Britain, the Crimean War and Legitimacy

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Introduction

How curiously the vein of Incapacity seems to wind about thro' everything, not omitting even the humble boot.[1]

Captain George Frederick Dallas wrote these words from the Crimean peninsula to his family in January 1855. After a long winter, ravaged by storms, the British troops in Crimea were feeling tired, hungry and cold. Captain Dallas was a British officer during the Crimean War (1853-1856), a war fought between the British, the French and the Ottomans on one side, against the Russian Empire on the other.[2] Dallas complains to his family that the winter boots they received were too small for almost all the soldiers and could therefore keep the feet dry of only a few of his fellow troopers. But the boot is but a symptom of a much larger problem, Dallas explains in his letter, as 'the vein of Incapacity seems to wind about thro' everything'. For the British everything that could go wrong, did go wrong in the Crimean War, and the war itself, the reports in the press and public discourse on the war would prove to be highly influential for British politics and society of the mid-nineteenth century.

The Crimean War was a conflict that arose for various reasons, and the possession of Crimea itself was not one of them.[3] The cause for the War that is most often named is a religious dispute between the Catholic and Orthodox churches over who had access to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. The Orthodox clergy had the keys to the church and restricted access to Catholics. Furthermore, a star with a Latin inscription was stolen, which led to increased tensions between both sets of clergymen. The conflict escalated when the French government started to meddle in the dispute and demanded unlimited Catholic access to churches in the holy land, basing these claims on older treaties with the Ottomans that promised exactly that. In response, the Russian-backed Orthodox Patriarch asserted the rights of Orthodox clergymen in the holy land, leading to increasing tensions. These at first small, religious disputes soon evolved into a larger conflict in which several European states were involved.[4] This religious dispute was only the catalyst that sparked the conflict, there were larger, underlying factors that had been brewing underneath the surface in the decades before the Crimean War. The most important of these factors was the so-called Eastern Question. Because the Ottoman Empire had steadily diminished in power, standing and in territorial lands, what would happen with its former territories became an important question to the five great powers of the time. Britain, France, Austria and Prussia took an active interest in the fate of the Ottoman Empire, but none more than Russia, that bordered on the Ottoman Empire.

When states wage war there are always underlying questions of the causes and reasoning behind going to war. In other words, what are legitimate reasons for going to war? The escalation of the events in Palestine and the underlying power relations at the background of the Eastern Question all relate to the legitimacy of warfare. Sometimes something as small as a contested church in Palestine can be the first step that leads to war, as this grew into a religious dispute that escalated into a large scale European conflict. All players in the Crimean War had different justifications for going to war. Some were more ideologically vested such as the arguments by the French and their stance on the religious dispute in Palestine, while others, like the British had less ideological justifications for the Crimean War. The British wanted to curb the Russian territorial ambitions in

[1] Stefanie Markovits, 'Rushing Into Print: "Participatory Journalism" During the Crimean War', *Victorian Studies* 50 (2008) 559–586, 559.
[2] Winfried Baumgart, *The Crimean War: 1853-1856*. Modern wars (London : New York: Arnold ; Oxford University Press 1999) 3.
[3] Ibid., ix.
[4] Clive Ponting, *The Crimean War* (London: Chatto & Windus 2004) 1–3.

general, and stop the increasing Russian influence in areas of the Ottoman Empire that became more independent. With the Ottoman Empire weakening, France and Britain wanted to safeguard the Ottoman presence in the region from a balance of power perspective. The Russians themselves had various reasons for going to war, among them gaining access to warm water ports, but also economic and religious motives, and territorial expansion.[5]

These motives all relate to legitimacy as seen in the context of the legitimate or 'just war', or valid reasons as to why states go to war. However, legitimacy does not only comprise war, it is a far more broad concept. Not only are there discussions on the legitimacy of warfare, these discussions extend to the legitimacy of the governments of the states themselves. The legitimacy in this case refers to the social constructs we have made to determine if an actor – for example a government or a king – has the right to rule. Hurrelman et al. describe legitimacy in its most basic form as an idea: '[that] refers to the rightfulness and acceptability of political authority'.[6] Legitimacy in this form relates to something I would describe as domestic legitimacy, as it describes political authority within a domestic context. In an increasingly globalized world, domestic legitimacy is still very much present, but has somewhat diminished in status as the 'international' has become more and more relevant as nation states have lost autonomy to international regimes, organizations and to non-state actors.[7] Legitimacy in an international context has therefore become more relevant. This international legitimacy refers to what is acceptable for states in international society. According to Ian Clark, legitimacy: 'express[es] rudimentary social agreement about who is entitled to participate in international relations, and also about appropriate forms in their conduct.'[8] While questions of international legitimacy have only become more apparent in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, they have existed before that too, albeit in a different shape to current international legitimacy. International organizations and non-state actors were completely or relatively absent in the nineteenth century, but who was entitled to participate and what conduct was deemed to be appropriate were questions that were at the forefront of nineteenth-century international politics. The Napoleonic wars, the Congress of Vienna and the revolutions of 1848 were all events that shaped these questions.[9] Domestic and international legitimacy are therefore also highly relevant to the Crimean war. Domestic legitimacy played an explicit or implicit role for every one of the actors involved in the Crimean war, while international legitimacy had become a topic of discussion after Napoleonic wars, the Congress of Vienna and the revolutions of 1848.

Perhaps most interesting from the standpoint of both domestic and international legitimacy within the context of the Crimean War is Britain. The most democratic of the main actors of the War, the question of domestic legitimacy was far more important in Britain than in for example tsarist Russia, where the Tsar still held absolute power. For this reason this thesis examines legitimacy and the Crimean war within the context of Britain. To do this I first explore the concept of legitimacy in depth. Based upon the small introduction on legitimacy in this introduction, it discusses and examines academic definitions of legitimacy, and gives historical examples of questions of legitimacy. As Britain in the nineteenth century displayed aspects we can see as distinctly modern, while also differing substantially from truly modern international politics, these historical examples provide a base upon the case of Britain is built. The academic definitions provide a more theoretical framework for the rest of the thesis, and serve to organize it. After this, the case of Britain, the Crimean War and

[5] Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 6.
[6] Achim Hurrelmann, Steffen Schneider and Jens Steffek, *Legitimacy in an age of global politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2007).
[7] Ibid., 1.
[8] Ian Clark, *Legitimacy in international society* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press 2005) 2.
[9] Ibid., 85–86.

legitimacy will be examined. The focus in this part will be on domestic legitimacy that will be examined by using secondary sources that provide a solid background, and primary sources. These primary sources are Parliamentary debates and newspaper articles that give examples of how legitimacy was constructed in nineteenth century Britain.

Crimea is still a highly relevant part of the world today, as Russia invaded the peninsula in 2014. While the international political backdrop on which modern Russia operates is in one way fundamentally different from the international political backdrop of mid-nineteenth century Europe, they are in other ways similar. Examining historical cases like this can show where modern cases like the Russian invasion of Crimea come from. The history of Crimea and the Crimean War still permeate national attitudes in Britain, and more importantly, in Russia. President Vladimir Putin has often referred to the Crimean War in speeches to legitimize the invasion, which is in turn a part of a larger legitimizing effort that often evokes the Russian Empire. By this I mean that Putin's expansionist attitudes are often put into a background of restoring, or at least emulating, the glory of the Russian Empire.[10] In this way, a historical case study can give us a much needed background to current day events. This does not mean that history can predict the future, but it does give us a strong indication of why things are like they are. Moreover, questions of legitimacy are, and will always remain relative, but thinking about different applications of these questions gives us perspective and a stronger grip on the world. Understanding legitimacy in its many different forms enhances our understanding of history, of domestic and international politics, and by extension, the world as a whole.

