

A Response to “*Dracula* and the Idea of Europe” by Eleni Coundouriotis*

CAROL A. SENF

While I don't agree with everything that Professor Coundouriotis says about *Dracula* in her essay, I am deeply appreciative of the fact that her reading of the novel within the context of the Eastern Question initiates a new way of reading Stoker's multi-faceted and enigmatic novel. All students of the novel will eventually owe her a debt of gratitude for a reading that both builds on existing criticism of *Dracula* and opens a new way of exploring the novel. The first generation of psychoanalytic readings opened up *Dracula* to serious scholarly attention and were continued by both feminist responses and science studies readings.¹ Somewhat closer in spirit to what Coundouriotis is doing here are interpretations that examine the novel as a response to colonialism or to the sensational trial of fellow-Dubliner Oscar Wilde.²

Although she is not the first to refer to the Eastern Question,³ Coundouriotis is the first to center her reading of *Dracula* on this issue. Quoting Michael Valdes Moses, who observes that “*Dracula* owes much of its mythopoeic power to the uncanny ability of its central figure to call forth a diverse and even mutually contradictory set of symbolic associations”⁴ Coundouriotis concludes her essay—correctly I might add—by noting that her reading “addresses what I perceive as an oversight in the many fine contextualizations of the novel (in terms of empire and Ireland especially) that overlook the more obvious historical context of the novel, the Eastern Question” (153).

*Reference: Eleni Coundouriotis, “*Dracula* and the Idea of Europe,” *Connotations* 9.2 (1999/2000): 143-59.

Building on existing criticism, Eleni Coundouriotis develops a comprehensive reading of *Dracula* in terms of “the Eastern Question” and provides yet more grist for the *Dracula* mills that now seem to have almost as many incarnations as does the practically immortal count himself. She opens her essay by pointing out that our contemporary “interest in the politics of *Dracula*—whether they pertain to Ireland, class conflict, gender, or empire—acknowledges the historical relevance of the novel” (142) and by referring to her research into the problem. She recognizes that readings of *Dracula* “should not overlook the significance of eastern Europe” because Stoker’s notes indicate that “he always had Eastern Europe in mind” (144).

Examining material in Stoker’s life, Coundouriotis suggests a variety of reasons that Stoker would have been interested in Eastern Europe. Among these is his admiration for English Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone, who wrote a pamphlet in 1876 on the Turkish massacres of Christians in Bulgaria, a pamphlet that reminded its readers of history. A second is the experiences of his brother George who served as a medical officer in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78. Perhaps most obvious, however, is the ongoing discussion of British policy in the decades preceding the publication of *Dracula*, a discussion that Coundouriotis summarizes for readers who ignore it because their orientation is toward Western Europe and the Western Hemisphere rather than toward the East. All of this information is important not only for our understanding of Stoker’s novel but also because it demonstrates Stoker’s awareness of a region that the West continues to ignore at its peril.⁵

Among the obvious strengths of the essay is the author’s awareness of the historical situation that confronted England during the years immediately before Stoker wrote *Dracula*. She goes on to argue that the “actual historical context of the novel informs its discursive delegitimation of history” (144), an argument that she bases largely on Stoker’s depiction of *Dracula*. It is at this point that I would like to suggest a slightly different direction or at least one that “reads” *Dracula* in a different way. Rather than identify the vampire as a

hybrid "both Christian and Ottoman" and therefore "monstrous and ultimately incoherent, a source of history that . . . needs to be silenced" (144), I suggest that readers also look at Dracula as a remnant of a primitive and warlike past that was being replaced during Stoker's lifetime with something more scientific and democratic. Coundouriotis opens her essay with a quotation from *Dracula* (" . . . and the glories of the great races are as a tale that is told") but ignores the passage that precedes it:

The warlike days are over. Blood is too precious a thing in these days of dishonourable peace; and the glories of the great races are as a tale that is told. (29-30)

Her essay also ignores numerous references to a past that seems entirely alien to the multiple narrators of *Dracula*. For example, Jonathan Harker's diary reminds the reader that Dracula is the paradigmatic hunter whose raised hand calms the wolves, and the civilized Harker describes the pleasure that Dracula takes in the hunt and in shedding blood, behaviors that are indicative of a more primitive culture. Indeed, Harker describes Dracula's dwelling as a "vast ruined castle" (14), a tangible relic of the distant past.

