian mediation without their promise to prevent Russia from meddling in Greece.

Ottoman armies withstood the Russian advance in 1828, but in mid-1829 the war turned decisively in Russia's favor. By August 1829, Russian forces had occupied Edirne with little resistance. Satisfied with his army's accomplishments, on 9 September 1829 Czar Nicholas wrote to his Russian commander-in-chief, Diebitsch, ordering him to reach a peace agreement with Mahmud II.¹²³ With Russian forces occupying Edirne, Mahmud II recognized that Russia

¹²³ Ibid., 70-71.

posed the greatest threat to his sovereignty. Consequently, on 14 September 1829, the Ottoman Empire and Russia signed the Treaty of Adrianople.¹²⁴

The Treaty of Adrianople reestablished peace between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, thereby protecting Mahmud II from his most immediate threat. To achieve this peace, Mahmud II had to agree to the convention France, Great Britain, and Russia had developed in December the previous year.¹²⁵ As well as giving up authority over Greece, Mahmud II also accepted other humiliating demands, including paying Russia a war indemnity, conceding territorial gains to Russia in Europe and Asia, and allowing Russia to supervise and guarantee a new system of government in the Principalities.¹²⁶ The treaty also stipulated that the Porte execute the clauses relating to Serbia in the Convention of Ackerman's fifth article. The Porte was to “proceed...to the immediate restitution of the six districts detached from Serbia” and issue a “firman, backed by a Hattisherif which shall order the execution of the said clauses, shall be delivered and officially communicated to [Russia] within a month, dating from the signature of the present treaty of peace.”¹²⁷ In the aforementioned required *hatt-ı şerif*, Mahmud II prohibited Muslims not stationed in Ottoman garrisons from buying land in Serbia and expelled the existing Turkish landowners in exchange for compensation from the Serbian government.¹²⁸

¹²⁴ Macfie, 17.

¹²⁵ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 74.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 73.

¹²⁷ “The Treaty of Adrianople, 14 September 1829,” in *The Great Powers and the Near East 1774-1923*, ed. M.S. Anderson, 34-35.

¹²⁸ Austen Henry Layard, *A Plea for Turkey: England and the Ottoman Empire in the 1860's with Special Reference to Serbia: A Speech Delivered in the House of Commons on Friday, May 29, 1863* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2011), 14-15. Despite the Porte's earlier refusal to discuss granting Ottoman subjects special statuses, in 1830 Serbian officials negotiated with the Porte to secure Serbian autonomy. With a limited presence in Serbia as well as Russia's support for the Serbian cause, the Porte accepted these further constrictions of Mahmud II's authority over Serbia as they had little recourse to oppose them.

The Ottoman policy of refusing a diplomatic solution to restore peace between the Sultan and his own subjects – while demonstrating the Ottoman Empire’s autonomy – therefore backfired on the Porte. The Porte had underestimated how partial the signatory Powers were to the Greek cause, and thus did not recognize that it needed to reach a diplomatic solution with the Powers that would allow it to present the peace settlements and concessions to Greece as an extension of the Sultan’s mercy. Because the Porte had refused to accept European mediation between the Sultan and the Greek rebels, it fought and lost another war with Russia and was forced to accept Greek autonomy, paid a war indemnity, ceded territory to Russia, and provided Serbia with the opportunity to gain autonomy the following year. In ordering Muhammad Ali to send his Egyptian forces to reconquer Greece, Mahmud II had hoped to end the rebellion on his terms while also implementing his long desired military reforms. Instead, because Ottoman forces had reverted to massacring rebellious and peaceful Greeks without the Porte's rebuke, Europe insisted on forcing peace between the two parties.

Whereas in 1821 the Porte had sought diplomatic means to prevent conflict with Russia, in 1828 it preferred war. In the earlier disputes with Russia during the Greek War of Independence, the Porte could accept mediation because its conflict was with a foreign Power demanding that the Porte uphold its preexisting treaties and policies, and thus mediation did not threaten the Sultan's authority. To obtain a desired settlement, the Porte advised Great Britain and the other non-belligerent Powers of Russia's role in fomenting the Greek rebellion as well as the latter’s desire to find a pretext for war. The Porte thus hoped to cultivate and exploit Great Britain's Russophobia, and thereby gain Great Britain’s support against Russia.

In 1828, however, France, Great Britain, and Russia demanded that the Porte accept their mediation between the Sultan and his Greek *reaya*. The Porte had rightly concluded that such an intercession would negatively impact Mahmud II's authority, and thus the Porte would only accept a diplomatic solution to reinstate peace with Russia if the mediating parties would guarantee that Russia would refrain from interceding in Greece. However, the Porte failed to recognize that due to the protraction of the Greek rebellion and the frequent Ottoman massacres in Greece, France and Great Britain were as determined as Russia to force a peace settlement even if it required war. Therefore, whereas in 1821 the Porte could trust that Great Britain would exhaust every diplomatic avenue to preserve peace, in 1828 Ottoman officials accepted war as the only remaining option to protect Mahmud II's autonomy.

The Porte miscalculated when it refused mediation. Great Britain's agreement with Russia authorized either party to take independent action against the Ottoman Empire if necessary, a clear sign that Great Britain was intransigent in its determination to restore tranquility to Greece. The Porte, however, still viewed reform primarily as a means to strengthening the Empire from within. Ottoman officials therefore did not conceive of following the signatory Powers' demands by promulgating the reforms as an emanation from Mahmud II's own desire to end the rebellion and show leniency to his own subjects. This would have minimized the loss to Mahmud II's prestige and authority as well as strengthened the Porte's diplomatic relations with Europe.

Thus, while in 1821 the Porte had agreed to show leniency to the Greek rebels and promised to protect peaceful Greek *reaya* in order to prevent Russia from declaring war,

beginning in 1822, the Porte ignored these policies because it no longer feared a Russian invasion. Consequently, in 1822 Ottoman troops massacred much of the Greek population of Chios, provoking European outrage at the Ottoman Empire and sympathy for the Greek rebels' cause. The Ottoman troops' successes after Muhammad Ali bolstered their ranks with his Egyptian forces only served to further Europe's desire to intercede on behalf of Greece, as the European Powers feared that Ottoman armies would practically annihilate the Greek *reaya*. Although France, Great Britain, and Russia demanded that Mahmud II agree to their mediation to reestablish peace between the Ottoman Empire and Greece, the Porte refused, believing that any foreign intercession between the Sultan and his subjects would harm his authority more than a war with Russia. Therefore, even after the signatory Powers' combined fleet had almost totally destroyed the Ottoman fleet in October 1827, Mahmud II still preferred war to diplomacy and in December 1827 declared war on Russia. Although this declaration of war demonstrated the Ottoman Empire's continued independence and refusal to accept subjugation to the other European Powers, it ultimately cost Mahmud II more of his authority than accepting mediation would have. Instead, Mahmud II agreed to sign the Treaty of Adrianople in September 1829, which required the Ottoman Empire to end its war against the Greek rebels, to grant Greece its internal autonomy, to cede territory to Russia, and to pay a war indemnity. Thus, Russia forced the Ottoman Empire to agree to harsher terms than it would have had Mahmud II agreed to mediation, and without the possibility of Mahmud II presenting his concessions to the Greek rebels as having been his own designs.