As Ian Clark explains, legitimacy and international society are inherently linked; the fact that questions exist on who can participate and why, make it appropriate to use the term international society in this context, as these are questions also associated with society in general. This is what I will use in this thesis as well, as opposed to other terms like international order or the international system.[11] Furthermore, it denotes a shared body of institutions, habits and practices that constitute this society, which are all things that can be linked to legitimacy in its different forms.[12]

Legitimacy

Before legitimacy in relation to the Crimean War can be discussed, legitimacy itself has to be examined. The word legitimacy comes from the Latin word *legitimus*, which in essence meant something or someone that follows the law. As time progressed, the word *legitimus* became *legitimates* and later legitimate. Like this etymological evolution, the meaning of the word evolved and expanded to comprise shared moral standards as well.[13] Because of the broad and contentious nature of legitimacy, the question of conceptualizing (political) legitimacy is a difficult one. Perhaps the most famous attempt at the conceptualization of legitimacy is that of Max Weber. Weber saw three valid justifications for *Herrschaft*, or political dominion; traditional, charismatic and legal authority. The first of these justifications focuses on traditions and habitual attitudes towards rule. The clearest examples of this *Herrschaft* are the hereditary kingships that were prevalent throughout

[10] Chaim Shinar, 'Vladimir Putin's Aspiration to Restore the Lost Russian Empire', *European Review* 25 (2017) 642–654, 653.
[11] Clark, *Legitimacy in international society*, 2.
[12] Cornelia Navari, *The international society tradition: from Hugo Grotius to Hedley Bull* (2021) 1.
[13] Bruce Gilley, *The Right to Rule: How States Win and Lose Legitimacy* (New York: Columbia University Press 2009) xii.

most of human history. The second, charismatic *Herrschaft*, expectedly focuses on the charismatic attributes of a leader and describes a more modern interpretation of the legitimacy of rule, while also acknowledging the historical cases of charismatic legitimacy. According to Weber, examples of this charismatic interpretation are 'chosen warlords, or [in Rome] the popularly elected "Ruler," the great demagogue, and the Leader of political parties'. The third, and last dimension of Weber's legitimacy relates to the oldest meaning of the word legitimacy; namely what is lawful. This legal authority concerns first and foremost an adherence to the law, but also relates to what Weber calls professional competence, and a functioning civil service.[14]

Weber's conceptualization has a strong influence on all other works that came after its conception in 1922, and for good reason. It is however a fairly general conceptualization, that is not able to fully encircle questions of legitimacy in many different cases. An example of this is how Weber solely focuses on legitimate politics as the legitimate domination of subjects. For Weber, this legitimate domination is inherently linked to political stability and is the sole reason for this political stability. But legitimacy is only one of the possible reasons for stability, as there are many factors outside of Weber's conceptualization that could explain why a society is socially or politically stable.[15] Some examples that could be a factor in social stability could be macro-economic fluctuations that are beyond the grasp of leaders of a state, or the presence of unexpected natural disasters, but there are many more besides these examples. Therefore modern examinations of legitimacy tend to be inspired by Weber, and build upon his legacy, but do interpret legitimacy in a different way. One of these interpretations is that of Bruce Gilley from his *The Right to Rule: How States Win and Lose Legitimacy*.

In *The Right to Rule* Gilley explores legitimacy by extrapolating different definitions. When these definitions are deemed incomplete, Gilley examines and expands them until finally coming to a comprehensive definition. By examining Gilley's consecutive definitions, the constraints and limits to legitimacy and the utilization of Gilley's definition of legitimacy as a theoretical framework within this thesis are better understood. His first definition of legitimacy is solely focused on rightfully holding and exercising political power. Rightful in this context is a contentious word, as it raises the question of what 'rightful' actually means. Gilley states that this is 'the moral expectations of a political community' or 'grounded in the common good'.[16] To expand upon this, Gilley emulsifies legitimacy as holding and exercising political power with the more moral dimensions of legitimacy by dividing it into three subtypes; legality, justification and consent. Legality is described as the legitimacy that is based on adherence to the laws and political rules of a society. Justification is linked to the more moral dimension of legitimacy, as a state can justify its rule by adhering to the shared moral consensus of society (if this exists). Because most citizens do not have an opinion on all governmental matters, they provide the state with the consent to rule by voting or paying taxes. This is because all governments are in a way dependent on the recognition of rule by its citizens. Even when this dependency is not as important, the dependency on consent is still implied; this is exemplified by near impossible turnout rates as seen in the elections of for example North Korea.[17]

Based upon the subtypes of legality, justification and consent, Gilley defines legitimacy as: 'a state, meaning the institutions and ideologies of a political system, is more legitimate the more that

[14] Tony Waters, Tony Waters and Dagmar Waters, *Weber's rationalism and modern society: new translations on politics, bureaucracy, and social stratification* (First edition; New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2015) 137–138.
[15] Benno Netelenbos, *Political legitimacy beyond Weber: an analytical framework* (London: Palgrave Macmillan 2016) 1–3.
[16] Gilley, *The right to rule*, 3–5.
[17] Ibid., 7–8.

it holds and exercises political power with legality, justification, and consent from the standpoint of all its citizens.'[18] This definition is – as Gilley duly admits – far from elegant or concise, but legitimacy as a concept does not lend itself to elegance or brevity. What Gilley's definition does do well is that it clearly encapsules the difficult and broad concept of legitimacy in understandable terms, and provides us with a subdivision of three factors that can organize the research of this thesis. By using legality, justification and consent as handles, the case of legitimacy of the British government and the Crimean War of 1853 becomes less abstract and more clearly ordered.

Legitimacy itself has been studied within the context of many different eras. From antiquity to the early modern period, the different shapes of legitimacy have been studied and examined. There exists an extensive body of academic works on legitimacy in relation to Roman Emperors, and how they legitimized their rule. Examples of this are the famous bread and circuses for the plebeians, the construction of public buildings and temples, wars of conquest, and even 'formal' discourse with the gods through tablets and papyri.[19] Roman legitimacy was therefore quite broad and comprised both Gilleys legitimacy as legality as well as justification. As it was an empire there was no formal legitimacy as consent, but as the importance of the bread and games for the plebeians show us, the role of the people of Rome was not non-existent. Within Rome, the Emperor himself was not only legitimized by the gods, he also legitimized Roman laws himself. By accepting laws, the sanctity of the office of Emperor provided legitimacy to them. In this way the Roman Empire was the exact opposite of a constitutional monarchy, where the monarch takes legitimacy from the law, as in the Roman case the laws took legitimacy from the Emperor himself.[20] This shows an interesting dynamic with Gilley's legitimacy as legality, as the Emperor adhered to political rules of society, but was not only legitimized by adhering to the law, he legitimized the law itself.

So, there are many examples of what a good Roman Emperor was expected to do. In this way, these acts were the way Roman Emperors legitimized their rule, and not fulfilling these expectations was often a reason for usurpation. The many usurpers of the late Roman empire tried to legitimize their rule as legitimate in relation to the Emperor on the throne. An example of how this was done was by projecting military power, and many of the usurpers were put forward as Emperor by their own legions. In general, the loyalty of the Roman armies was a very important base for legitimate rule in the Roman empire.[21] As the personal characteristics of these usurpers often played a large role in the support of the armies, the usurper's legitimacy was most clearly based on Weber's charismatic *Herrschaft*.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, Europe changed significantly, and the concept of legitimacy changed as well. Examples of legitimacy in the medieval era can be found in *Dynastic Change: Legitimacy and Gender in Medieval and Early Modern Monarchy*. This bundle of essays discusses amongst other topics, hereditary kingships, the role of female heiresses and their position,

[18] Ibid., 11.
[19] Anne Kolb ed., *Herrschaftsstrukturen und Herrschaftspraxis: Konzepte, Prinzipien und Startegien der Administration im römischen Kaiserreich: Akten der Tagung an der Universität Zürich, 18.-20.10.2004* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag 2006) 58;
Elizabeth A. Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law in the Roman World: Tabulae in Roman Belief and Practice* (Cambridge University Press 2004) 1.
[20] Meyer, *Legitimacy and Law in the Roman World*, 295–296.
[21] Adrastos Omissi, *Emperors and usurpers in the later Roman Empire: Civil War, panegyric, and the construction of legitimacy*. Oxford studies in Byzantium (First edition; Oxford, United Kingdom ; New York, NY: Oxford University Press 2018) 3–4.

and the role of constitutions and familial traditions in various medieval European states.[22] In the European middle ages legitimacy was most strongly based on Weber's traditional *Herrschaft*, kings were legitimized by being a part of a dynasty that had a strong tradition of rule. When these dynasties weakened, elections were often seen as a means to consolidate the power of the dynasty. But most often rule was legitimized by referring to the rulers the monarch descended from. Often there was some cognitive dissonance present, Henry VII of England did not present himself as a king from a new dynasty – namely the Tudor's – but presented himself as a legitimate continuation of the house of Lancaster, even if this was not objectively true.[23] Other bundles essentially do the same thing and examine different historical case studies of legitimacy in medieval Europe. In these bundles the focus lies again on continuation and on dynasty, as most medieval states were governed by hereditary kingships. Some of these essays however also put a stronger emphasis on the legal aspect of legitimacy, where the relationships between these kingships and legal rule is explored. When kings would diverge too far from the legal framework, their rule could be delegitimized. Besides this, the role of the church, of cities and royal entourages are discussed. All of these could play a role in the legitimization of rule in the middle ages.[24] Therefore, legitimacy in the middle ages was most strongly based upon Gilley's legality, as the adherence to the political rules of society, namely dynastical succession, was deemed most important.

