Introduction

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"Adultery is not just the favorite, but also the only theme of all novels."[1] So writes the great Lev Tolstoy in 1898, exactly twenty years after his own, enormously successful *Anna Karenina* had come out in book form. What Tolstoy detects—rather bitterly, since at this point he has parted with high culture and renounced his former masterpieces as yet another source of pleasure for the idle wealthy classes—is the prevalence of the novel of adultery in the second half of the nineteenth century, when it had practically become a subgenre within realism. The inaugural novel of this subgenre is typically considered to be Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, to which all subsequent novels of adultery have been compared. Its serialization in 1856 was followed by a lawsuit against the author on account of "outrage to public and religious morals and to morality,"[2] which only made the sales of the 1857 book version skyrocket. Although *Madame Bovary* was, obviously, not the world's first novel to take up the theme of the unfaithful wife, it did establish a particular pattern for addressing this theme. The aforementioned Russian *Anna Karenina*, for example, the American *The Awakening* (1899), and the somewhat lesser known German *Effi Briest* (1896) all feature, like the French masterpiece, an attractive and energetic young woman, who, feeling stifled in a marriage to a dull and significantly older man, cheats on him and subsequently commits suicide. The eponymous heroine of *Effi Briest*, to be precise, dies a natural death but one that is occasioned by the stresses of her unenviable situation. Although volumes have been written about the various nineteenth-century novels of adultery and the politics of gender that are inherent in them, none have as of yet analyzed the adultery plots from the perspective of nationalism and imperialism that imbued the time period of these novels' literary dominance. Relying on the long history of gendering nations as female, the present volume offers a reading of the adulterous woman of nineteenth-century European fiction as a symbol of national anxieties.

The notion of adultery as an international crisis played out in miniature within the confines of a nuclear family becomes almost obvious if we consider the fact that some of the world's best-known novels of adultery portray

the home-wrecking lover figure as a national outsider. As the subsequent chapters show, the triangular love constellations depicted in these novels are not random, but rather they reflect the political tensions taking place between different European nations at the time. The first part of this book, "Empires," examines three masterpieces that belong to the canon of world literature: England's beloved *Middlemarch*, the novel par excellence of German realism, *Effi Briest*, and Russia's famous *Anna Karenina*. *Middlemarch* is a novel in which no actual sexual betrayal occurs, but it is as close to the novel of adultery as the nineteenth-century English literary tradition gets and, as such, is frequently compared to *Anna Karenina* and *Effi Briest* in the critical literature.[3] The heroines of both the English and the German novel are tempted by a lover of Polish origins, while Anna's lover, Count Vronsky, embodies everything that the author considers inauthentic (i.e., westernized) about Russian aristocracy, including its desire to liberate the South Slavs from Ottoman rule. If Russia's war against the Ottoman Empire forms the political backdrop—and even interferes with the publication, as chapter 3 shows—of *Anna Karenina*, *Middlemarch* unfolds in the wake of England's support of Polish insurrections against Russia, while *Effi Briest* operates in the context of hostile neighbor relations between the newly unified Germany and its Polish provinces. All three of the authors included in the first part of this study had written other novels that have been considered each author's major work on the nation and, by extension, the empire that it oversees. While I address these, more straightforwardly national novels as well, the book as a whole is an invitation to read in George Eliot's case not only *Daniel Deronda* but also *Middlemarch*, in Theodor Fontane's not only *Vor dem Sturm* (though this novel is hardly known even in Germany) but also *Effi Briest*, and, finally, in Tolstoy's case not only *War and Peace* but also *Anna Karenina* as novels of empire.

Looking at the adultery novels of empires from the perspective of national tensions naturally calls for a corresponding examination of the literary output from the occupied territories that subsisted in between and on the fringes of those empires and generated those tensions. The second part of the book, "Nations," complements the first part by turning to the novels of the very regions that spawn—or are otherwise associated with, as in the case of Vronsky—the lover figures who disturb the peace of respectable English, German, and Russian families. Serbia, Croatia, and Poland had their own thriving if not always internationally recognized realist traditions and canonical works that defined them. Moreover, unlike the literary fiction composed in the centers of empires, the works emerging from subjugated nations played indispensable political roles in raising the national consciousness of their reading populace and bolstering their national liberation movements. Although neither the South Slavic nor the Polish realist movements produced the typical novel of adultery with the plot conventions established by *Ma-*

dame Bovary, their key works nevertheless rely on the trope of adultery to convey their patriotic message. Precisely because these novels utilize adultery in a politically significant way, they provide a necessary answer to the more mainstream novels whose adultery plots I contextualize politically for the first time.