Chapter 4: Changes to Ottoman Diplomatic Tactics in the 1830s

The diplomatic events during the latter years of the Greek War of Independence had a significant effect on the evolution of Ottoman diplomatic tactics in the 1830s. In 1821, the Porte had turned to diplomacy to prevent a war with Russia, and in the process had shared more Ottoman intelligence and plans with Great Britain than the Ottoman Empire had previously shared with any foreign power. The Porte's primary diplomatic tactic to convince Great Britain to support the Ottoman Empire diplomatically was to incite Great Britain's Russophobia by portraying Russia as the instigator of the Greek rebellion in order to secure a pretext to declare war on the Ottoman Empire.

This tactic worked for the Porte in 1821, as the Porte had adopted both Great Britain's and Austria's advice to satisfy Russia's demands without limiting Mahmud II's authority. In the following years of the Greek rebellion, however, France, Great Britain, and Russia had sided with the Greek rebels against the Ottoman Empire. Because the Porte did not believe that it could accept European mediation between the Sultan and his subject without damaging the Sultan's authority, the Porte rejected European attempts to force a peace settlement between the Ottoman Empire and the Greek rebels and subsequently declared war on Russia. After losing the war, however, the Ottoman Empire still had to agree to peace with Greece as well as grant the latter its internal autonomy.

Since the Ottoman Empire was not strong enough to defeat Russia in a war, it needed to develop a new diplomatic tactic that could appease the other European Powers when they sought to interfere in internal Ottoman affairs without granting them the actual right to intercede.

Ultimately, it was the events of the Greek War of Independence that led Ottoman officials to recognize that they could use promises to reform their administration and military in order to assuage European concerns about the mistreatment of the Ottoman Empire's Christian *reaya*. First, the signatory Powers' decision to intercede on behalf of Greece demonstrated to the Porte the need to adapt its diplomatic tactics to convince the European Powers that the Sultan could rule his Empire justly. Second, the Ottoman armies' inability to defeat the Greek rebels without Muhammad Ali's aid, coupled with Russia's defeat of the Ottoman Empire, convinced Muhammad Ali in 1832 that he could rebel against his sovereign. This created yet another crisis for the Ottoman Empire, but the results also provoked Great Britain to offer the Porte the diplomatic solution it was seeking: to use promises to reform in order to secure diplomatic support from Europe. Finally, the Porte reorganized its diplomatic service and incorporated Great Britain's advice into its diplomatic strategy. Consequently, during the second Muhammad Ali crisis in 1839, the Porte utilized its new diplomatic tactics to secure the European diplomatic support against its rebellious vassal it had lacked during the Greek War of Independence.

The negotiations between the European Powers over Greece's status:

The signatory Powers had originally intended only to grant Greece its internal autonomy. Thus, while Greece could enact and enforce its own laws, it would have to pay the Sultan an annual tribute and select a ruler whom the Porte approved and the Sultan invested in office. After the Treaty of Adrianople, however, both France and Great Britain feared that an internally autonomous but still subject Greece would quickly degrade into a Russian satellite. Great Britain especially worried that Russia intended to partition Ottoman lands in the Balkans and Caucasus

for itself. Two days after the Treaty of Adrianople, however, Czar Nicholas I had established a special committee to determine whether Russia would benefit most from destroying the Ottoman Empire or preserving it. The committee recommended maintaining the Ottoman Empire, as having a weak empire to the south served as a useful buffer against the more powerful empires.¹²⁹ Unaware of Russia's intentions, however, France and Great Britain were determined to convince Russia to accept Greece's independence, and were finally successful in February 1830. The parties agreed that Greece should be an independent kingdom with borders from the Gulf of Arta on the Adriatic Sea to the Gulf of Volo, including Cyclades, on the Aegean Sea.¹³⁰

Although it had been France, Great Britain, and Russia that had determined both Greece's autonomy and its frontiers, these Powers remained unsatisfied with Greece's status. Therefore, in January 1832 the British government sent Canning back to Istanbul to complete negotiations with the Porte over Greece. Great Britain had hoped to enlarge Greece's borders in the hopes that this would allow Greece to remain free of excessive Russian influence, but as Greece could not afford to pay the Ottoman Empire for the additional territory, Mahmud II refused.¹³¹ Not wanting another dispute with the European Powers, however, Mahmud II remained amenable to granting Greece its independence. In February 1832, France, Great Britain, and Russia agreed to offer the Crown Prince Otto of Bavaria Greece's throne.¹³² On 7 May 1832, the Powers signed a convention with the King of Bavaria:

The Prince Otho of Bavaria shall bear the Title of King of Greece...under the guarantee of the three Courts [France, Great Britain, and Russia]...shall form a Monarchical and Independent State according to the terms of the Protocol signed between the said Courts on the 3rd of February, 1830, and accepted both by Greece and the Ottoman Porte...The limits of the Greek State shall be such as

¹²⁹ Šedivý, 208.

¹³⁰ Macfie, 18-19.

¹³¹ Lane-Poole, 161-162.

