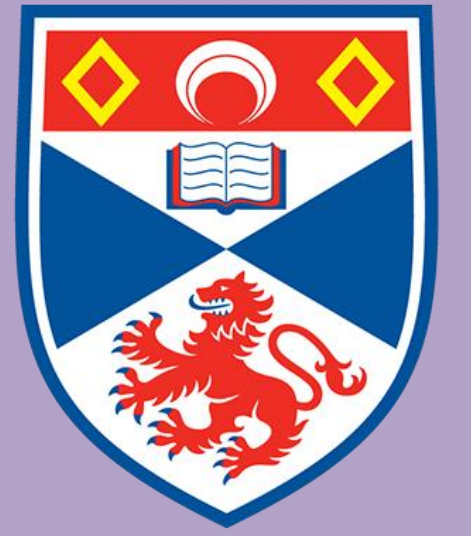


# The Role of Russian Emigres in Anglo-Russian Relations in Late Victorian Britain



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## 1 Background

The end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw many major figures emigrate from Russia to Western Europe and particularly Britain. It was also an era marked by tensions between Russia and Britain with them peaking around the period of the Bulgarian agitation in the 1870's. A period of extreme tension between Russia and Britain centred around the treatment of Bulgarians by the Ottoman Empire. My research aimed to examine the role that emigres in Britain had in impacting public opinion and government action.

## 3 Gladstone and Stead

William Stead, was a prominent editor and journalist who worked 'hand in glove' with Novikoff.<sup>1</sup> He helped give her views a voice and was a strong advocate for positive relations with Russia. His meeting with the Tsar marked the peak of his success as a pro-Russian figure with Britain.

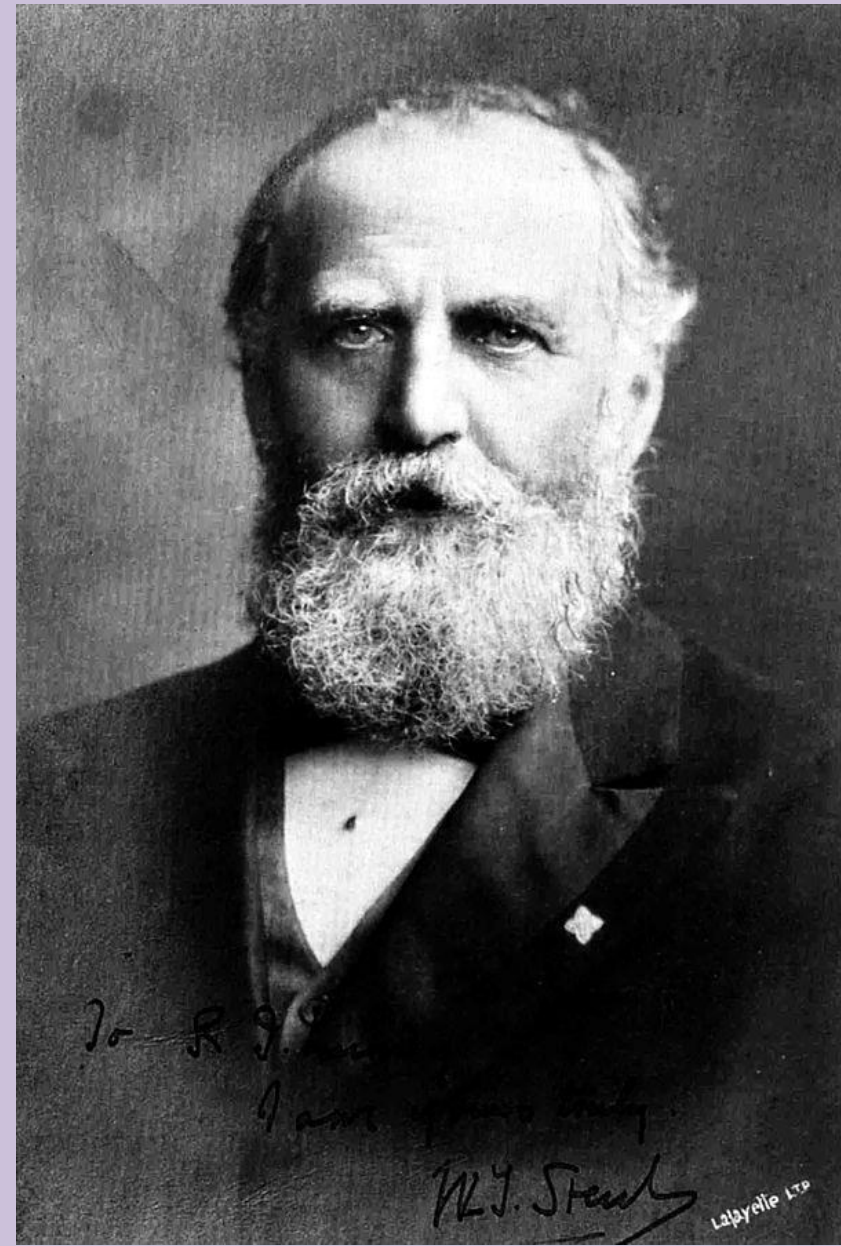


Figure 2: William Stead

William Gladstone met Novikoff after having already been prime minister. Yet he re-entered politics in part due to his 'disgust at the Ottoman Empire', which Novikoff nurtured.<sup>2</sup> His successful campaign to become Prime Minister led to Britain avoiding war with Russia and he continued to correspond closely with Novikoff.

## 2 Madame Novikoff



Madame Olga Novikoff

Figure 1: Olga Novikoff

Olga Novikoff (1840-1925), was an aristocrat who moved between Russia and England for much of her life. Her brother's death in Serbia, at the hands of the Ottomans in 1876, led to her increasing involvement in debates around Britain's involvement in the Eastern Mediterranean. Her connections to figures such as William Stead and William Gladstone gave her much influence marked by her successful campaign to avoid war with Britain in the period. Her success resulted in the sobriquet the M.P. for Russia.

## 4 Sergei Stepniak

Stepniak in contrast was a terrorist and anti-tsarist figure who arrived in Britain after his assassination of the chief of the Gendarmery in 1878. He aimed to 'acquaint the western societies with Russian life'.<sup>3</sup> His relationships with prominent British socialists and his editorship of Free Russia exposed widespread atrocities and maltreatments within Russia to the British public, he represented a charismatic face for the nihilist movement. His tragic early death left him as a mythic revolutionary figure.



Figure 3: Sergei Stepniak



Access my Bibliography here

## 5 Bibliography and acknowledgements

Figure 1: Wikimedia.org. (2022). File:Olga Novikoff.jpg - Wikimedia Commons. [online] Available at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Olga\\_Novikoff.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Olga_Novikoff.jpg) [Accessed 29 Aug. 2024].

Figure 2: Wikimedia.org. (2022). File:William Thomas Stead.jpg - Wikimedia Commons. [online] Available at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:William\\_Thomas\\_Stead.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:William_Thomas_Stead.jpg) [Accessed 29 Aug. 2024].

Figure 3: Wikimedia.org. (2022). File:Stepniak 2.jpg - Wikimedia Commons. [online] Available at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stepniak\\_2.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stepniak_2.jpg) [Accessed 29 Aug. 2024].

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2. William Thomas Stead, *The M.P. For Russia, Reminiscences and Correspondence of Madame Olga Novikoff*, (London, 1909), p.463
3. James Hulse, *Revolutionists in London A Study of Five Unorthodox Socialists*, (Oxford, 1970) p. 48

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