There is a plethora of historical case studies that discuss early modern legitimacy. For example, legitimacy in early modern Russia was based on piety, where the Tsar was seen as the shepherd leading his people to salvation. The Emperor's legitimacy was based upon the shared moral values encapsuled in the Orthodox Christian faith, and therefore relate to Gilley's legitimacy as justification. Moreover, the Tsar was tasked with protecting his people and rendering fair justice, and was supported in this task by the bishops and boyars (the Russian nobility), who ensured that the Tsar remained on this righteous path. From this we can also infer that straying from this path could diminish the legitimacy of the Tsar, or could at least complicate it.[25] In early modern Russia legality was an important factor of legitimacy, but consent was as well. Contrary to the case of modern democracies, this consent did not come from the people, it came from the nobility and the clergy. Moreover, as religion played a large role, justification as legitimacy is also relevant, as religion has often strongly influenced the morality of societies. In early medieval North Africa legitimacy was based upon the Khaldunian cycle – named after the famed Arab philosopher and historian Ibn Khaldun – which theorized that rural communities that based their society upon familial and other strong social bonds were able to fight more fiercely than the armies of cities. They were therefore able to overthrow the armies of city states that did not possess these strong bonds. When these rural conquerors settled and subsequently lost the bonds that made them able to overthrow the city states, they themselves became suspect to rural invaders and were often ousted by rural conquerors after three generations. In early modern Morocco, this Khaldunian cycle of conquering and being conquered was broken by the ruling 'Alawi dynasty who based their legitimacy on a specific strand of Islam called sharifianism. They instilled a new political creed based on this strand in the population by means of religious presentations, panegyric literature and religious ceremonies that were linked to sharifianism and the ruling family. The 'Alawi dynasty was able to break the Khaldunian cycle in

[22] Ana Maria Seabra de Almeida Rodrigues, Manuela Santos Silva and Jonathan Spangler ed., *Dynastic Change: Legitimacy and Gender in Medieval and Early Modern Monarchy*. Themes in medieval and early modern history (New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group 2020).
[23] Ibid., 1–3.
[24] Isabel Alfonso Antón and Hugh Kennedy Escalona, Julio, *Building legitimacy: political discourses and forms of legitimacy in medieval societies* (Leiden; Boston: Brill 2004) ix–xvi.
[25] Nancy Shields Kollmann, 'Representing Legitimacy in Early Modern Russia', *The Russian Review* 76 (2017) 7–21, 7–8.

this way and ruled for almost 350 years.[26] The example of the 'Alawi dynasty shows that sometimes ruling families have to adapt and shape how legitimacy works if the old legitimizing factors, in this case military power, did not suffice anymore. By doing so the 'Alawi's created their own legitimacy as legality, as they shaped the political rules of society to comprise sharifianism to legitimize their own rule.

In the Ottoman empire during the early modern period the Sultans legitimized their rule first and foremost by eliminating other prospects to the throne. Because of this, Ottoman successional politics have often been labelled as 'succession of the fittest'. Upon the death of a Sultan, and often even before it, potential successors openly fought for the throne. By eliminating the other rivals, the victor would be the only legitimate Sultan. Only in the nineteenth century the practice of primogeniture was introduced in the Ottoman empire, whereby the firstborn son would always become the new Sultan. By doing this, the Ottomans shifted the frame of legitimacy like the Moroccan 'Alawi's had done, but instead of using Islam, they codified the process by making the firstborn the Sultan.[27] So the Ottomans too shaped the political rules of their society to their liking, but this was only done after many centuries of infighting.

From all these works it becomes apparent that legitimizing factors differ throughout time and are specific to different places as well, but do share some similarities. Roman legitimacy was focused on public works, military expansion and religion, while medieval legitimacy focused more on tradition and religion. While legitimacy has always been a diverse concept, it became more diverse in the early modern period, as the ways of government became more diverse and diverged from the most prevalent form of government of the middle ages; hereditary kingships. In early modern Russia the Tsars mostly used religion to legitimize their rule, and were supported by the bishops and boyars that 'guided' them in this task. Similarly, the Moroccan 'Alawi's used Islam as a means to legitimize their rule, by linking the specific Islamic strand of sharifanism to the ruling family by means of rituals, literature and ceremony. The Ottomans had a long tradition of familial infighting to gain legitimacy, but later on changed this to a more traditional western-European approach to dynastical succession; primogeniture. These are but some examples of how legitimacy differs throughout different times and places and the different ways that ruling dynasties had to legitimize their rule.

Most relevant to this thesis is legitimacy in early modern England, as this predated and heavily influenced the situation concerning legitimacy in Britain in the nineteenth century. In the seventeenth century Britain was a society in transition, power seeped from the monarchy to Parliament as both were competing for power in an escalating manner. Questions of legitimacy, namely who was *the* legitimate ruling faction came to the forefront in the early seventeenth century. Both sides of the conflict framed themselves positively and the opposing faction negatively. For example, to parliamentarians the monarchists were tyrannical power mongers, and the parliamentarians themselves were liberty loving patriots. But the British Parliament was declining in relevance in the seventeenth century, which was another factor that exasperated the conflict.[28]

At the start of the century it seemed that questions of legitimacy would for the first time in a long time be less important. James I, the new King, was a man, at thirty-seven years old was an adult, and already had two male sons. It had been fifty-six years since England had an adult male King, as

[26] Stephen Cory, 'Breaking the Khaldunian cycle? : the rise of sharifianism as the basis for political legitimacy in early modern Morocco', *The journal of North African studies* 13 (2008) 377–394, 377–378.
[27] H. Erdem Çıpa, *The making of Selim: succession, legitimacy, and memory in the early modern Ottoman world* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2017) 29–30.
[28] Robert Zaller, *The discourse of legitimacy in early modern England* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press 2007) 3–4.

King Edward VI (1547–53) had been ten years old when he ascended the throne, and the Queens Mary I (1553–58) and Elizabeth I (1558–1603) were female. This absence of questions of legitimacy soon disappeared; James favoured an absolutist model of monarchy, and saw himself as anointed by god and being above the courts, councils and most importantly, Parliament. Moreover, James saw Parliament as something that was hard to reconcile with a monarchy and something that he was obliged to put up with. He also wanted to exercise judicial powers, like medieval Kings had done, which was something Parliament saw as a dangerous development. Furthermore, James I had been James VI of Scotland before he became King of both countries and strongly favoured a union between the two. This was opposed by Parliament.[29] For Parliament, the King was subject to the law, not above it. In this way this became a conflict relating to legitimacy as legality, as the question became who had the primacy according to the law. After the death of James, his son Charles I became King, and the conflict between monarch and Parliament did not subside. On the contrary, it worsened. After some fifteen years of squabbling back and forth between the King and Parliament the conflict reached the boiling point in the early 1640's. In 1642 both royalists and parliamentarians took up arms, beginning what would later become known as the English Civil War (1642-1651). The nature of kingship in England and the role of Parliament had become irreconcilable subjects and led to outright war. Essentially these are questions of legitimacy, or who was legitimized to rule in what way. On the background of these conflicts between King and Parliament lay religious cleavages as well; as elsewhere in Europe protestant and Catholic forces battled for power England was not exempt. Charles' wife Henrietta Maria was Catholic, and he had increasingly flirted with converting to Catholicism, while Parliament underlined their 'holy' and protestant nature and their appointment by god. When Charles called an alternative Parliament in Oxford in 1644, several parliamentarians saw this 'Anti-Parliament' as 'hellish' and Charles himself as the antichrist. The legitimacy, the protection of the rule of law, of freedom, and essentially, of religion was now seen as resting solely in the hands of Parliament.[30] Like in early modern Russia, Morocco and the Ottoman Empire, religion was strongly linked to questions of legitimacy in seventeenth-century England. In this way, Gilley's legitimacy as justification was a topic of discussion. It became a question of who was 'anointed by god'; Parliament or the King. But other than these aforementioned other cases, the role of Parliament in England was unique, as this simply was not present in the other cases. Parliament and the King essentially fought over what were to be the political rules of society, as the King wanted English society to be something close to an absolute monarchy, while Parliament saw it as something closer to a constitutional monarchy.