¹³² Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 75.

shall be definitively settled by the negotiations which the Courts of Great Britain, France, and Russia have recently opened with the Ottoman Porte.¹³³

On 21 July 1832, Mahmud II accepted this agreement, granting Greece its independence.¹³⁴

After completing his special mission to the Porte in 1832, Canning was pleased with the changes Mahmud II had implemented. Canning believed that by destroying the janissaries, Mahmud II could implement his planned reforms without fear of being deposed. While Canning had been a huge supporter of the Greek rebels against their Ottoman sovereign, he now hoped to preserve what power the Sultan retained. To accomplish this, Canning wished for the Sultan to improve his government's treatment of its Christian *reaya* and thus prevent future rebellions, to fully implement his reforms both to strengthen the Empire and its relations with Europe, and to prepare the Ottoman Empire to join the Concert of Europe.¹³⁵

The first Muhammad Ali crisis:

After having witnessed the inferiority of Mahmud II's armies in comparison to Egypt's, in 1832 Muhammad Ali rebelled against his sovereign in the hope of gaining new territories and possibly overthrowing the Ottoman dynasty. Having already conquered Syria, Muhammad Ali's armies, again led by his son Ibrahim Paşa, proceeded to twice defeat Ottoman forces in the fall of 1832, giving Ibrahim an unobstructed path to Istanbul. Faced with this imminent threat to his throne, Mahmud II requested Great Britain to send 15 warships against Muhammad Ali, but the British government refused.¹³⁶ Both France and Russia offered military support against

¹³³ "Convention signed by Great Britain, France, Russia and Bavaria, 7 May 1832," in *The Great Powers and the Near East 1774-1923*, ed. M.S. Anderson, 39-40.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹³⁵ Lane-Poole, 162-165.

¹³⁶ Šedivý, 213-214.

Muhammad Ali, but the Porte distrusted both offers and continued to seek British aid.¹³⁷ Even after the Porte sent emissaries to London to procure British support against Muhammad Ali, Great Britain again declined to protect Mahmud II's throne despite Metternich's suggestion that Great Britain should join the other European Powers to propose a settlement between the Sultan and his vassal.¹³⁸ Finally in February 1833, after Ibrahim Paşa had continued to draw closer to Istanbul, Mahmud II formally asked Butenev, the Russian minister in Istanbul, to send 30,000 Russian soldiers across the Danube and through the Balkans to defend the Ottoman capital from Muhammad Ali's armies.¹³⁹ Because Mahmud II had hesitated to accept Russian military support, however, Russian forces could not reach Istanbul before Muhammad Ali's armies. Consequently, on 5 May 1833 the Porte acceded to Muhammad Ali's demands to be invested as the governor of Egypt, Syria, and Adana to prevent Ibrahim Paşa from marching on Istanbul.¹⁴⁰

Although Muhammad Ali no longer posed an immediate threat to Mahmud II's reign, Russia refused to withdraw its troops from Istanbul. As Nicholas I's special committee had advised him to maintain a weak Ottoman Empire, the Czar did not wish to risk Muhammad Ali ascending to the throne and possibly revitalizing the Empire.¹⁴¹ Having received Mahmud II's permission to send soldiers and ships to Istanbul, however, Nicholas I refused to withdraw them without first gaining concessions from Mahmud II. On 8 July 1833, Nicholas I achieved his goals by forcing Mahmud II to agree to the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi. This treaty was set for eight years and compelled each Power to provide military assistance to the other in case a third

¹³⁷ Davison, *Nineteenth Century Ottoman Diplomacy and Reforms*, 157.

¹³⁸ Macfie, 21.

¹³⁹ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 81.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 83.

¹⁴¹ Šedivý, 214.

party attacked. It further stipulated that “in the event of circumstances occurring which should again determine the Sublime Porte to call for the naval and military assistance of Russia... [Russia] engages to furnish...as many troops as the two...parties may deem necessary.”¹⁴²

While that article alone could have been enough to evoke British and French protests that this established the Ottoman Empire as practically a protectorate of Russia, the treaty also contained a separate, secret article that reduced the Ottoman Empire's assistance to Russia in case the latter were attacked to merely closing the Dardanelles to foreign warships.¹⁴³ Although the separate article was meant to remain confidential, the Porte informed Ponsonby, the British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, of its existence almost immediately after signing the treaty.¹⁴⁴ By August 1833, both France and Great Britain issued a strong remonstrance against the treaty, and empowered their ambassadors to the Ottoman Empire to summon their fleets to Istanbul if Russia threatened the Sultan.¹⁴⁵ Both Powers feared that not only did this treaty establish Russia as the Ottoman Empire's protector, but that it enabled the Czar to have the Dardanelles closed at will.

The Porte's actions in 1833 reveal that it continued to practice the same diplomatic tactics it had in 1821. Even with Muhammad Ali no longer a threat, Russian ships and troops had already arrived in Istanbul willing to protect Mahmud II's throne. Mahmud II could not dismiss the troops without granting Russia concessions, as the troops sent to protect him could just as easily depose him. Thus, the Porte agreed to the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi but immediately

¹⁴² “The Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, 8 July 1833,” in *The Great Powers and the Near East 1774-1923*, ed. M.S. Anderson, 43.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ Margaret Lamb, “Writing Up the Eastern Question in 1835-1836,” *The International History Review* 15, no. 2 (1993): 241.

¹⁴⁵ Macfie, 22.

informed Great Britain of the supposedly secret article. While Great Britain had worked closely with Russia to settle the Greek question, Ottoman officials knew that the British government still distrusted Russian ambitions within the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, they told Ponsonby about the secret article in order to arouse British Russophobia. Great Britain had repeatedly rejected Ottoman overtures over the previous five years to aid Ottoman interests against Russia, but the Porte was still determined to attain Great Britain's alliance.

Palmerston's fateful advice to the Ottoman Empire:

Fearful of the effect the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi would have on the balance of power in Europe, shortly after its signing British officials advised Mahmud II to reform his administration and military. Great Britain desired the Ottoman Empire to reform its government so that it could rule its Christian *reaya* justly and prevent further rebellions. If the Ottoman Empire did so, then British officials could recommend an alliance between Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire without fear of losing British popular support. Had the British government known that Mahmud II would accept Russia's assistance against Muhammad Ali and that the Czar would then force the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi on the Porte, it may even have interceded between the Sultan and Muhammad Ali without Mahmud II's promise to reform. In December 1832, at the same time Ottoman emissaries were in London trying to gain British support, Canning wrote to Palmerston regarding the Porte's request for military support that "as far as Great Britain is concerned, the only ground on which this plan could be recommended, is the necessity of interfering to rescue the Turkish Empire from a War, which threatens to lay it at the feet of a Power already too great

for the general Interests and Liberties of Europe.”¹⁴⁶ David Urquhart, one of Canning's personal agents on his special mission to Istanbul, also condemned Great Britain's refusal to aid the Ottoman Empire, which enabled Russian forces to occupy the Ottoman capital.¹⁴⁷

After the shock of the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi, Palmerston sought to ensure that Great Britain could ally with the Ottoman Empire in the future. In order to guarantee this, however, Great Britain had to trust that the Porte would improve its administration, military, and the status of its Christian *reaya*. Thus, on 6 December 1833 Palmerston ordered Ponsonby to advise Mahmud II to reform his Empire and to prevent future rebellions. If Mahmud II did this and acted as an independent monarch rather than as a vassal of the Czar, Palmerston promised to constrain Muhammad Ali.¹⁴⁸ Due to reports of the atrocities Ottoman troops committed during the Greek War of Independence, Great Britain had sided with the Greek rebels. Even had the British government wished to ally with the Ottoman Empire, British popular opinion would have made this nearly impossible. Therefore, Palmerston desired for the Porte to reform the Ottoman Empire so that it would no longer mistreat its non-Muslim subjects and thereby prevent future rebellions.