In addition, Coundouriotis's reading depends too much on drawing an "analogy between Dracula and the idea of Europe" (152) when it is unclear exactly how much Stoker actually knew of the historical Vlad.⁶ Coundouriotis also draws an unnecessarily specific connection between Dracula and a single historical figure "Grand Vizier Abdul Aziz who ruled from 1861 until May 1876 when he was deposed" (154) because he committed suicide after being deposed and folklore presents vampires as suicides. There are, however, numerous causes of vampirism, and Emily Gerard, one of Stoker's sources, lists a number of them:

More decidedly evil, however, is the vampire, or *nosferatu*, in whom every Roumenian peasant believes as firmly as he does in heaven or hell. . . . The living vampire is in general the illegitimate offspring of two illegitimate persons, but even a flawless pedigree will not ensure anyone against the intru-

sion of a vampire into his family vault, since every person killed by a *nosferatu* becomes likewise a vampire after death.⁷

There is no mention here of suicide.

My few quarrels with Professor Coundouriotis are not meant to detract from her interesting and informative essay, however, nor to deny that she has turned over a new leaf in scholarship on the novel. Certainly both her interpretation and the extensive bibliography on which it is based should encourage all readers of *Dracula* to consider the degree to which Stoker was influenced by the Idea of Europe when he wrote the novel.

Indeed, looking at the rest of Stoker's oeuvre confirms that Stoker was deeply concerned with Eastern Europe, an area to which he returned in *The Lady of the Shroud* (1909).⁸ The settings of *Dracula* and *Lady* are unlike the settings of his other novels in that they are not based on locations with which he was intimately familiar.⁹ While the majority of Stoker's fiction depends on his careful depiction of the geography and the cultural history of places where he had traveled or lived, such is not the case with the two novels set in Eastern Europe. Widely traveled in the United States, Western Europe, and the United Kingdom, Stoker had never been to either Romania or Albania.¹⁰ The two novels are thus anomalous works in many ways, their settings based not on close observation but on library research and imagination.

In *The Origins of Dracula*, one of the most informative studies of the research that Stoker put into *Dracula*, Clive Leatherdale observes:

Stoker never went to Transylvania. All the information on that country that appears in *Dracula* can be traced to the notes he made from the handful of books on his source-list. These books, in the main, were written by British official servants—soldiers, administrators, or their wives. The portraits they present share many features: implicit belief in British superiority; irritation at minor inconveniences; a patronising desire to effect change; and a degree of racism—particularly anti-semitism—that might take the modern reader by surprise. (97)¹¹

It is clear from his notes on *Dracula* that Stoker was thinking of Eastern Europe when he wrote the novel, and I am grateful to Arata for being the first to reveal to me the immediate political context, a context that I find far more relevant to *Lady* than to *Dracula*. In fact, I am inclined to agree with Judith Wilt's observations about *Dracula*:

It is interesting to think of *Dracula* as a kind of subterranean comment on, presentiment about, "The Eastern Question" in the last Victorian decades. But the truth is that *Dracula* is far more about religion and sex than about politics. (622-23)

Moreover, the Eastern Europe that Stoker imagines in *Dracula* is not the region of his own day. Instead, it is a mysterious region—an embodiment of the past, more mythic than real.¹²

Twelve years later, however, Stoker presents a markedly different picture of Eastern Europe, a picture that conforms more closely to Arata's analysis of *Dracula*. While *Lady* opens with another vampiric figure, the novel rapidly abandons Gothic mystery to explore a technological Utopia complete with airplanes, submarines, armored yachts, and the most recent methods of wresting wealth from the earth. Ultimately, the novel concludes with the hopes for a Balkan Federation, which, if it had actually materialized, would have solved a number of the problems associated with that troubled region at the turn of the century and would have prevented the "Powder Keg of Europe" from erupting into World War I. Indeed *Lady* seems overwhelmingly committed to a vision of a technologically and scientifically sophisticated future, as Harry Ludlam noted in his biography of Stoker.¹³