This early seventeenth-century crisis of legitimacy would not be resolved before the end of the century. While the British case of legitimacy is somewhat unique because of the role of Parliament, other monarchies had similar struggles with their respective Parliaments, but were able to deal with them more decisively. An example of this are the French kings of the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-centuries. Louis XIII of France held the last meeting of the Estates General before the French Revolution and therefore did what James I and Charles I of England could not; he effectively abolished France's Parliament. To counteract this apparent diminishing of legitimacy – as in England, the French Estates were often used to legitimize monarchical rule – a royally sponsored newspaper was set up.[31] In this way the French kings used propaganda to legitimize their rule as a substitute to Parliament, and Louis' son Louis XIV would do the same as his father. Louis XIV reigned for an extraordinarily long period of time, he was king from 1643 until 1715, and oversaw the further

[29] Ibid., 563–565.
[30] Ibid., 704–706.
[31] Joseph Klaits, *Printed Propaganda under Louis XIV: Absolute Monarchy and Public Opinion:* (Princeton University Press 2015) 6–7.

centralization of the French state. He was seen as *the* absolute monarch, he was given the right to rule by god, and by grace of his god given power France was sovereign. The ambitions of the nobility and the Catholic church had challenged monarchical sovereignty and absolutism was used as a measure to counter these forces.[32] But even if his power seemed unbridled with the absence of the Estates General, and the nobility and church effectively side-lined, even Louis XIV had to legitimize his rule. Besides the aforementioned propaganda, the safeguarding of the territorial borders of France was a means for legitimization for the French King. These were mostly done by waging wars of expansion, of which the war with and annexation of the Duchy of Lorraine in 1670 is an example.[33] The waging of these wars in itself could also be a way to legitimize ruling, as victories solidified his almost deified status and could be celebrated with paintings, festivals and other spectacles to further underline the justification of his kingship.[34] Like the 'Alawi's in Morocco, Louis XIV shifted legitimacy, by abolishing the Estates General and supplanting it by using propaganda. In essence he operated within Gilley's legitimacy as legality, by changing the political rules of society.

While both the French and English kings had to legitimize their rule, the ways in which they had to do this were very different. The situation of Charles II was diametrically opposed to that of Louis XIV, as his father King Charles I had been executed in 1649. Charles I had mismanaged several difficult factors in seventeenth-century Britain, like religious pluralism and the role of Parliament in the rule of England. This led to the English Civil War, the execution of Charles I and to the rule of Oliver Cromwell up until 1658. After Cromwell's death, a power vacuum was left and Charles II was reinstated as monarch to fill it.[35] Both the French and English kings were authoritarian in their nature and believed in the divine right of their rule, but only in England this was not just accepted as fact. Charles I had to be pressured to explain his policies to Parliament, and in the end reluctantly did so. But it proved to be too little, too late. After literally fighting the English and Scottish Parliaments in war and losing, Charles I was imprisoned and later executed for high treason.[36] Legitimacy in relation to these two cases therefore also differs. Both would have to legitimize their actions, plans and wars to a certain extent, but the English King had to deal with a relatively powerful Parliament while the French Kings had effectively abolished their own Parliament. The English Parliament proved to be so powerful that the English King ended up being executed by it.

After the early modern period legitimacy evolved again. First, the international order wherein nineteenth century Britain had to navigate was highly influenced by the French revolution, the Napoleonic wars, and subsequently the Vienna settlement. The domestic and international dimensions of legitimacy were becoming increasingly intertwined after the congress of Vienna (1814-1815). One of the reasons for this increased interconnectedness was democratic legitimacy, as democratic states began to see other democracies as legitimate. Moreover, democracies derive their legitimacy from the people, and in this way, the people of one country had influence on the perception of legitimacy in another. This is Gilley's legitimacy as consent, as governments were starting to rule by 'grace of the people', even if the 'people' in this case was a small group of white and wealthy men of a certain class. The coming of democratic states also created a divide between

[32] Andrew Mansfield, *Ideas of monarchical reform: Fenelon, Jacobitism and the political works of the Chevalier Ramsay* (Baltimore, Maryland: Project Muse 2017) 105–106.
[33] P. McCluskey, 'From Regime Change to Reunion: Louis XIV's Quest for Legitimacy in Lorraine, 1670-97', *The English Historical Review* CXXVI (2011) 1386–1407, 1386.
[34] Darryl Dee, *Expansion and Crisis in Louis XIV's France: Franche-Comté and Absolute Monarchy, 1674-1715* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2012) 3.
[35] Ann Hughes, *The causes of the English Civil War*. British history in perspective (Basingstoke: Palgrave 2001) 149.
[36] Ibid., 151.

European states; where the vast majority had been autocratic monarchies, the European political landscape was now more diverse.[37] Because of these changes in forms of government, the question of legitimacy and where it was derived from also rose to the forefront. Talleyrand, the French foreign minister during the congress put forth the legitimacy of governments as a safeguard for the nation state and saw legitimacy as a domestic affair.[38] But the most important aim of the Congress of Vienna was the prevention of another large scale European conflict like the Napoleonic wars. Moreover, the congress put forth the question of what the great powers deemed acceptable. From Vienna onwards, great powers like Britain would have to be more conscious of what was acceptable in international society, as the concept of legitimacy was enlarged from mostly domestic, to also international in nature.[39]

This does not mean that domestic legitimacy lost its relevance. Domestic politics in nineteenth century Britain were somewhat opaque, as it was not always as clear who had the primacy between the King and Parliament. Only in 1885 would it officially be stated that Parliament was the highest authority in the country, while Parliament had officially already existed from 1706 onwards and had unofficially existed long before that.[40] The Britain of the mid 1850's was, like almost every other European state, heavily influenced by the revolutions of 1848. All over Europe riots broke out, republics were established, constitutions were drafted and new nations were declared. Britain escaped most of the revolutionary elements, and as happened often in British politics, change was more evolutionary than revolutionary. The continental revolutions led to a surge in popularity for reformist candidates, who wanted to expand the electorate to provide a more solid base for rule, to prevent revolutionary outbreak as seen in the rest of Europe, and saw political exclusion as degrading.[41] Still it took until 1867 before the electorate was expanded to every man who paid more than 10 pounds rent a year. This implies that the voice of the 'people', in this case middle and working class men who could not yet vote, was not deemed too important by the British government. But this is not completely true either, as Lord John Russell, then prime minister spoke in Parliament: '[that public opinion had] fully as much influence as it ought to have on the votes and transactions of members of this house'. Russell was more in favour of reform than many of his cabinet ministers, and emphasised the importance of public opinion while also not overstating it.[42] Therefore, Gilley's legitimacy as consent did not entail democratic consent by the people as we see it nowadays, the consent came from a much smaller group of men that were allowed to vote. However, the people as a broader group, this time including lower and middle class men were not completely ignored as unrest was seen as detrimental to stability in Britain. The people therefore lent consent to the government, but not in a democratic way. The British government was operating within a fine line of acknowledging something had to change to prevent outright revolution and the want to adhere to traditional hierarchical structures. Legitimacy in the nineteenth century was therefore in part derived from the approval of the public, but still mainly rested on the old traditional hierarchy, in which a small upper class was able to rule.

[37] Clark, *Legitimacy in international society*, 85–86.
[38] Ibid., 92–93.
[39] Ibid., 101–102.
[40] Matthew Flinders e.a. ed., *The Oxford Handbook of British Politics* (Oxford University Press 2009) 222.
[41] Robert Saunders, *Democracy and the vote in British politics, 1848-1867 the making of the second Reform Act* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate 2011) 27–34.
[42] Ibid., 47.