Perhaps the strongest supporter of the Ottoman Empire in the British government, David Urquhart, sought to convince Great Britain of the necessity to help maintain the Ottoman Empire and Mahmud II of the need to continue reforming his Empire. Urquhart had actually fought for Greece during its war for independence, but later traveled to Istanbul in 1831 as a part of

¹⁴⁶ Lord Stratford Canning, “Canning's Memorandum, December 19, 1832,” in *British Policy and the Turkish Reform Movement: A Study in Anglo-Turkish Relations 1826-1853*, ed. Frank Edgar Bailey (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942), 241.

¹⁴⁷ Bolsover, 445.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 447.

Stratford Canning's special mission to the Porte. During this visit to Istanbul, Urquhart was convinced that by destroying the janissaries, Mahmud II had halted the Ottoman Empire's decline.¹⁴⁹ In his book, *Turkey and Its Resources*, Urquhart argued that through further reforms, such as eliminating tax-farming, Mahmud II could restore the Ottoman Empire to its former strength. Mahmud II was so intrigued by Urquhart's ideas that one of his advisers, M. Blacque, the editor of the official Ottoman gazette, *Moniteur Ottoman*, translated Urquhart's book for Mahmud II to read. On 20 February 1834 Urquhart believed that Mahmud II was ready to implement his suggestions.¹⁵⁰

Mahmud II was happy to follow Palmerston's and Urquhart's advice, as he already desired to strengthen the Ottoman Empire through reform and convert the British government into Ottoman allies in order to gain their support against Russia. Consequently, on 14 May 1834, the Porte announced that it had organized an efficient militia to supplement the regular army.¹⁵¹ Apparently pleased with the Ottoman Empire's progress, in 1835 Palmerston proposed signing a treaty with Austria and France to guarantee the Ottoman Empire's independence and territorial integrity. Palmerston failed to secure this treaty, but his attempt evidences how successfully the Porte had incorporated its military and administrative reforms into its diplomatic discourse with Great Britain.¹⁵² Then in 1838, Mahmud II established the *Meclis-i Vala-yı Ahkam-ı Adliye*, or Grand Council of Justice. Mahmud II charged the council with the task of developing new regulations for the Ottoman Empire.¹⁵³ The Porte still had not achieved its ultimate diplomatic

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 445.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 448.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 451.

¹⁵² Lamb, 256.

¹⁵³ Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 28.

goal of entering into the Concert of Europe and gaining Europe's guarantee to uphold the Sultan's autonomy and the Ottoman Empire's territorial integrity, and thus had to continue reforming to establish greater European support.

Ottoman military reforms during the Greek War of Independence:

As further proof that before receiving Palmerston's advice in 1833 the Ottoman Empire did not conceive of using reforms in its attempt to curry favorable diplomatic relations with the other European Powers, it is necessary to examine Mahmud II's destruction of the janissaries in 1826. Under Selim III, the Ottoman Empire had attempted to create a regular army instilled with western discipline and tactics. Because the janissaries could not countenance such an obvious threat to their own position, they deposed Selim III in 1807 and his successor, Mustafa IV, in 1808. Although Mahmud II wished to enact Selim III's military reforms, he also recognized that he would have to be prepared to defeat the inevitable janissary revolt when he announced his plans to create a regular army. Consequently, the Porte waited until a Grand Council meeting on 19 May 1821 to propose adopting Mahmud II's plan to introduce European tactics to Ottoman troops, including the janissaries.¹⁵⁴ The continued necessity of instilling new tactics and discipline in Ottoman forces had already been evidenced within the first couple months of the Greek rebellion. In April 1821, Ottoman troops dispatched for Varna refused to proceed without additional ships of war for escort, forcing Mahmud II to issue a *hatt-ı şerif* calling for their obedience to his will as Muslims.¹⁵⁵ The same day that the Porte held the Grand Council calling

¹⁵⁴ Strangford, "No. 41, 25 May 1821," 92-94.

¹⁵⁵ Strangford, "No. 21, 21 April 1821," 65.

for instituting western reforms to the military, Bekir Paşa arrived at Beykoz on the Bosphorus with 5,000 troops to curb the excesses of the *yamaks*, Ottoman auxiliary troops. In proof of the need for the Ottoman Empire to improve its troops' discipline, the *yamaks* prepared to attack Bekir's forces, forcing the Porte to send Bekir and his men to Rumelia.¹⁵⁶

The janissary officers present at the Grand Council meeting originally agreed to start training janissaries in western discipline and tactics on the condition that they did not have to wear uniforms or adopt Sultan Selim III's term *Nizam-ı Cedid* for themselves. However, the majority of janissaries vehemently opposed the proposed reforms, and threatened to revolt if the officers did not rescind this promise. After the janissary officers notified the Porte that they would not accept Mahmud II's proposed military reforms, Mahmud II feared the janissaries would soon rebel. Consequently, on 20 June 1821, Mahmud II issued a *hatt-ı şerif* to his Grand Vizier ordering all his ministers and attendants to equip themselves for the field in order to be ready to ride with the Sultan upon his summons. As Strangford surmised, Mahmud II intended to be prepared to flee from any janissary revolt without relinquishing control of the Empire.¹⁵⁷

Rather than trust in his ability to escape should his janissaries revolt, Mahmud II also stationed 30,000 Anatolian troops near Istanbul to intimidate the janissaries into accepting his reforms.¹⁵⁸ Mahmud II had called these troops in order to coerce the janissaries, but due to the Ottoman Empire's deteriorating relations with Russia, Mahmud II could not risk inciting a janissary rebellion and temporarily weakening his military strength when every soldier might

¹⁵⁶ Strangford, "No. 39, 25 May 1821," 88-90.

¹⁵⁷ Strangford, "No. 54, 26 June 1821," 112-113.