The two novels of stateless nations that I analyze in this book are the inaugural novel of Croatian realism, *The Goldsmith's Gold*, and Poland's international best seller, *Quo Vadis*, both of whose plots are propelled by a love triangle that, as in the novels of empires, reflects the political crisis of their age. Rather than present a sexually tempted or transgressing heroine, each novel associates adultery with the heroine's nemesis, who comes from the ruling caste. The heroine herself—unlike Dorothea Brooke of *Middlemarch*, Effi Briest, or Anna Karenina, all of whom inhabit the upper echelons of society—comes from the impoverished class or belongs to a conquered people. The social status of the heroines of all five novels, then, is indicative of the political status of their respective geographic regions. If in the novels of empires it is the ethnically dubious lover figure who endangers the marital bonds of the aristocratic couple, then in the novels of stateless nations it is the heroine's adulterous nemesis who threatens her romantic union with the novel's hero. In both the Croatian and the Polish novel the role of the adulterous woman is played by the unfaithful wife of a ruling male figure, which makes her comparable to Effi Briest and Anna Karenina, since both of them are married to highly placed government officials. Even the scholarly project of Dorothea Brooke's vicar husband, a book titled *The Key to All Mythologies*, implies a sort of world dominance. It is important to note, however, that the difference between the two types of adulterous women is the difference between the pursued in the "Empires" section and the pursuer in "Nations." Ladislaw fantasizes of rescuing Dorothea from the "dragon who had carried her off to his lair,"[4] Crampas is known as a notorious womanizer around town in *Effi Briest*, and seducing Anna becomes the "исключительно одно желанье" (one exclusive desire) of Vronsky's life (*PSS* 18:157). Conversely, in the literatures of the "nations in waiting"[5] the empire is evil and its immorality is highlighted through its sexually aggressive female representative. She uses both her beauty and her political clout to attempt to woo the hero away from his beloved and into doing the bidding of the empire, thereby diverting his energies from improving the lot of the subjugated nation.

While a Serbian work may have made for a better complement to the Russian novel that sends its heroine's seducer to fight the Turks in Serbia, the case is such that no suitable Serbian novel exists. To be sure, there is no dearth of Serbian realist novels, but none stands out as a work employing the trope of adultery in the way I analyze it in this project. The reason for this absence must, at least partially, be the fact that the Ottoman Empire

was never anthropomorphized as a bewitching woman in the literature of the South Slavs, as the western empires were. Even in the literature of Serbian realism, the temptress is, as revealed in the title of a short story by Laza Lazarević, which I discuss at the end of chapter 4, a "Švabica" (German girl). The history of Croatia, like that of other South Slavic regions, involves numerous battles against the Ottoman Empire and the accompanying national epics that celebrate their heroism. August Šenoa is especially significant in the latter regard for his turning away from the popular literary genre and developing the novel, in which he warns against the nation's reliance on Austria and its use of Croatian soldiers as Turkish cannon fodder. His work also presents a valuable follow-up to the Russian novel because he promoted an alternative to the Slavophile/Westernizer binary that dominated Russian intellectual thought of the nineteenth century by calling for the South Slavs scattered among the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires to unite into their own state. The solution to statelessness as advocated by Šenoa, then, not only for Croatia, but also for the neighboring nations whose autonomy was secured by Russian intervention, was not a reliance on a powerful big brother, but a strengthening by means of sheer numbers based on a common cultural and linguistic identity.

As the subsequent chapters inevitably demonstrate, compared to the plethora of secondary material that is available for informing the discussion of the three novels of empires, the Croatian and the Polish novel have engendered meager scholarship. The Croatian novel, which has only recently been translated into English for the first time,[6] has been examined mostly by Croatian scholars working at Croatian universities. More surprisingly, the Polish novel, which secured its author international fame and a Nobel Prize, and was even the subject of a hugely successful Hollywood motion picture in the early 1950s, also yields very little by way of critical engagement. The vast disparity between the amount of mainstream critical attention devoted to the key works of English, German, and Russian literature and to those of Croatian and Polish literature accurately reflects the inequality between those countries in terms of their political and economic power. A mere glance at the theories of realism and the novel reveals that what they group under those categories are the realist movements and the novels of empire. Georg Lukács's definition of the "historico-philosophical" milieu of the novel as one of "transcendental homelessness" is one very telling example,[7] since the Polish and South Slavic realists lived and wrote under conditions of literal homelessness, in the sense that their nations were not possessed of a state. Including the two lesser-known novels here alongside the three world classics provides an initial step toward filling that gap. The tactic is also necessary for bringing my study thematically full circle, as the last two chapters examine the novels produced in the regions whose characters and political upheavals cause familial strife in the novels examined in the first

three chapters. In addition, it allows a couple of key works from "minor" or "peripheral" literatures to speak back to both the canon and the empire, with adultery as the point of convergence.