Even more important to his vision of a progressive Eastern Europe than the technological marvels is Stoker's political vision. For example, he makes Rupert a Constitutional monarch,¹⁴ a decision that may have been determined by his familiarity with the United Kingdom and its monarch, Victoria.¹⁵ While it remains for Rupert, as Constitutional monarch, to bring about a better future, Stoker reminds his readers of the region's immediate past. In fact, a letter from Roger

Melton to Rupert specifically mentions the "Balkan struggle" of '90 (32)¹⁶:

Greece, Turkey, Austria, Russia, Italy, France, had all tried in vain. . . . Austria and Greece, although united by no common purpose or design, were ready to throw in their forces with whomsoever might seem most likely to be victor. Other Balkan states, too, were not lacking in desire to add the little territory of the Blue Mountains to their more ample possessions. Albania, Dalmatia, Herzegovina, Servia, Bulgaria, looked with lustful eyes on the land, which was in itself a vast natural fortress, having close under its shelter perhaps the finest harbour between Gibraltar and the Dardanelles. (33)

The Land of the Blue Mountains is, of course, Stoker's fictionalized utopia, literally a "nowhere" but a nowhere that incorporated many of Stoker's hopes for the future. In fact, Glover notes that *The Lady of the Shroud* presents "Stoker's liberal utopia in its fullest, most developed form" (52). Glover also places *Lady* into the context of other fin-de-siècle literary utopias (53), suggesting that the difference in the two novels may be due to literary influence, with *Dracula* being a Gothic tale and *Lady* a utopian, a distinction that is confirmed by the fact that *Dracula* is shrouded in magic and mystery while *Lady* is full of technological detail.

Although Stoker may well have been influenced by other literary works, it is equally possible to assume that the differences in the two novels also stemmed from his political vision. There are, for example, remarkable similarities between Stoker's Ireland and Eastern Europe at the turn of the century. Just as Ireland had been dominated by England, Romania (and the rest of Eastern Europe) had been dominated by more powerful expansionist empires, including the Ottomans, Czarist Russia and the Hapsburg Empire. Like Ireland, Romania also differs from her near neighbors, being the only descendant of the Eastern Roman stock; the Romanian language, together with French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, is of course one of the major heirs of the Latin language. And both regions had suffered great violence over the centuries at the hands of their powerful neighbors.

For example, Dracula describes to Jonathan Harker the world of medieval Transylvania:

Why, there is hardly a foot of soil in all this region that has not been enriched by the blood of men, patriots or invaders. In old days there were stirring times, when the Austrian and the Hungarian came up in hordes, and the patriots went out to meet them—men and women, the aged and the children too—and waited their coming on the rocks above the passes, that they might sweep destruction on them with their artificial avalanches. (21)

In *Lady*, Roger Melton writes to Rupert, explaining that the Land of the Blue Mountains had been subject to similar invasions:

For centuries they had fought, with a fervour and fury that nothing could withstand or abate, attacks on their independence. Time after time, century after century, they had opposed with dauntless front invading armies sent against them. This unquenchable fire of freedom had had its effect. One and all, the great Powers knew that to conquer that little nation would be no mean task but rather that of a tireless giant. Over and over again had they fought with units against hundreds, never ceasing until they had either wiped out their foes entirely or seen them retreat across the frontier in diminished numbers. (33-34)

Such conflict between a small invaded territory and a larger invading one is similar to the relationship between Britain and Ireland as it is described, for example, by Arata (119). Well aware of the differences between his primitive homeland and his technologically advanced adopted country, Stoker suggests in *The Snake's Pass* that English financial backing and technological sophistication could correct the damages done by previous invasions. In *Dracula*, invasions are brutally suppressed while *Lady* suggests that invasions are largely a thing of the past because the tiny Land of the Blue Mountains is capable of using technology to protect itself. Having repulsed the Turkish invaders, Rupert emphasizes the promise of a Constitutional Monarchy and a democratic federation, made even more progressive by advanced science and technology. Thus, unlike *Dracula*, where past and present are constantly at war, *Lady* presents the union of past and present, which is demonstrated in both the individual and the nation.

For example, if Dracula embodies the primitive past, Rupert St. Leger manages to combine what is best from the past with the best of the present. This union is especially clear in his abilities as a warrior. Rupert manifests “the Berserk passion which he inherited from Viking ancestors, whence of old came ‘The Sword of Freedom’ himself” (149) and bears “himself as a Paladin of old, his mighty form pausing for no obstacle” (153).