¹⁵⁸ Strangford, "No. 67, 10 July 1821, 134-135.

soon be needed to withstand the Russian attack. Consequently, Mahmud II decided to wait to implement his military reforms.

The janissaries' actions in August 1821 ensured that Mahmud II would again attempt to institute his military reforms. On 24 August 1821, after the Porte had declared its intentions to prosecute the war against the Greek rebels in a more moderate manner, janissaries killed four peaceful Greek chiefs, forcing Mahmud II to issue a *ferman* to punish the guilty soldiers. The following day, 800 janissaries abandoned their station in the Principalities in order to complain to the Porte about the Paşa of Braila. Their *ustalar*, officers, believed that they only remained in the Principalities so the Sultan could institute his reforms. They warned the Porte that if the Sultan attempted this, the janissaries would rise en masse in rebellion against Mahmud II.¹⁵⁹

Further complicating matters for the Porte was that at the same time that Russia appeared to be preparing for war due in part to the continued presence of Ottoman troops in the Principalities, the Porte feared to recall the janissaries to Istanbul lest they rebel. Ismail Efendi actually confided to Strangford that some officials in the Divan even hoped for a war with Russia simply to destroy the janissaries. The majority of the Divan did not adhere to this view, however, and preferred to retain limited authority over the janissaries rather than institute reforms and force them to rebel.¹⁶⁰ Mahmud II adopted the latter attitude, and even after tensions with Russia lessened, waited to force his military reforms until Ottoman forces had gained an advantage over the Greek rebels.

Mahmud II began his military reform project in June 1826, after Ibrahim Paşa's had begun successfully reconquering Greece. As Mahmud II had feared, the janissaries rebelled just

¹⁵⁹ Strangford, "No. 113, 10 September 1821," 212-216.

¹⁶⁰ Strangford, "No. 123, 25 September 1821," 229-236.

two days after witnessing a few of Mahmud II's new officers drilling in their European-style uniforms.¹⁶¹ In their revolt, the janissaries failed to capture Mahmud II, however, allowing him to launch his counterattack. Mahmud II had the janissaries' barracks set on fire and had the janissaries that escaped the flames killed. At the end of the massacre, Mahmud II had had nearly 6,000 janissaries killed and another 5,000 exiled from the capital.¹⁶² Mahmud II's victory over the janissaries was so complete that when the Paşa of Edirne carried out Mahmud II's order to abolish the local janissaries, not a single man opposed his actions.¹⁶³ Because the janissaries had repeatedly checked any attempt to reform the military, Mahmud II had been forced to destroy them. Although he had hoped to institute these reforms at the beginning of the Greek insurrection, the possibility of war with Russia and the failure to make inroads against the Greek rebels had postponed any plans that would even temporarily weaken the Ottoman Empire's military.

With the janissaries destroyed, Mahmud II was free to fully implement his military reforms. In order to instill European tactics and discipline into his new forces, Mahmud II hired European officers to drill them. Mahmud II was so interested in their training that he even took an active part in their drills.¹⁶⁴ Although the janissaries had once been elite troops, by Mahmud II's time they were a threat to public order and the authority of any Sultan that displeased them. For Mahmud II, his newly created regular army represented a chance for the Ottoman Empire to reestablish its former status as a Power on par with the other European Empires.

¹⁶¹ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876*, 26.

¹⁶² Warr, 64.

¹⁶³ Consul Duveluz, "To Stratford Canning, from Adrianople, 26 June 1826," in *British Consular Reports from the Ottoman Levant in an Age of Upheaval*, ed. Theophilus C. Prousis, 140.

¹⁶⁴ Lane-Poole, 140.

In a letter to Lord Palmerston in 1832, Stratford Canning, British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire multiple times but then on a special mission to the Porte, summarized Mahmud II's goals in reforming his empire: "The great end and aim of the Sultan's exertions is the formation of a military force capable of maintaining his authority at home and enabling him to recover the station which he has lost for the present with respect to foreign countries."¹⁶⁵ In 1821, the Porte had not only accepted European mediation, but encouraged it in order to prevent war with Russia. Ottoman officials used this unprecedented action as proof to Strangford that the Ottoman Empire desired to act in concert with the other European Powers.

Unlike the Porte's diplomatic tactics during 1821, or its later efforts to reform its laws and administration, Mahmud II's military reforms were designed to secure his internal authority as well as to enable the Ottoman Empire to again treat with its neighbors from a position of strength. Had these reforms been designed to curry favor with Great Britain or another European Power, Mahmud II would not have waited to enact these reforms. Instead, seeing that Muhammad Ali's Egyptian forces were on the verge of subduing the Greek rebellion, he felt comfortable enough to temporarily weaken his military strength to create a new, well-disciplined and westernized regular army. While British officials like Canning and Urquhart approved of Mahmud II's military reforms, the Sultan had created his regular army solely to strengthen the Ottoman Empire, not to appease Europe. It was not until the Porte received Palmerston's advice in 1833 that the Ottoman Empire recognized it could incorporate its efforts to revitalize from within through administrative and military reforms into its efforts to improve its diplomatic relations with the other European Powers.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 78-79.

Changes to the Ottoman diplomatic service:

Because the Porte's strategy to gain European diplomatic support through promises to reform depended on even stronger diplomatic relations between the Ottoman Empire and the other European Powers, in 1834 Mahmud II undertook the task of overhauling the Ottoman Empire's diplomatic service. Before the Greek War of Independence, Greeks had fulfilled many of the highest administrative positions in the Ottoman Empire. In particular, Greeks from the Phanar quarter in Istanbul, the location of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, attained elite status amongst the Sultan's Christian *reaya*. Members of the Phanariots served as *hospodars* in the Principalities, imperial *dragoman* at the Porte, and headed the Ottoman Empire's foreign diplomatic missions.¹⁶⁶ By the 18th century a few of the more prominent families essentially had a monopoly on the position of imperial *dragoman*.¹⁶⁷ Due to the Greek rebellion, however, the Porte distrusted Greek officials, especially in positions that would take them outside the Ottoman Empire. As Greek *chargé d'affaires* oversaw all of the Ottoman Empire's European diplomatic missions, the Porte began winding down these missions shortly after the Greek War of Independence started.¹⁶⁸

Although the Porte ended its foreign diplomatic missions during the Greek War of Independence, it still recognized the importance diplomacy played in protecting the Ottoman Empire's territorial integrity. During the first year of the Greek War of Independence, the Porte relied on diplomacy to prevent Russia from declaring war. Even after the role France, Great

¹⁶⁶ Christine May Philliou, "Communities on the Verge: Unraveling the Phanariot Ascendancy in Ottoman Governance," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 1 (2009): 156, accessed December 7, 2012, doi:10.1017/S0010417509000073.