The most frequently cited monograph on the topic of the unfaithful wife remains Tony Tanner's *Adultery in the Novel: Contract and Transgression* (1979), and I use it as my point of departure. Other articles and books on individual novels of adultery, needless to say, have been published since, and I refer to many of them here. When it comes to taking up the subject across different national literatures, however, despite a couple of more recent comparative treatises, Tanner's still stands out as the most widely recognized one.[8] His study covers about a century's worth of time just before adultery became, as Tolstoy put it, "the favorite . . . theme of all novels" and the plot sequence in which adultery leads to death was established; it begins with Jean-Jacques Rousseau's 1761 *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse* (Julie, or the New Heloise), continues with Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's 1809 *Wahlverwandtschaften* (Elective Affinities), and ends with the trendsetting *Madame Bovary*. Tanner's most valuable suggestion for the study of adultery in fiction is to examine "the connections or relationships between a specific kind of sexual act, a specific kind of society, and a specific kind of narrative."[9] His take on the sexual act of adultery privileges the category of class, specifically the bourgeoisie and its mores, which is why an analysis of *Madame Bovary* constitutes the appropriate ending for his book. The placement of Rousseau's *La nouvelle Héloïse* and Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften* under the bourgeoisie umbrella, it ought to be noted, has not gone unnoticed, and at least one reviewer took issue with this grouping.[10] The overarching theme that holds the three novels together in Tanner's framework is the compulsion to order. This compulsion is evident in the bourgeois society's tendency to "enforce unitary roles on its members," which means that adultery becomes a "bad multiplicity within the requisite unities of social order."[11] Tanner emphasizes the bourgeoisie's obsession with "taxonomy and categorization,"[12] which is why Eduard and Charlotte's never-ending improvements to their estate in *Elective Affinities* support his central argument so well, even though the couple is of a much higher economic crust. If the bourgeois reading is misapplied to the novels of adultery that precede *Madame Bovary*, it cannot be applied to those that follow either. The central characters of *Madame Bovary*'s most famous successor, *Anna Karenina*, belong to the enormously wealthy Russian landed gentry and the family of *Effi Briest* inhabits the upper echelons of Prussian society. Even *Middlemarch*, whose subtitle is *A Study of Provincial Life*—similar in that vein to *Madame Bovary*'s *Moeurs de province* (Provincial Manners)—informs us regarding its heroine on the first page of the first chapter that "the Brooke connections, though not exactly aristocratic, were unquestionably 'good': if you inquired backward for

a generation or two, you would not find any yard-measuring or parcel-tying forefathers—anything lower than an admiral or clergyman" (7). The rise of the bourgeoisie, however, had enormous consequences for the development of national identity with its concomitant anxieties, and these are reviewed below.

In tracing the literary history of adultery in his introduction, Tanner observes that the first stories on the theme portray the act as threatening to entire civilizations (such as Paris and Helen's) and societies (such as Launcelot and Gwenyver's), whereas in the nineteenth-century novel the destruction is focused on the nuclear family and typically on the adulteress herself. My own reading of the nineteenth-century novel of adultery in a way returns to the ancient theme of threatened civilizations, which is why Ferida Durakovi ć's poem, though written about the dissolution of Yugoslavia at the end of the twentieth century, is the appropriate epigraph for a study of nineteenth-century national anxieties as rendered through a sexual metaphor. While heroines of Anna's or Effi's ilk do not provoke war—or launch a thousand ships, to use Christopher Marlowe's poetic phrase—like Helen of Troy does, they are linked, through their lovers, with the wars their nations do fight, whether it be to liberate another people (such as the South Slavs in Anna's case) or to subjugate them (such as the Poles in Effi's). Dorothea's second husband, as the grandson of a Polish refugee, is connected to the country's partitions and its subsequent uprisings, which England supported. In the Croatian and Polish novel the link between adultery and threatened civilizations is even stronger, since the adulteress herself, a symbol of the overpowering empire, actually threatens the survival of the subjugated nation, her ire inflamed by the hero's rejection of her in favor of a woman with an inferior pedigree.