Furthermore, instead of hoarding everything for himself and oppressing those who are weaker, as Dracula is inclined to do, Rupert plans to share both wealth and technological power:

My own dream of the new map was to make ‘Balka’—the Balkan Federation—take in ultimately all south of the line drawn from the Isle of Serpents to Aquileia. There would—must—be difficulties in the carrying out of such a scheme. Of course, it involved Austria giving up Dalmatia, Istria, and Slavonia, as well as part of Croatia and the Hungarian Banat. . . . Each of these integers would be absolutely self-governing and independent, being only united for purposes of mutual good. I did not despair that even Turkey and Greece recognizing that benefit and safety would ensue without the destruction or even minimizing of individuality, would . . . come into the Federation. (240-41)

Thus, *The Lady of the Shroud* ends with the promise of a brighter future and an image of an Eastern Europe that is freed of its primitive, warlike past.

Stoker’s return to Eastern Europe in *The Lady of the Shroud* confirms that Eleni Coundouriotis is absolutely correct in focusing her reading of *Dracula* on the Idea of Europe, and that is a reminder that readers of *Dracula* should consider more carefully the social and political context of Stoker’s world. I am grateful to her solid reading of the novel and to her exploration of the history of Eastern Europe in Stoker’s day.

The Georgia Institute of Technology
Atlanta, Georgia

NOTES

¹Psychoanalytic readings include Joseph S. Bierman, "Dracula: Prolonged Childhood Illness and the Oral Triad," *American Imago* 29 (1972): 186-98 and Phyllis A. Roth, *Bram Stoker* (Boston: Twayne, 1982). Feminist studies include Stephanie Demetrakopoulos, "Feminism, Sex Role Exchanges, and Other Subliminal Fantasies in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*," *Frontiers* (1977): 104-13; Gail B. Griffin, "'Your Girls That You All Love are Mine': *Dracula* and the Victorian Male Sexual Imagination," *International Journal of Women's Studies* 3 (1980): 454-65; and Carol A. Senf, "Dracula: Stoker's Response to the New Woman," *Victorian Studies* 26 (1982): 33-49. Studies of science and technology in *Dracula* include Troy Boone, "'He is English and Therefore Adventurous': Politics, Decadence, and *Dracula*," *Studies in the Novel* 25 (1993): 76-91; John Greenway, "'Seward's Folly: *Dracula* as a Critique of 'Normal Science,'" *Stanford Literature Review* 3 (1986): 213-30; Rosemary Jann, "Saved by Science? The Mixed Messages of Stoker's *Dracula*," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 31 (1989): 273-87; and Jennifer Wicke, "Vampiric Typewriting: *Dracula* and Its Media," *ELH* 59 (1992): 467-93.

²Studies of *Dracula* as a response to imperialism include Stephen D. Arata, "The Occidental Tourist: *Dracula* and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization," *Victorian Studies* 33 (1990): 621-45; Patrick Brantlinger, "Imperial Gothic: Atavism and the Occult in the British Adventure Novel, 1880-1914," *ELT* 28 (1985): 243-52; Cannon Schmitt, *Alien Nation: Nineteenth-Century Gothic Fictions and English Nationality* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania Press, 1997); and Judith Wilt, "The Imperial Mouth: Imperialism, the Gothic and Science Fiction," *Journal of Popular Culture* 14 (1981): 618-28. Examining the relationship between Stoker and Wilde is Talia Schaffer, "'A Wilde Desire Took Me': The Homoerotic History of *Dracula*," *ELH* 61 (1994): 381-425.

³The first to do so is Arata, who reminds readers that Eastern Europe was on the minds of Stoker and his contemporaries: "Transylvania was known primarily as part of the vexed 'Eastern Question' that so obsessed British foreign policy in the 1880s and 90s. The region was first and foremost the site, not of superstition and Gothic romance, but of political turbulence and racial strife. Victorian readers knew the Carpathian Mountains region largely for its endemic cultural upheaval and its fostering of a dizzying succession of empires. By moving Castle *Dracula* there, Stoker gives distinctly political overtones to his Gothic narrative. In Stoker's version of the myth, vampires are intimately linked to military conquest and to the rise and fall of empires. According to Van Helsing, the vampire is the unavoidable consequence of any invasion." *Fictions of Loss in the Victorian Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996) 113.