¹⁶⁷ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876*, 29.

¹⁶⁸ J.C. Hurewitz, "Ottoman Diplomacy and the European State System," *Middle East Journal* 15, no. 2 (1961): 148.

Britain, and Russia's played in separating Greece from the Ottoman Empire, Mahmud II still sought to improve diplomatic relations between the Porte and these European governments. Thus, in 1834, Mahmud II appointed special ambassadors to Paris and London, and the following year instituted a system to establish permanent embassies headed by Ottoman Muslims in all major European Powers save for Russia.¹⁶⁹ As a result, in 1836, Mustafa Reşid Paşa, the head of the special Ottoman diplomatic missions to France and Great Britain, traveled to London as the head of the first permanent Ottoman embassy in Great Britain.¹⁷⁰ Mahmud II also established the *Tercüme Odası* (Translation Bureau) to replace the Greek *dragomans* with new Ottoman translators, who worked under the authority of the *reis efendi*.¹⁷¹

In addition to establishing permanent embassies abroad in Europe, Mahmud II also sought to improve the treatment of European ambassadors in Istanbul. Mahmud II eliminated the more humiliating elements of his court's etiquette, and in January 1832 when Canning again traveled to Istanbul, he found the city more tolerant of Christians.¹⁷² Mahmud II had lost Greece and direct control over Serbia as the result of opposing the European Powers' wishes, and he hoped to prevent further European attacks on his sovereignty by establishing a stronger rapport with these Powers through increased diplomatic contact and less onerous demands on European ambassadors at the Porte. As Canning wrote to Palmerston at the conclusion of his special mission to the Porte in 1832, "the great end and aim of the Sultan's exertions is the formation of

¹⁶⁹ Davison, *Nineteenth Century Ottoman Diplomacy and Reforms*, 155.

¹⁷⁰ Hurewitz, 148.

¹⁷¹ Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876*, 29.

¹⁷² Lane-Poole, 161.

a military force capable of maintaining his authority at home and enabling him to recover the station which he has lost for the present with respect to foreign countries.”¹⁷³

The second Muhammad Ali crisis:

Due to the reforms he had instituted to his military and diplomatic service, in 1839 Mahmud II was confident that his armies would either defeat the forces of the rebellious Muhammad Ali or the Ottoman Empire’s ongoing military and administrative reforms would guarantee European protection from Muhammad Ali’s reprisal. Therefore, in April 1839, Ottoman troops entered Muhammad Ali's territory. On 24 June 1839, Ibrahim Paşa's army again defeated the Ottoman Empire’s forces, thus placing Mahmud II's throne in jeopardy.¹⁷⁴ Just six days later Mahmud II died, and his 16-year old son Abdülmecid ascended the throne. Mahmud II’s death combined with the Ottoman armies' defeat convinced the *Kapudan Paşa*, Ahmad Mushir, and most of the Ottoman fleet, to defect to Muhammad Ali in Alexandria. With Ibrahim Paşa posed to march on Istanbul uncontested and Egypt in charge of the Ottoman navy, Abdülmecid's reign appeared destined to be a short one. But before Ibrahim Paşa’s forced could march on Istanbul, Palmerston ordered Great Britain's Mediterranean fleet to cut off sea communications between Egypt and Syria and to compel Muhammad Ali to agree to peace.¹⁷⁵ The Porte had worked diligently since the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence to gain British support to protect the Sultan's autonomy. It was not until the Porte implemented military and administrative reforms while continuing to evince the Russian threat to Ottoman

¹⁷³ Warr, 78-89.

¹⁷⁴ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 95.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 96.

independence, however, that the Porte succeeded in turning the British government into strong supporters of the Ottoman Empire.

After Great Britain's intervention, Ibrahim Paşa did not dare to provoke their wrath by marching on Istanbul. Since Muhammad Ali still controlled Syria and the Ottoman navy, however, the Porte still had to reach a new agreement with its Egyptian paşa. Muhammad Ali hoped to benefit from Mahmud II's miscalculation of the Ottoman military's strength, and continued to demand that Abdülmecid grant him hereditary rule in both Egypt and Syria and to dismiss his Grand Vizier, Husrev Paşa. The Porte was prepared to accept these conditions, but on 27 July 1839 Austria, France, Great Britain, and Russia presented the Porte with a collective note stating that the signatory Powers had reached an "agreement...on the Question of the East" and advised the Porte to "suspend any definitive resolution without their concurrence, waiting for the effect of the interest which these powers feel for it."¹⁷⁶ In August the Porte requested that the signatory Powers reach a settlement between Abdülmecid and Muhammad Ali, with the only stipulation that the Ottoman Empire not be asked to cede Syria to the Egyptian paşa.¹⁷⁷

In order to help secure a favorable settlement as well as strengthen the Ottoman Empire's diplomatic ties with the other European Powers, on 3 November 1839 Abdülmecid promulgated the Hatt-ı Şerif of Gülhane, marking the beginning of the Tanzimat Era in the Ottoman Empire. The Hatt-ı Şerif of Gülhane admitted that because the Ottoman Empire "had ceased to observe the sacred Code of the laws and the regulations derived from it...the former strength and prosperity have changed into weakness and impoverishment." To remedy these weaknesses, the edict promised to guarantee the Ottoman Empire's "subjects complete security for their lives,

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

their honour, and their fortune...A regular method of assessing and levying taxes...An equally regular method for the raising of soldiers...These imperial concessions extend to all our subjects, of whatever religion or sect they may be; they shall enjoy them without exception.” The edict also empowered the Grand Council of Justice to “assemble in order to establish laws regulating these points of security of life and property, and that of the assessment of taxation.”¹⁷⁸

The timing of the Hatt-ı Şerif of Gülhane suggested the Porte's primary motivation in promulgating it. With an inexperienced Sultan in a conflict with the reforming Paşa of Egypt, the Porte hoped to convince Europe that Abdülmecid was prepared to guarantee the security and prosperity of all of his subjects, including the Christian *reaya*. The Porte had taken Palmerston's and Urquhart's advice to heart. It knew that Great Britain and the other European Powers would only support the Ottoman Empire if it strengthened its military and prevented further rebellions by improving the status of its non-Muslim subjects.