Legitimacy and war

Like with the case of Louis XIV, the legitimacy of ruling actors is in many other cases related to war as well. If these wars were seen as 'just' or legitimate has been a topic of discussion since the early modern period. War itself has been a common occurrence ever since the dawn of civilization. The first properly documented war took place in Megiddo in modern day Palestine 1469 B.C.E. between the Egyptians and the Canaanites who came to challenge the Egyptians' authority.[43] Based on archaeological evidence, war had been a part of human civilization even before the battle of Megiddo, and it has been a feature of human existence in the many millennia after it. The ways to wage war have changed of course, as have the rules of war, and most important to this thesis, the thoughts on war. Hugo Grotius was one of the first to write on international law, and by extension, on war and subsequently, the legitimacy of war. His *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* raised questions like: what is war, when is it lawful to wage war, and who should be able to wage war? In this same work Grotius wrote: 'War is undertaken for the Sake of Peace, and there is no Controversy from whence War may not arise', outlining that a just war is waged for the sake of peace and that there are many reasons for the waging of war.[44] Heavily influenced by life in the warring Dutch Republic of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Grotius attempted to examine the legitimacy of waging war. He was clearly influenced by the Dutch trade with the East-Indies and the war with the Spanish oppressors.[45] In another one of his famous works, *De Jure Pradae* (On the Law of Prize and Booty in Dutch), Grotius set out to more explicitly construct theories that justified the ways of warfare and privateering of the Dutch East India Company (V.O.C.) for which he worked. Grotius' works became the foundation of modern International Law, and subsequently a heavy influence on the field of International Relations.[46] Grotius attempted to codify legitimacy as legality, as he was aiming to set rules (or laws) for waging war, but as he was influenced by his time the moral dimensions of legitimacy remain relevant as well. Grotius was very inconsistent in his work, as he often praised certain actions – often conducted by the V.O.C. – while rejecting these same actions in other cases. Moreover, Grotius saw slavery and political absolutism as morally justifiable, which are standpoints unacceptable to the modern reader but normal to the intellectual of his time. In this way Grotius' justification of what was legitimate was influenced by the morality of his time.[47]

Throughout history, the waging of successful wars could be a legitimizing factor, while losing wars could delegitimize rule as well. Most works on legitimate warfare and legitimizing wars are focused on the modern era. One factor important to the legitimization of war in the present day is the role of the media in the legitimizing of modern armed conflicts. It has become increasingly important to provide legitimacy for going to war, and the media not only plays an important role in legitimizing the conflict, but also in the conflict itself; as the media plays a significant role in the outcome of wars as well. For example, the (state) media can denote victory in a war by framing the narrative, even when victory has not been achieved.[48] As we have seen in the case of Louis XIV and

[43] Eric H. Cline, *The battles of Armageddon: Megiddo and the Jezreel Valley from the Bronze Age to the Nuclear Age* (Mich: University of Michigan Press 2002) 16–17.
[44] Hugo Grotius and Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*. Natural law and enlightenment classics (Indianapolis, Ind: Liberty Fund 2005) 134.
[45] Grotius and Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*.
[46] Martine Julia Van Ittersum and Hugo Grotius, *Profit and principle: Hugo Grotius, natural rights theories and the rise of Dutch power in the East Indies, 1595-1615*. Brill's studies in intellectual history v. 139 (Leiden; Boston: Brill 2006) xix.
[47] Larry May ed., *The Cambridge Handbook of the Just War* (Cambridge University Press 2018) 33–34.
[48] Milena Michalski and James Gow, *War, image and legitimacy: viewing contemporary conflict*. Contemporary security studies 47 (London ; New York: Routledge 2007) 1–10.

his propaganda, this role of the media is not new, but the relative power it wields has grown significantly. Besides the role in the media, the legitimacy of war itself has changed in modern society. With increasing value put on the lives of soldiers and civilians, actors seem more reluctant to go to war. Every casualty, civilian or soldier, is increasingly being seen as a great tragedy, where this had been less the case in history.[49] The legitimacy of war is implicitly present in almost all works on specific wars. Almost all of them will emphasise the legitimacy of that war by discussing the causes, and in the case of more modern wars, the reaction in society. However, few articles or books on specific wars will name the word legitimacy itself. That is why the examination of the Crimean war through a lens of legitimacy can be useful. As legitimacy and the perception of legitimacy are often only implicitly discussed, to explicitly examine it in the context of a nineteenth century conflict that still relates to modern conflicts, the causes and intricacies of these modern conflicts can be better understood.

Legitimacy in democracies

Historical legitimacy has followed different interpretations, and all of them can be fitted within Gilley's legitimacy as legality, justification and consent. In modern times this is not different. Like throughout history, which of Gilley's three aspects of legitimacy is most important varies between different states and forms of government. In democracies legitimacy relates to Parliament of the people as a larger whole. There are several factors that are generally considered to be important to democracy and subsequently, the legitimacy of democratically elected rulers. These are, among others, upholding the rule of law, the protection of minority groups and a general respect for human rights. However, the most important factor by far is of course the presence of free elections. These elections are the ultimate legitimizing factor in democracies and present the ultimate mandate for the ruling to rule over the ruled. The goal of politicians is to create support, to be voted into office again and thereby solidifying legitimacy. Nowadays a large proportion of the adult populace can vote in modern democracies, but this share of voters was much smaller in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Because this group was both smaller and closer to the ruling elite – people went to the same schools, clubs etc. – legitimacy was mostly derived from positive personal characteristics. For example, the charisma and rhetorical abilities of politicians were important to persuade the elite voting class of their suitability for office.[50] Weber's charismatic *Herrschaft* is therefore most closely related to the British political system of the 1800's. This elitist early stage of democracy is one that is present in the Britain of the mid 1800's, and its relationship to legitimacy is therefore different than in modern democracies.

Britain, the Crimean War and Legitimacy

With legitimacy as a concept properly introduced and examined, the case of Britain, the Crimean War and legitimacy can be explored. First the domestic legitimacy will be researched within the context of Britain and the Crimean War, after which examples from newspapers and Parliamentary debates will be put forth. The newspapers used in this thesis are *The Morning Chronicle* and *The Examiner*, both

[49] Martin Shaw, 'Risk-transfer Militarism, Small Massacres and the Historic Legitimacy of War', *International Relations* 16 (2002) 343–359, 343.
[50] Jerzy J. Wiatr, *Political leadership between democracy and authoritarianism: comparative and historical perspectives* (Opladen Berlin Toronto: Verlag Barbara Budrich 2022) 42–43.

London based newspapers. *The Morning Chronicle*, which I abbreviate as *The Chronicle*, was founded in 1770 and ran until 1862. Originally a Whig newspaper, through the years it fluctuated in political alignment, but can overall be characterised as a fairly progressive paper. Famous authors that wrote for *The Chronicle* are John Stuart Mill, and Charles Dickens, who wrote on Parliament and published short stories under the pseudonym Boz. In 1848 *The Chronicle* hired the first female reporter in Eliza Lynn Linton and published a series of reports on the situation of the poor in England.[51] *The Examiner* was a similar newspaper that was seen as an important radical voice in the time of the Crimean War. Prominent writers like Lord Byron and Charles Dickens had written for *The Examiner*.[52] Alongside examples from these two newspapers, I will use secondary sources on the reporting of *The Times*, one of the leading and most influential papers of the time. *The Times* has already been extensively examined for its prominent role in the Crimean War, and examining a source this well used again will be a redundant exercise. The reporting of *The Chronicle* and *The Examiner* serve as examples of the sentiments expressed on the Crimean War, and shows the influence of the press on the perception of the War, but also on the course of the War itself. The articles of *The Examiner* and *The Chronicle* also show how the sentiments on the War in the press changed, and how their reporting influenced the British public, and later even the British government.

The Crimean War was reported on in Britain to an unprecedented degree. Former wars had been described by poets, writers and historians, but this was often done some time after the wars had taken place. The Crimean War was reported on in real time, by an extensive range of journalists from various newspapers. The increased effects that these newspapers had on the course of the War and on the perception of the War was noted by Victorian contemporaries as well. In a letter to his family, Captain George Fredrick Dallas put forth various interesting points on the role of the media and legitimacy. Dallas complained to his family on the mismanagement of the British army in Crimea; he states how the material is subpar, how the army is managed in a disorganized way, and called the British army: 'the worst clad, worst fed, worst housed Army that ever was read of'. To Dallas the British army was not only badly clothed, fed and housed, but more importantly, it was the worst clothed, fed and housed army *that was ever read of*. By using these words, Dallas implied the importance of the printed media in relation to war, as a disorganised army in itself is disadvantageous, but a disorganised army as described in the newspapers has larger ramifications. These potential ramifications were also discussed in a more concrete manner earlier in Dallas' letter. He specifically stated that Lord Raglan – who was the British Commander in Chief – must have read *The Times* when he sent reinforcements to Balaklava. There were several editorial pieces in *The Times* that criticized how the British army was overworked, ill-clothed and ill-fed. Dallas stated that writing on the War specifically influenced the War itself.[53]

In the years and months before the conflict had escalated into a full scale war, the possibility of war was discussed in the papers as well. As foreign dispatches of papers discussed what happened in the respective countries on which they were reporting, many of them discussed the possible ramifications of war for Britain, and if it was desirable to go to war. An example of this is in *The Morning Chronicle* of June 20th 1853, a few months before the outbreak of the War. The correspondents first discussed how Russia and the Ottomans were preparing for war, and were

[51] Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, *Dictionary of nineteenth-century journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: Academia Press British Library 2009) 426.
[52] University of British Columbia, R. Norman Colbeck and Tirthankar Bose ed., *A bookman's catalogue: the Norman Colbeck collection of nineteenth-century and Edwardian poetry and belles lettres in the Special Collections of the University of British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 1987) 426.
[53] Stefanie Markovits, 'Rushing Into Print: "Participatory Journalism" During the Crimean War', *Victorian Studies* 50 (2008) 559–586, 1–3 .