⁴Countouriotis 156.

⁵Misha Glenny opens *The Balkans: Nationalism, War and the Great Powers, 1804-1999* (New York: Viking, 1999) by accusing Tony Blair of being more familiar with *Dracula* than with contemporary geography: "'Kosovo,' the British Prime Minister . . . informed his public in early April 1999, 'is on the doorstep of Europe.' Yet no geographer would consider Kosovo and its neighbours part of Asia. If neither in

Europe nor in Asia, where does the Balkan peninsula lie? Perhaps Mr Blair has been influenced by Bram Stoker's *Dracula* in which the Balkans occupied 'the centre of some sort of imaginative whirlpool', where 'every known superstition in the world is gathered.' For many decades, Westerners gazed on these lands as if on an ill-charted zone separating Europe's well-ordered civilization from the chaos of the Orient" (xxi).

⁶Although Coundouriotis even mentions that Stoker may not have known "the sobriquet 'impaler'" and observes that "he never uses it in the novel" (152), her argument seems to assume that Stoker was aware of the historical figure.—A number of studies examine Stoker's sources, including Clive Leatherdale, ed., *The Origins of Dracula* (Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex: Desert Island Books, 1995). There is perhaps no better analysis of what Stoker knew and did not know than Elizabeth Miller's who dispels many of the arguments that Stoker was aware of the historical Vlad. In *Dracula: Sense and Nonsense* (Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex: Desert Island Books Ltd, 2000), Miller carefully sifts through Stoker's sources and reminds credulous readers that *Dracula* is fiction.

⁷Emily de Laszowska Gerard, "Transylvanian Superstitions," *The Ninetenth Century* (July 1885): 128-44. Included in *The Origins of Dracula* 124.

⁸The comparison of the two novels has been developed in a paper for The Second World Dracula Congress ("Dracula 2000") in Poiana Brasov, Transylvania, Romania; I hope that readers will indulge me for summarizing that argument here largely because it confirms the validity of the line of thinking contained in Coundouriotis's essay.

⁹For example, two early books are set in his native Ireland—*The Duties of Clerks of Petty Sessions in Ireland* (1879) and *The Snake's Pass* (1889); two more—*The Watter's Mou'* (1894) and *The Mystery of the Sea* (1902)—take place in Cruden Bay, Scotland, where Stoker and his family spent numerous holidays; two are set entirely in the United States, another region where Stoker traveled extensively—*A Glimpse of America* (1886) and *The Shoulder of Shasta* (1895); three are set entirely within England—*Miss Betty* (1898), *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (1903), and *The Lair of the White Worm* (1911); and the largest group, by far, takes place in a variety of locations that Stoker had actually visited—*Snowbound: The Record of a Theatrical Touring Party* (1899), *The Man* (1905), *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving* (1906), *Lady Athlyne* (1908), and *Famous Impostors* (1910).

¹⁰Stoker locates the Land of the Blue Mountains on the Adriatic Sea and provides it with "the finest harbour between Gibraltar and the Dardanelles"; *The Lady of the Shroud* (Dover, N.H.: Alan Sutton Publishing, Inc., 1994) 33. He also indicates that it is in danger of being annexed by Albania, Dalmatia, Herzegovina, Servia, and Bulgaria. Future references to *The Lady of the Shroud* will be to this edition and will be included in the text.

¹¹Leatherdale's appendix to *The Origins of Dracula* includes the full list of Stoker's sources for *Dracula*; they can be grouped into the following categories: the bulk are books on folklore and superstitions; books about Transylvania and the Carpathians; book on scientific subjects, e.g. Sarah Lee's *Anecdotes of Habits and Instincts of Birds, Reptiles and Fishes* (Philadelphia: Lindsay Blamston, 1853),

Herbert Mayo, *On the Truths contained in Popular Superstitions—with an Account of Mesmerism* (London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1851), Thomas Joseph Pettigrew, *On Superstitions connected with the History and Practice of Medicine and Surgery* (London: John Churchill, 1844), F. C. and J. Rivington, *The Theory of Dreams*, 2 vols. (London: 62 St. Paul's Churchyard, 1808), and Robert H. Scott, *Fishery Barometer Manual* (London: H.M.S.O., 1887). While books on geography and history do not constitute the bulk of the works that he read in preparation for writing *Dracula*, it is evident from his research that Stoker wanted to get his details straight.