Further evidence that the Porte designed the Hatt-ı Şerif of Gülhane as a diplomatic tactic is found in the political testament of Ali Paşa, a member of the Grand Council of Justice in 1843 and protégé of Mustafa Reşid Paşa, the author of the Hatt-ı Şerif of Gülhane. Ali Paşa informed Sultan Abdülaziz that some European Powers only wanted to conquer the Empire while others aided the Empire in order to exploit its resources and maintain the peace in Europe.¹⁷⁹ Ali Paşa then informed Abdülaziz that the Porte had shaped Ottoman diplomacy to protect Ottoman interests from these European Powers:

We conceded to what was expedient, but always safeguarded the general interests of Your Empire; these had top priority. Above all we had to look after our Sovereign's interest and reconcile the claims of His power with the

¹⁷⁸ “The Hatt-ı Şerif of Gulhané, 3 November 1839,” in *The Great Powers and the Near East 1774-1923*, ed. M.S. Anderson, 59-62.

¹⁷⁹ Fuat M. Andic and Suphan Andic, *The Last of the Ottoman Grandees: The Life and the Political Testament of Ali Paşa* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1996), 34.

concessions the country and Europe demanded...We allowed Europe to believe that its advice was being followed and that its demands were being attended to fully and satisfactorily. This was only half true. What Europe was proposing appeared to be very beneficial; but it was so only for Europe. To accept her proposals would have been fatal for us. We could not comply with all. But to declare this openly would have been a blunder. We had neither the officials nor the army to enforce them...We had to strengthen our relations with Europe. Only when their material interests coincided with ours would the integrity of the Empire become a reality and not remain a diplomatic fiction.¹⁸⁰

Mahmud II, Mustafa Reşid Paşa, and other Ottoman officials truly hoped to strengthen the Ottoman Empire through reform. After the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi, however, the Porte also recognized that by promising to reform, the Ottoman Empire could secure British diplomatic and even military support.

The Porte's efforts to induce goodwill with the European Powers worked, and in July 1840 Austria, Great Britain, the Ottoman Empire, Prussia, and Russia signed the Treaty of London, which stipulated that the European Powers would protect the Sultan from Muhammad Ali in exchange for Abdülmecid closing the Straits to all foreign warships in times of peace. The treaty also granted Muhammad Ali hereditary rule of Egypt so long as he surrendered within ten days, but he would have to adhere to the Ottoman Empire's laws and incorporate his army and navy into the Ottoman forces.¹⁸¹ Muhammad Ali did not agree before the Treaty of London's deadline, but on 6 September 1840 he sent his envoy, Rifaat Bey, to ask Abdülmecid only for hereditary rule of Egypt, thus accepting the other stipulations in the treaty.¹⁸² As the Porte had hoped, by promising to implement reforms to its government, the Ottoman Empire had convinced Europe to side with Abdülmecid and restrict Muhammad Ali to Egypt.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 36-40.

¹⁸¹ Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774-1923*, 101.

¹⁸² Ibid., 103.

During the Greek War of Independence, the Porte did not view internal westernizing reforms as a necessary component for gaining admittance to the Concert of Europe. Instead, the Sultan implemented military reforms in order to strengthen the Ottoman Empire from within. Because of the diplomatic developments towards the end of the Greek War of Independence, however, the Porte recognized that it needed to adapt its diplomatic tactics in order to gain Great Britain's diplomatic support. Thus, while in 1821 the Porte successfully provoked Great Britain's Russophobia to convince the latter to aid the Ottoman Empire in its efforts to prevent a war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, Great Britain later sided with France and Russia against the Sultan in order to secure Greece's autonomy. As a result of the Ottoman Empire's military weakness, in 1832 Muhammad Ali rebelled against Mahmud II, forcing the Sultan to accept Russia's military support and then the embarrassing Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi in 1833. Fearing that this treaty changed the Ottoman Empire into a protectorate of Russia, Lord Palmerston offered the Porte the solution it sought to improve its diplomatic relations: promising the other European Powers that the Ottoman Empire would implement military and administrative reforms. By improving its administration, the Ottoman Empire could govern all of its subjects justly, thereby preventing future rebellions and ensuring that European support would remain with the Sultan rather than his rebels. As a result, in 1839, although it was Mahmud II that started hostilities against Muhammad Ali, the other European Powers sided with the Porte. Because they believed that the Ottoman Empire, which had recently promised to institute reforms to guarantee its subjects protection for their lives, honor, and wealth, deserved its territorial and administrative autonomy.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In conclusion, 1821 to 1840 represents a single period of Ottoman diplomacy because it was during this timeframe that the Ottoman Empire sought to secure its territorial and administrative autonomy through fostering its diplomatic relations with the other European Powers and gaining admittance into the Concert of Europe. Although throughout this period the Ottoman Empire designed its diplomacy primarily to attain these goals, in 1833 the Porte changed the diplomatic tactics employed to improve its diplomatic relations with the other European Powers. Consequently, this era of Ottoman diplomacy can be subdivided into two periods: first, from 1821 until 1833, when the Porte sought to establish a strong relationship with Great Britain by inciting the latter's Russophobia; and second, the period from 1833, after the Porte received Lord Palmerston's advice, to 1840, when the Ottoman Empire used diplomatic promises to reform its administration and military to garner European diplomatic support for the preservation of the Ottoman Empire's autonomy.

During the first year of the Greek War of Independence, the Porte sought British support to pressure Russia into reestablishing diplomatic relations and to refrain from war with the Ottoman Empire. To attain Great Britain's help, Ottoman officials shared internal intelligence with the British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Lord Strangford, demonstrating Russia's role in fomenting the rebellion and Russia's desire to find a pretext to declare war. Concurrent with trying to incite British Russophobia, the Porte reiterated its desire to maintain peace, evidenced its willingness to solve the conflict with Russia through diplomatic channels, and promised to follow Austrian and British advice to negate any Russian pretext for war. The Porte

therefore agreed to accede to Russia's demands included in the Ottoman Empire's treaties and promised to prosecute the war with Greece in a more humane manner. Thus, beginning in 1821, the Porte increased its efforts to secure the Ottoman Empire's political and territorial integrity through diplomatic means. The Porte knew that it could not compete with the European Powers militarily and therefore sought entrance into the Concert of Europe to gain some protection from Russian encroachment. During the first year of the Greek rebellion, the Ottoman Empire successfully utilized its diplomatic tactic of inciting Russophobia to gain British aid in pressuring Russia not to start a war with the Ottoman Empire.