clearly siding with the Ottomans. This is exemplified in a passage written by the unnamed correspondent to Prussia in Berlin:

> War is to deeply be deplored, and to be avoided by every earthly means short of destruction of British interests, so closely interwoven with the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. But war at present would be preferable to war six months or a year hence, when Russia will have had time to make necessary preparations on the Danube, and may commence invasion under auspices a hundred times more favourable than at present; above all, if she would succeed in her efforts to weaken the Anglo-French alliance.[54]

This small passage in the paper is filled with references to the potential desirability of the British going to war, and by extension, of the legitimacy of warfare. The author started off with denouncing the desirability of war, but immediately went on to name circumstances in which the British going to war would be advantageous. 'The destruction of British interests' is a factor that directly relates to the balance of power in eastern Europe. The British and Russian Empires were direct rivals in the region, and with Ottoman presence diminishing, the British had a strong stake in supporting the Ottomans to counter Russian expansionist tendencies.[55] Moreover, the correspondent also described a more militaristic, logistical angle, as going to war sooner rather than later would be beneficial for the British. As the correspondent argued, giving the Russians more time to arm themselves could give the British a more formidable potential foe in the future. Going to war before the potential enemy has time to build up their forces is seen by the correspondent as a legitimate reason for war, or at the very least an important factor to keep in mind.

War between the Ottomans and Russia was declared on October 4th 1853. Britain and France would join the War in March of the next year, but the role of the British and the French in the conflict before they joined was discussed in the papers as well.[56] In *The Examiner* of December 17th the for the Ottomans disastrous battle of Sinope was discussed. First it was stated that the British have sustained no disgrace yet, and that the failure to help the Ottomans had 'only deserted a friend in the hour of extremity' so far, but it went on to state that the massacre at Sinope was in some way caused by the policies of the British government. The *Examiner* stated that they were told by correspondents of *The Times* that Turkish officials were advised by the British Foreign Minister to not send their fleet to the Black Sea.[57] At Sinope, several Ottoman warships were attacked by a superior, more numerous Russian fleet and sunk within a couple of hours. The British Cabinet under Lord Aberdeen had been unwilling to go to war and had previously ignored public pressure, mainly expressed in *The Times*, to curb the Russian expansion. But now, especially because the British and French fleet had been inactively anchored close to Sinope, it was impossible for the Cabinet to refrain from joining the fight on the Ottoman side.[58]

The Examiner expressed these same sentiments rather scathingly:

> 'Such then are the effects of the "policy of peace" persevered in by the Government in opposition to the wishes of the nation at large, and unsupported by any party in the country, except the so-called "party of peace".'[59]

In *The Examiner* the wishes of the nation at large were specifically named. Public opinion played an increasingly large role in the Crimean War, as Russophobic sentiments had steadily built up in Britain and essentially forced the Cabinet to go to war after the outbreak of public outrage concerning the

[54] Correspondent to Berlin, 'The Morning Chronicle' (London 20 June 1853), section Prussia,.
[55] Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 6.
[56] Ibid., 15.
[57] 'The Disaster at Sinope', *The Examiner* (London 17 December 1853), section The Political Examiner,.
[58] Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 17.
[59] 'The Disaster at Sinope'.

debacle at Sinope. This outrage was mostly channelled through the papers, and particularly through *The Times*.[60] Newspapers in general had become the main outlet for public (political) opinion, and had become more current and accurate in describing foreign affairs through the recent inventions of foreign correspondents and the telegraph. *The Times* was the most influential newspaper during the Crimean War. Their accurate and speedy reports on events during the War were an important reason for this influence; they employed the first ever war correspondent in William Howard Russell. Russell's reports were supported with letters of soldiers on the front and letters of civilians that discussed the War.[61] In this way public opinion had become more important than it had ever been. Pressure and outrage from the public, channelled through the papers, had so much influence that it had driven the Cabinet into a war it had at first been very reluctant to wage. Gilley's legitimacy as consent is linked to this trend; the British government had public opinion to take into account to safeguard its own position as the consent given by the public was taken into question in the case of inaction. Not going to war after the debacle of Sinope would mean losing legitimacy for Lord Aberdeen's Government, but waging the War itself would prove to be very relevant to the legitimacy of the Aberdeen Government as well.

The British army at the beginning of the Crimean War was outdated and complicated when compared to their continental allies and to Russia. The British military consisted completely of hired soldiers, as opposed to having a system of conscription that was common in Europe. Moreover, the British army, its numbers of troops and weapons was regulated and extensively discussed in Parliament. Alongside an outdated, feudalistic system in which officers were of aristocratic descent, regardless of merit, the excruciatingly detailed discussions in Parliament meant that the British army was relatively disorganized. There was no sole minister responsible for war, the different aspects of the War like logistics and finances were handled by different ministries and Lord Aberdeen proved to be too weak to lead a country at war.[62] As Britain had not been at war since the Napoleonic Wars, Lord Raglan, the British Commander in Chief, only had experience gained in colonial wars which were fundamentally different than the large scale European conflict that was the Crimean War.[63] All these factors combined led to a chaotic begin of the War, in which the British troops were unprepared for the battles in Crimea. This too was discussed extensively in the papers and letters, of which the letter of Captain Dallas is a prime example.

In mid-nineteenth century Britain, the free press was seen as a force for good and as something that gave a state more resources and purpose. Moreover, the free press and democracy present in England were often contrasted to the absolute and tyrannical form of government of the Russian enemy. This narrative was especially put forth in the press. In *The Times* of November 5th 1855 it was stated that: 'We do not worship our Sovereigns as demi-gods […] We are intelligent and self-respecting races, and require to have our interest and sympathy fed and sustained by constant participation in the history and even the conduct of war'. The willingness and need for the people to have opinions on the War and to discuss its events as they unfolded are deemed very important to the writers of *The Times*. It must be said that it is logical for a newspaper that bases their popularity on reporting on the War to state that its reporting is important. But there is definitely truth to this

[60] Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 17–18.
[61] Markovits, 'Rushing Into Print', 559–563.
[62] Olive Anderson, *A Liberal State at War: English Politics and Economics During the Crimean War* (New York: St. Martin's Press 1967) 34.
[63] Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 81–82.

statement, *The Times* were widely read, and had a daily print order of 61000 in 1855, a very high number for the time.[64]

The Russian Emperor was depicted as an autocratic tyrant in the press, while the Ottoman Sultan, who was in many ways just as autocratic as the Russian Emperor was seen as an exponent of tolerance and as a victim of Russian aggression.[65] This standpoint was pushed in the press to an extent that it clashed with other viewpoints often expressed in the press. One of these viewpoints concerned the fate of the Greeks. The English had played a significant role in the Greek War of Independence of 1821, providing funding and intervening on the Greek side against the Ottomans. Within this context, the Greeks were the suppressed party, while the Ottomans had been the tyrannical oppressor.[66] So when the Greeks mounted further insurrections towards Ottoman territories where Greek minorities were present in 1854, this presented a problem for commentators. In *The Morning Chronicle* of 14 March 1854, these Greek insurrections were summarized as being a 'a hostile operation on the rear of Turkey [that] is most injurious to the cause of Europe and of liberty'. To the Greeks these insurrections were perceived as the liberation of Greeks still living under Ottoman rule, but to the English commentators this was detrimental to the war effort. Furthermore, the commentator in *The Chronicle* stated that if the Greeks kept on with their insurrection they would enable the Russians to win the war. In that case, they would: 'be left to the grinding tyranny of the Muscovite'.[67] So the Crimean War was simultaneously framed as a conflict against tyranny, while other conflicts against tyranny, like the Greek insurrections, were at the same time seen as detrimental to the furthering of liberty. This shows us how certain developments can be framed in the press, to push the narrative advantageous to the writer of the article. It also shows how legitimacy as a concept can be stretched, as the tyranny of the Russian Tsar was seen as illegitimate, while the similar autocratic rule of the Sultan was not.

