

**RUSSIA'S WORK IN
TURKEY: A REVELATION.
FROM THE FRENCH
"LES RESPONSABILITES"**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649531608

Russia's Work in Turkey: A Revelation. From the French "Les Responsabilites" by G. Giacometti & Edgar Whitacker

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

G. GIACOMETTI & EDGAR WHITACKER

**RUSSIA'S WORK IN
TURKEY: A REVELATION.
FROM THE FRENCH
"LES RESPONSABILITES"**

RUSSIA'S WORK IN TURKEY:

A REVELATION.

FROM THE FRENCH

“LES RESPONSABILITÉS”

OF

G. GIACOMETTI



TRANSLATED BY

EDGAR WHITAKER.

“O præclarum custodem ovium (ut aiunt) lupum!”
Crc. Philip. iii. 11.

LONDON:

EFFINGHAM WILSON, ROYAL EXCHANGE, E.C.

1877.

246 . e . 403 .

PREFACE.

"LES RESPONSABILITÉS," of which the following pages are a translation, appeared in Constantinople only just before the diplomatic exodus which ensued upon the *fiasco* of the Conference. Had the work been published earlier, Mr. Gladstone's pious aspiration that England should "emulate the good deeds of Russia" might probably never have been uttered, or, if uttered, would have failed to arouse the enthusiasm which responded to it. Moreover, certain plenipotentiaries at the Conference might have cut better figures and served better ends, had the knowledge against which they fortified themselves been forced upon them by a timely disclosure of these secret workings of the policy which they supported with almost offensive ostentation.

To the delicacy or timidity of the Porte is due the long delay of this disclosure. The existence of the documents which compose it has been known to the Porte for the last two or three years, but the holders of the prize were unable to obtain permission to give them publicity. There was always the fear of envenoming the diplomatic relations between the Porte and St. Petersburg, and so the Turk hid the fox in his bosom and suffered his vitals to be gnawed away rather than commit a diplomatic *maladresse*.

The interest of the book as a piece of political scandal was to some extent forestalled in Constantinople by the fact

that several of the mines of General Ignatieff—the Mr. X of these pages—had been sprung before the work appeared. Close bystanders had thus been able to recognise the engineer in the style of his work, and many a buried fact cast upon the surface by successive explosions had already taught them how dark and strange was the fashion of his burrowings.

But, just in proportion as its sensational colour faded, so its historical and dramatic interest grew more hotly vivid from this very cause; for men who had seen a part wanted to know the whole, and craved to unravel all the mysteries of the plot of which they had witnessed the bloody *denouement*.

The pages of "*Les Responsabilités*" did not, it is true, exhaust the subject; but they pieced together the fragments of knowledge already acquired; linked in a connected tale the scattered phenomena which had been the signs of their times in Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch, Mount Athos and other fields in which Russia labours; threw a distinct light upon the origin of the insurrection in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and exposed the complex dealings by which the unfortunate Bulgarians were involved in a revolt with which they had no real sympathy. They revealed, moreover, the real feebleness of the hold of the Pan-Slavic idea upon the South-Slavic peoples, showing the idea to be kept alive in that ungenial soil only by the golden stream with which Russia assiduously waters it.

But, satisfactory as all this was to the student of current history, to the politician it yielded only regret that the disclosure should have come too late to exercise any influence upon the forces which were shaping events. Thus, the author's flattering

proposal that I should undertake to prepare an English version of his work did not meet with immediate acquiescence, because I failed to see what practical good it could do at so late an hour, and when the popular interest in England on Eastern affairs seemed to be fast cooling down.

While thus hesitating, the telegraph brought the news that the indefatigable General had quitted his retreat at Krussodernitza and was starting on a series of missions to the principal Courts of Europe. The news was speedily followed by a whisper that the object of this movement was to induce the Powers to cast the tatters of the Treaty of Paris to the winds, and to suffer Russia to creep back into her old position as "protectress" of the Christian races subject to the Porte,—the position from which it was the object of the Crimean war to dislodge her, and of the Ninth article of the Treaty to shut her permanently out.

This move of Russian diplomacy creates a new opportunity and fitness for the publication of an English version of Mr. Giacometti's work, which reflects, as in a mirror, the nature of the "protectorate" which Russia aspires to exercise over the Christian peoples of Turkey, and the manner of her manipulation of it;—discovers Russia in fact hard at her holy work, bathed in a sweat of lies, her bared arms plunged now in blood and now in gold.

As regards the authenticity of the letters, no independent person, competent to form a judgment upon them, has ventured to dispute it. On the other hand, those competent to judge have accepted them without misgiving. And, indeed,

the correspondence bears upon its face the stamp of truth. In the style and phraseology of Mr. X's letters, in the tone of their raillery and sarcasm, in the *naïve* frankness of their cynicism, the language of General Ignatieff is unmistakable. Add to this the extraordinary knowledge of detail which the letters display,—of men, of things, of places, over all the vast scene in which the action lies, and the conviction is forced upon the reader's mind, that none but the hand which, with consummate skill was guiding that action, could have touched upon all these with the freedom and firmness of Mr. X., and escape as he has done every incongruity and inaccuracy.

EDGAR WHITAKER.

Pera, Constantinople; *March* 16, 1877.

CYPHERED KEY.

If the reader has been pleased to honour with any degree of his attention our preceding publications he will be aware that we have a delicacy with regard to the use of proper names.

We feel this delicacy even with respect to those collective beings which are called Powers—States. It will be understood that we respect the sentiment all the more when persons are in question.

We would not, however, inflict upon the reader the task which we ourselves have had to undertake, of guessing at the Cyphers of Departments, Embassies, Consulates, and Secret Societies. Not to associate him, therefore, with our labours beyond a reasonable degree, we have limited ourselves to composing for his use the following cyphered key:

Mr. X . . . is a high personage residing at Constantinople.

Mr. Y . . . is his colleague residing at Vienna.

Mr. Z . . . is the chief of the Asiatic department of a great European Power.

Monseigneur * is an august personage.

Monseigneur * *, a near relative of the preceding, is an august personage of the same rank.

Monseigneur * * *, a personage yet more august, is the heir apparent of a great empire.

Monseigneur * * * * is a personage who cannot be called august, but who reigns over a people of 120,000 souls.

Monseigneur * * * * *, another personage by no means august, governs a country over which he has more than once attempted to reign.

As regards the actors of minor importance whom this publication will introduce to the stage, their names will be simply represented by dotted lines. The part which they play is alone of value to our theme.

The reader will pardon us for imposing on him this slight trouble. It was indispensable to adopt some such method.

We treat of a subject which, in a certain point of view, is a lofty one; it presents however details which call for severe comment. But we shall be careful never to allow the *severities* of our pen to be confounded with *personalities*.