Although the Porte had adopted a conciliatory manner in the first year of the Greek War of Independence, once the threat of a Russian invasion passed, it returned to imposing harsh punishments on rebellious and peaceful Greek subjects alike. As Muhammad Ali's armies were in the process of systematically reconquering Greece, France, Great Britain, and Russia reached an agreement to impose peace between the Ottoman Empire and Greece in order to prevent further Ottoman atrocities against the Greeks. Whereas in 1821 the Porte had succeeded in gaining diplomatic support from both Austria and Great Britain to pressure Russia into reaching a peaceful settlement with the Ottoman Empire, in 1828 neither Power would side with the Ottoman Empire due to the latter's troops' massacres of peaceful Christian *reaya*. Refusing to accept European mediation between the Sultan and his subjects, the Ottoman Empire instead declared war on Russia. Even with Mahmud II's military reforms, the Ottoman Empire could not defeat the Russian attack, and in 1829 signed the Treaty of Adrianople, agreeing to end hostilities with Greece and recognize Greece's internal autonomy.

In 1832, shortly after Mahmud II agreed with the European Powers to grant Greece its independence, Muhammad Ali rebelled against his sovereign. Once again under the command of Muhammad Ali's capable son, Ibrahim Paşa, the Egyptian armies routed the Ottoman forces and looked ready to march uncontested to Istanbul. The Porte attempted to gain Great Britain's aid to protect the Sultan from his rebellious vassal, but due to the Ottoman massacres of Greeks during the Greek War of Independence as well as the Porte's refusal to peacefully accept European mediation, Great Britain could not countenance allying with the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, the Ottoman Empire accepted Russia's offer to send forces to occupy Istanbul, necessitating the Porte's agreeing to the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi. Although the last article in the treaty was supposed to remain secret, almost immediately after Mahmud II signed the treaty, an Ottoman official notified Lord Ponsonby of the secret article's existence in order to incite British Russophobia. The Porte's ploy worked, and in December 1833 Lord Palmerston ordered Ponsonby to advise Mahmud II that he needed to further reform his Empire so that it could prevent future rebellions by protecting its Christian *reaya*, thereby creating a government that Great Britain could support.

Because Mahmud II recognized that even with the military reforms he had implemented his Empire could not compete militarily with the other European Powers, he accepted Palmerston's advice and applied further reforms to Ottoman administration. Unlike previous reforms – including his destruction of the janissaries and the creation of a regular army in 1826 – these were designed to appease the European Powers, especially Great Britain, so that they would protect Mahmud II from Muhammad Ali as well as future Russian aggression. As this plan required better diplomatic relationships with the European Powers, Mahmud II created the

Tercüme Odası and established permanent Ottoman embassies in the capitals of most of the European Powers to ensure that the Ottoman Empire maintained constant diplomatic discourse with its most useful potential allies. These changes to Ottoman diplomacy – both in changing Ottoman diplomatic tactics and increasing diplomatic contact – were a direct result of the Greek War of Independence. Muhammad Ali rebelled as a result of the weakness the Ottoman Empire displayed during the Greek War of Independence, precipitating the events that led to the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi and thus the reason for Palmerton's advice. During the Greek War of Independence, the Porte had, for the first time, welcomed European mediation in the hopes of entering into the Concert of Europe so that the other European Powers would respect the Ottoman Empire's sovereignty. But due to Ottoman troops' atrocities, the Porte failed to secure European support and in 1833 realized that they would need to incorporate Palmerston's advice to reform into their diplomatic message designed to garner entrance into the Concert of Europe.

The Porte's new diplomatic tactics succeeded in 1840, when the European Powers sided with the Ottoman Empire in its most recent conflict with Muhammad Ali. Once again faced with a potential Egyptian attack on Istanbul, the Porte asked for the European Powers to settle the dispute. Because the Ottoman Empire had demonstrated its earnest desire to reform its government along European lines as well as the Porte's willingness to accept foreign mediation, the Powers agreed. In order to secure a favorable settlement, in November 1839 the new sultan, Abdülmecid, promulgated the Hatt-ı Şerif of Gülhane, marking the transition to the Tanzimat Era in the Ottoman Empire. The Hatt-ı Şerif of Gülhane thus represented the culmination of the evolution of Ottoman diplomacy from the Greek War of Independence until the Tanzimat Era. It promised to uphold all of its subjects' security, wealth, and honor by implementing reforms to its

military, tax collection, and legal system. While Ottoman officials hoped it would prevent further rebellions, the timing of its promulgation demonstrated that the Porte was primarily hoping to convince Europe that the Ottoman Empire both could be saved and that it should be. As a result of the Hatt-ı Şerif of Gülhane as well as the Ottoman Empire's other reforms, the European Powers favored the Ottoman Empire over Muhammad Ali, and in the Treaty of London, satisfied all of the Porte's hopes by only offering Muhammad Ali hereditary rule over Egypt.

Throughout this period of Ottoman diplomacy, the Ottoman Empire consistently asserted its independence and resistance to foreign influence. The Porte sought entrance into the Concert of Europe not to appease the other European Powers, but to secure the Ottoman Empire's boundaries and autonomy. Therefore, the Ottoman Empire's increased reliance on diplomacy from 1821 to 1840 should not be interpreted as evidence that the Ottoman Empire acted as a pawn of the other, more powerful European Empires. Instead, the Porte's actions demonstrated its independence, recognition of the fact that it was, at least temporarily, militarily inferior to the other European Powers, and finally, its attempts to renegotiate its position in relation to those militarily superior Powers. Thus, from 1821 to 1840, while the Porte increased its willingness to share information with the other European Powers and accept the advice of European ambassadors, it did so only when it would serve the Ottoman Empire's own interests. Consequently, in 1821 the Porte accepted Great Britain's and Austria's suggestions because they helped the Ottoman Empire achieve its goal of preventing war with Russia; in 1827, however, the Porte refused Europe's advice and instead declared war on Russia because it viewed the latter as less of a threat to Mahmud II's autonomy. Finally, in the 1830s the Porte incorporated its efforts to reform into its diplomatic discourse, as it had the desire both to strengthen the Ottoman

Empire through reform and to improve its diplomatic relationship with the other European Powers. In all of these events the Ottoman Empire therefore demonstrated that it used its diplomacy in support of its sovereignty. Its decisions did not always work, but they evidence that the typical western approach to studying the Ottoman Empire's role in the "Eastern Question," which assumes that because the Ottoman Empire was militarily weaker to the other Empires it acted as a dependency to these Powers, is incorrect.

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