The framing in the papers of the conflict as a battle against Russian tyranny shows a strong appreciation in British society for legitimacy as consent. The commentators in the newspapers, who admittedly often represented a relatively small and elitist part of society, emphasize Britain's democracy, its Parliament and the relatively marginal role of Queen Victoria compared to the Russian Tsar. In the eyes of the commentators, the government governs by consent of the people, and when this governing was deemed insufficient, this was strongly criticized. This often led to a change in public opinion. Where the public was hopeful at first for a good outcome, this changed quickly after the press published its many critical pieces. The perception of legitimate rule related to consent was a direct consequence of the crisis of legitimacy in the seventeenth century in Britain discussed earlier in this thesis. As Parliament emerged victorious, and the role of the monarch in Britain became more marginal, legitimacy as consent had become a staple of English political thought by the nineteenth century. Parliament had won the battle with the 'tyrannical' absolutist Charles I in the seventeenth century, and this victory had remained in the British political consciousness in the nineteenth century. This was contrasted with how legitimacy functioned in Russia and the Ottoman Empire, even if the difference was only acknowledged in relation to Russia. Like in the early modern period, the legitimacy of the Tsar in the nineteenth century was still vested in Christian piety, but more importantly, was still largely unquestioned by the Russian people. A revolutionary movement in Russia that questioned religion, the absolute power of the Tsar, the plight of the Russian serfs, and that championed democratic ideals would arise around 1856, the year the Crimean War came to an

[64] Olive Anderson, *A Liberal State at War: English Politics and Economics During the Crimean War*, 70–71.
[65] Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 17.
[66] Spiridoula Demetriou, 'Greece's Byron', in: Clara Tuite ed., *Byron in Context* (Cambridge University Press 2019) 77–85, 77.
[67] 'The Greek Insurrection', *The Morning Chronicle* (London 14 March 1855).

end.[68] Legitimacy as consent was therefore not yet an important factor in Russia during the Crimean War, as legitimacy was still mostly derived from traditional elements such as absolute Tsarist power and the Orthodox church.

As the War went on, the British lacklustre start was not improved upon. In the fall of 1854 a huge storm ravaged the French and British troops that had been camped out in tents, as opposed to their Russian counterparts that stayed in stone houses in Sevastopol. Many ships sunk before the coast of Balaklava as well, carrying supplies, munition and clothing. As Lord Raglan had not expected a long conflict in Crimea, the British supply system was not equipped to supply the British troops on a large scale for a prolonged period of time. There were 20000 British troops present in Crimea in December 1854. Roughly a month later there were only 13000 left, with 5000 more hospitalized and unable to fight.[69] The deplorable state of the British army became a hot topic in the press. In *The Examiner* of December 16th 1854 the language used was still cautious, but does state that the army relied too much on the traditions that came from old wars, and that mistakes were made, even if these mistakes were somewhat to be expected. In an article that filled the full front page of *The Examiner*, the editor examined the lack of experience and reinforcements in Crimea, and concluded that mistakes were made. Moreover, it was concluded that the statistics provided by the government on numbers of soldiers and provisions did not add up.[70]

Where the December 16th edition of *The Examiner* was critical, but fairly mild in its wording, the December 30th edition is much more sharply written. It was a scathing indictment of the inaction and ineffectiveness of the government:

> That there has been all anxiety and zeal on the part of the Government no one can doubt, Ministers having the cause of the country as much at heart at least as other men, and having besides the responsibility for the conduct of the war; but between their measures and the intended effect there has been a miscarriage like the proverbial one between the cup and the lip. They literally cast their bread on the waters. Stores in abundance for every purpose go out, but do not come to hand and mouth. And the same errors, the same miscarriages are repeated over and over again, as if they were the established laws of a system of misrule. Nothing mends, nothing is better now than it was two months ago, much having passed from bad to worse.[71]

The editor of *The Examiner* at first addressed how the actions of the government were undoubtably well-intentioned, but that the results of these actions had been disastrous. Moreover, the same mistakes kept being made, as if the Aberdeen Government *had* to make these mistakes because of some law of misrule. This is an interesting point related to legitimacy as legality, as the commentator put forth how the political system itself did not seem to work. The editor finished the article by stating that the situation had not improved in any way, it had often worsened. Where the actions of the Government were lightly criticized two weeks before the December 30th edition, but in a fairly supportive manner, the editor did not spare the Government in any way in the December 30th edition. The article finished with yet another discussion on the deplorable state of the weapons, logistics and the British army in general, and blamed: 'obstinate and stupid adherence to things which have had their day'. The wording of this sentence stands in stark contrast to the earlier reporting in T*he Examiner*. While not specifically naming who the editor thought of as obstinate and

[68] Victoria Frede, *Doubt, atheism, and the nineteenth-century Russian intelligentsia* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press 2011) 153.
[69] Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 148–152.
[70] 'The Power of Russia', *The Examiner* (London 16 December 1854), section The Political Examiner.
[71] 'Praise and Neglect', *The Examiner* (London 30 December 1854), section The Political Examiner,.

stupid, the earlier indictment of the government in the article shows us that Lord Aberdeen and his ministry was probably the intended target.[72]

This is but one example of the intense criticism the government received in the press. *The Times* was also steadily finding scapegoats for the mismanagement of the War. These scapegoats ranged from Lord Raglan himself, to more abstract entities such as 'the system' or the aristocracy. In this way the press, and especially *The Times* with their enormous middle class readership, influenced public opinion on the War and its course. It once again put into question legitimacy as legality, as the political system itself was criticized and pointed to as the problem. Where it was first presumed that the press could instil the public with patriotism and sacrifice to promote the war effort, the opposite had happened. The deplorable state of the British troops had become somewhat of a national obsession that was spearheaded by the reports in the press.[73] The reporting on the War in the press had led to a more general distrust in the capability of the main players of the War, and had put into question the legitimacy of the Aberdeen Government. Legitimacy as consent, as given by the public and channelled through the press, had deeply diminished by the spring of 1855 and would become so problematic to the Aberdeen Government that it led to heated debates in both Houses of Parliament.

On January 24th, the radical MP James Roebuck put forth a motion of inquiry on the conduct of the war in Crimea.[74] The motion read: '[To set up a] Select Committee to inquire into the condition of our army before Sebastopol, and into the conduct of those departments of the Government whose duty it has been to minister to the wants of that army.'[75] This would be the official expression of the criticism on the handling of the War voiced by the public and the press, and would prove to be the final nail in the coffin of the Aberdeen Government. On January 26th, one of the most senior members of the Aberdeen Ministry, the Lord President of the Council Lord John Russell, handed in his resignation. In the speech he gave to announce his resignation he at first glance mostly lauded his fellow members of the Cabinet, but was very critical between the expressions of praise. He read aloud the letters he had written to the Prime Minister in November 1854 on his concerns over the Prime Minister's capability of leading the Cabinet during wartime, and how a Minister of War, in this case the Duke of Newcastle should be strong enough to control the other departments. Russell's conclusion seemed to be that neither was the case, Lord Aberdeen had not been able to lead his Cabinet in wartime, and the Duke of Newcastle had not been able to control the other departments in a manner advantageous to waging war. Lord Palmerston was suggested as the person who should take over the office of Minister of War.[76] These questions were not addressed by the Prime Minister. To Lord Russell, the Prime Minister and the Minister of War had failed to properly handle the War, and he resigned as a consequence.

Roebuck's select committee, was put to vote after two days of debate in the House of Commons. Lord Aberdeen treated this vote as a vote of no confidence.[77] In his closing statement Roebuck juxtaposed the failure of the Ministers with the aptitude of overcoming adversity of the British people. Roebuck asked if the logistical problems the Aberdeen Ministry encountered in the winter of 1854 would have been enough for the British people to give up. Roebuck added to this that

[72] Ibid.
[73] Olive Anderson, *A Liberal State at War: English Politics and Economics During the Crimean War*, 73–75.
[74] Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 152.
[75] Roebuck, 'The Army In The Crimea—Motion For Select Committee Postponed', *Hansard* 136 (1855).
[76] Lord John Russell, 'Resignation Of Lord John Russell', *Hansard* 136 (1855).
[77] Guy Arnold, *Historical dictionary of the Crimean War*. Historical dictionaries of war, revolution, and civil unrest no. 19 (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press 2002) 4.