¹²Once again Miller is useful in distinguishing history from Stoker's creative assimilation of numerous materials: "By the time Stoker began work on *Dracula* in 1890, Transylvania was already well established as a suitable setting for supernatural tales. But the literary Transylvania was an imaginative construct rather than a realistic representation" (146).

¹³*The Lady of the Shroud* was published in 1909. It was only in the last months of the previous year that the Wright brothers had made their most successful flights; and only as the book was published did Bleriot successfully fly the Channel. But Bram, looking far ahead, had already given his Land of the Blue Mountains a royal air force" (159). David Glover, whose study places Stoker within the British Liberal tradition, examines Stoker's belief in science: "Like many advanced Liberals, Stoker looked to scientific growth as the key to modernization, and in an article he published in *The World's Work* in May 1907 one finds an account of Ireland's developmental potential that closely mirrors his Scottish-Balkan utopia" (13). Actually, Stoker wrote two articles for *The World's Work* in 1907, and both extol the wonders of science and technology. The first article, "The World's greatest Ship-Building Yard," *The World's Work* 9 (Special Irish ed., May 1907): 647-50, focuses more on commercial efficiency than it does on actual technological developments, but such commercial success was indeed based on technological expertise. The second article, "The Great White Fair in Dublin," *The World's Work* (Special Irish ed., May 1907): 570-76, celebrates Ireland's entry into the industrial age, and Stoker waxes eloquent on the "wonderful things are being done to start the island upon a new career of industrial progress, aside and beyond affairs political" (571).

¹⁴It is interesting to note that Romania did institute a constitutional monarchy in 1866 after the abdication of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, who had united the assemblies of Moldavia and Wallachia. Cuza initiated a reform program that attempted to transform Romania into a modern state. For example, he provided for the abolition of serfdom and granted their land to them, made primary school tuition free and compulsory, and established universities in Iasi and Bucharest. Forced out by conservative forces in 1866, he was replaced by a constitutional monarch, Karl of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, who was declared king on May 10, 1866 and took the name of Carol I. A relative of the royal family of Prussia, Carol was supported by Napoleon III and Bismarck. According to Tim Burford and Dan Richardson, *Romania: The Rough Guide* (London: Rough Guides; New York: Viking Penguin, 1995), Carol became a true king in 1881: "In 1877 yet another Russo-Turkish war broke out, and Carol personally led a Romanian army into Bulgaria

to help the Russians, suffering huge losses in taking Pleven and the Shipka Pass. Rumania declared its independence on May 9, 1877; the Treaty of Berlin, ending the war in 1878, forced Turkey to Recognize this and to cede Northern Dobrogea to Rumania, and Carol became a fully fledged king in 1881, with an iron crown made from a gun captured at Pleven" (349).—It is interesting to note that Stoker's brother George served on the opposing side and wrote an account of his experiences in Turkish-controlled Bulgaria, published as *With "The Unspeakables": or, Two Years' Campaigning in European and Asiatic Turkey*. Miller observes that all three of "Stoker's biographers suggest that Bram may have helped George with his book" (211). Thus, Stoker had some knowledge of conditions in Eastern Europe through his brother.

¹⁵On the other hand, Raymond P. Wallace, who discusses *The Prisoner of Zenda* and a number of other adventure novels that were popular in England and the United States at the turn of the century observes that their plots often revolve around a threat to a rightful monarch. Wallace, "'Cardboard Kingdoms,'" *San Jose Studies* 13 (Spring 1987): 23-34.

¹⁶While no specific struggle united the Balkan nations in 1890, Stoker may well have been thinking of the meeting at Narva of William II of Germany and Alexander III of Russia. During the period that lasted from the Crimean War to World War II, there was always the threat of war between the great powers, a threat that would have involved all of Europe. Moreover, the reactionary Alexander was entirely comfortable containing any threat of revolution or nationalistic movement by violent means.