'active exertion […] exists as a law of its inhabitants', and that by failing in sufficiently supplying and preparing the British army, the Ministers had: 'disappoint[ed] the expectations of the whole English people'.[78] By bringing up the expectations of the British people, and the subsequent failure of the government to fulfil these expectations, Roebuck challenged the government's legitimacy as consent. Aside from the more general failure of the handling of the Crimean War, the people's opinion on how the government handled the War was Roebuck's last and most important argument. Roebuck did not want to bring down the Government, but wanted to emphasize parliamentary accountability, underlining the legitimacy as consent that was often silently given by the public. In the case of the mishandling of the War, its reports in the press and the following public outrage, this consent was publicly doubted. The motion was then passed with a large majority of 305 votes for, and 148 against. Lord Aberdeen resigned the next day. Like Lord John Russell had wanted, Queen Victoria put forth Lord Palmerston as Prime Minister. Palmerston had been a favourite of the press and the British public by virtue of his aggressive foreign policy, and would therefore be less likely to receive the same challenge to legitimacy, based on consent, as Lord Aberdeen had received. Moreover, Lord Palmerston's sceptic rhetoric on Russia and his aggressive foreign policy that was seen by the public as the embodiment of the national character and popular ideals can be related to legitimacy as justification. The aggressive foreign policy can be explained as the imperial expansion that was popular among the public at the time. His opposition to Russia is linked to this same imperial fervour felt among the British public. In this way, Lord Palmerston embodied some of the moral values deemed important by the British public, and became a more legitimate option to lead the country.[79]

With Roebuck's motion of inquiry came a challenge to the legitimacy of the Aberdeen Government. By failing to properly supply and prepare the British troops in Crimea, the faith of the press, the public and of Parliament in the Aberdeen ministry had waned enough for Aberdeen's position to have become untenable. But besides legitimacy as consent, another one of Gilley's forms of legitimacy is relevant to the case of the British government in the Crimean war. Gilley's definition of legitimacy stated that the political system is more legitimate if it holds and exercises political power with legality, justification and consent from all its citizens. Besides the aforementioned consent, legitimacy as legality is relevant as well. For Gilley, this legitimacy concerns adherence to the law, but more relevant to this case, the political rules of society as well. Because of the mishandling of the War, and the great exposure of these mishandlings in the press, the political rules of society had changed. But this change of the political rules had already begun in the early nineteenth century. Before the Crimean War, the press had already been very present in British society, and was largely free to write on whatever subject they saw fit. They had become a force to be reckoned with in British politics. The press was increasingly seeing itself as the 'Fourth Estate', and was seen as an instrument to criticize and even control politics. Lord Aberdeen reluctantly acknowledged this as well: 'An English Minister must please the newspapers'. As Palmerston understood the role of the press better, he had positioned himself better than Lord Aberdeen for a successful premiership.[80]

During the nineteenth century the press had changed the political rules of society; politicians had become accountable to the press, and by extension, the British public. The Crimean War and the reports of mismanagement in the press only exacerbated this trend. Politicians skilled in handling the press like Palmerston came on top, while politicians that were unable to do this well, like Aberdeen,

[78] James Roebuck, 'Army (Crimea)—The Conduct Of The War, And Condition Of The Army Adjourned Debate—(Second Night)', *Hansard* 136 (1855).
[79] Orlando Figes, *The Crimean War: a history* (New York: Metropolitan Books 2012) 319.
[80] Ibid., 157–159.

failed. The press had influenced the allocation of Cabinet positions, a ministry was abolished and two others had been merged because of reports in *The Times* and other newspapers.[81] In this way the press was relevant to legitimacy as legality as put forth by Gilley; the so-called Fourth Estate had changed the political rules of British society. This trend was also discussed in the House of Lords, the House in Parliament mostly associated with Weber's traditional authority. Lord Lyndhurst lamented the 'vituperation' he would receive for even putting *The Times*' role in the Crimean War to question and called his opposition to *The Times* a 'bold course'. Moreover, Lyndhurst stated that the press had exceeded their legitimate bounds and that the proceedings in the press were detrimental to the country's best interests.[82] The politicians of Britain during the Crimean War sometimes used the press to their advantage like Lord Palmerston and in a way, James Roebuck, but were well aware of its power to influence not only public opinion, but the course of the War and even the British Government.

With the fall of the Aberdeen Government, the role of waging wars in relation to legitimacy becomes apparent as well. As waging successful wars can be a legitimizing factor for governments, so can waging unsuccessful wars be delegitimizing. The mishandling of the war became a factor that was delegitimizing enough for the Government to be ousted. Russia eventually lost the war, and the loss of a war can be an impetus for legitimacy to shift, even if this went in a different direction than would have been the case in Britain. Compared to Britain, the press in Russia was small in scope, slow in reporting and virtually non-existent. Basic news on the war was published, but often only two or three weeks later. Everything that was published was heavily censored; an example of this is how the Russian defeat in the Battle of the Alma was described as a 'tactical withdrawal', more than three weeks after the fact. The literate public that read Russian newspapers often heard rumours of defeats, which then officially would be acknowledged nearly two months later, but no details on the deplorable state and weapons of the Russian army were disclosed.[83] But the war was in the end lost by the Russians, and losing it laid bare a number of issues and started a movement of scepticism aimed at the imperial structure. The Russian Tsar was subsequently forced to implement liberal reforms to put off revolution in Russia.[84] The Crimean War had reshaped how legitimacy worked in Imperial Russia; as it had created an opening for more liberal voices in an autocratic empire.

Conclusion

Legitimacy is and will always be a contentious concept. It is malleable by time and space, and can, for example, mean one thing for the 'Alawi dynasty of Morocco, and something entirely different for the British democratic Government during the Crimean war. The 'Alawi's shaped legitimacy themselves by linking it to political Islam to safeguard their dynasty. In nineteenth century Britain, legitimacy was shaped as well, but not by the ruling class. The press in Britain, spearheaded by *The Times*, increased in importance and power throughout the nineteenth century, coming to an apotheose during the Crimean War. The Russian enemy legitimized their rule in a different way than the British did, based more on based on Weber's traditional authority, as opposed to the legal authority of Parliament. This difference in legitimacy was highlighted in the reporting on the Crimean War as well; the Russian Tsar's autocratic tyranny was juxtaposed to the English fondness of democracy and liberty. This

[81] Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 17–18.
[82] Lord Lyndhurst, 'The 'Times' Correspondent With The Army', *Hansard* 136 (1855).
[83] Figes, *The Crimean War*, 321.
[84] Leonid E. Gorizontov, 'The Crimean War as a Test of Russia's Imperial Durability', *Russian Social Science Review* 62 (2021) 416–442, 416–417.

meant that the way how the Russian government legitimized their rule became a topic of discussion, and strengthened the self-perceived righteous nature of the British form of legitimacy in British society. The role of the press as the self-perceived Fourth Estate relates to this as well. As the press saw itself as a regulator that exposed the mishandlings of the government in the War, it by extension had a great role in the legitimization of that same government. Because of its enormous influence over public opinion, the Government had to react to what was written in the press, which eventually led to the fall of the Aberdeen Government and a strong reshape of the British political system and of the British army. In this way, the press changed legitimacy as legality, as the political rules of British society were changed by the growing presence and influence of the press. The British press had a strong influence on legitimacy as consent as well, as it changed the way in which the British public could express consent. As voting rights were extremely limited, the opinion of the British public as a larger whole to give consent through the press was an alternative way to give legitimacy as consent.

The case of Britain, the Crimean War and legitimacy shows us where some perceived modern aspects of political life have their origin. The role of the media in relation to war and legitimacy of democracies has only increased. Extensive reporting on modern wars is a factor that has made the waging of wars themselves harder to legitimize, as the casualties shown in reports have led to a strong distaste for war in the public.[85] This is a trend that saw its true beginning in the Crimean War with the reports of the first war correspondent William Howard Russell in *The Times*.[86] The printed press became increasingly important throughout the nineteenth century, and with the reporting on the Crimean War and voicing public opinion, it became an important staple of democracy. For the first time it was seen as a regulatory device that could express legitimacy as consent in a broader way than just voting. So while the case of Britain, The Crimean War and legitimacy is in one way overtly Victorian, it is at the same time an early example of very modern perceptions on war, the legitimacy of war and the legitimacy of democratic governments. Moreover, the Crimean War shaped the nineteenth century and the following years up until today; it lived on in the British public conscience by virtue of the charge of the light Brigade and Florence Nightingale, but more relevant to today, in the Russian public conscience. There were several different narratives that president Vladimir Putin used to legitimize the annexation of Crimea in 2014, as Putin claimed that Crimea had always been part of Russia and that it therefore 'returned home', and emphasised the 'sacrifices of Russian soldiers' in Crimea, of which the Crimean war of 1853 was the prime example.[87] Roughly a 150 years later, the Crimean War itself is still being related to legitimacy and is as relevant as ever.

[85] Shaw, 'Risk-transfer Militarism, Small Massacres and the Historic Legitimacy of War', 343.
[86] Markovits, 'Rushing Into Print', 560.
[87] Magdalena B. Leichtova, 'Why Crimea was Always Ours: Legitimacy Building in Russia in the Wake of the Crisis in Ukraine and the Annexation of Crimea', *Russian Politics* 1 (2016) 291–315, 300–301.

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