Other kinds of social anxieties can be detected in the portrayal of other kinds of sexual breaches, as Tanner remarks, though he does not develop the idea further: "Earlier fiction, particularly in the eighteenth century, abounds in seduction, fornication and rape, and it would be possible to show how these particular modes of sexual 'exchange' were related to differing modes of economic exploitation or simply different transactional rules between classes or within any one class."[13] Building on this insight, I wish to point out that the very rise of the novel as a literary genre in eighteenth-century England did, in fact, coincide with a major shift in class structure, that is, as Ian Watt has famously shown, with the rise of the middle class. This structural shift, together with the anxieties it generated, is mirrored in the topics those first novels address. It is not coincidental that all three authors in the subtitle of Watt's work, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*, depict impoverished protagonists—such as the eponymous heroines in Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, as well as the eponymous hero in Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*—who transgress class boundaries through sexual relations and mar-

ital unions with members of the aristocracy. The rise of the middle class, the very demographic whose literary imagination came to subsist on these works, threatened the previously firmly established class demarcations and, more specifically, the width of the gap between them. The fears associated with the narrowing of this gap are embedded in the stories where the wider gap is crossed through sexual liaisons and, most terrifyingly of all, liaisons that elevate a servant girl to the status of an aristocrat's wife. The seduction or rape of a servant girl by one of her male employers was not an uncommon occurrence—this is precisely what Pamela Andrews's parents fear when they learn from her letters of Mr. B's attentions—but a marriage between the two indicated a collapse in class structure and suggested class mobility, which is precisely the kind of threat that the rise of the middle class posited.

As various scholars of nationalism have amply demonstrated, "the formal universality of nationality as a socio-cultural concept"[14] was made possible by the rise of the middle class and, in fact, replaced class as the operative form of identification. In outlining what he sees as the necessary precursor to the birth of nationalism, Ernest Gellner describes "a path from the agrarian world, in which culture underwrites hierarchy and social position, but does not define political boundaries, to the industrial world in which culture *does* define boundaries of states, but where it is standardized, and hence insensitive, non-discriminating with respect to social position."[15] "It was thus natural," Eric Hobsbawm argues regarding the half century leading up to World War I, "that the classes within society, and in particular the working class, should tend to identify themselves through nation-wide political movements or organizations ('parties'), and equally natural that de facto these should operate essentially within the confines of the nation."[16] Commenting on the period preceding this shift, Hannah Arendt describes eighteenth-century "nobles who did not regard themselves as representatives of the nation, but as a separate ruling caste which might have much more in common with a foreign people of the 'same society and condition' than with its compatriots."[17] One of these eighteenth-century nobles, the famous German poet, playwright, and philosopher Friedrich von Schiller encapsulated the idea in a footnote to the fifteenth of his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* (1795). Recounting the various national pastimes in cities like London and Madrid, he observes that "there is far less uniformity among the amusements of the common people in these different countries than there is among those of the refined classes in those same countries."[18] The eventual faltering of class boundaries necessitated national identity as a new means of social cohesion, since, as Hobsbawm shows, "from the 1870s onwards it became increasingly obvious that the masses were becoming involved in politics and could not be relied upon to follow their masters."[19] Hobsbawm's choice of the 1870s as the point of demarcation coincides with the publication dates of the novels under my consideration, whose heroines

come under threat from a national outsider rather than an unscrupulous master, as they do in the novels that comprise Watt's study. Arendt's observation, somewhat humorous in its bluntness, that the newly emerged "bourgeoisie from the very beginning wanted to look down not so much on other lower classes of their own, but simply on other peoples,"[20] is evident in the transition from the eighteenth-century predominantly class-oriented novels to those of the nineteenth and especially later nineteenth century, in which national concerns predominate.

Hobsbawm's choice of the 1870s as the point of demarcation is also significant for my lack of inclusion of the foundational modern novel of adultery, *Madame Bovary*, in the present study. Tanner's evaluation of this 1857 masterpiece as "the most important and far-reaching novel of adultery in Western literature" might cause one to wonder whether the English, German, and Russian classics on the same topic could have even been possible without it.[21] Yet the key difference between the first and the three that followed in its wake is that Emma Bovary does not have a foreign lover or even one connected to a foreign cause, so neither of her two adulteries translates into a compromise of French national purity. At one point in the novel she even "retrouvait dans l'adultère toutes les platitudes du mariage" (rediscovered in adultery all the banality of marriage),[22] thus obliterating the difference between the two, between husband and lover, insider and outsider.

Hobsbawm's and, preceding his, Arendt's assessment of the difference between French and German nationalism is useful in shedding further light on the difference between *Madame Bovary* and its successors. According to Arendt, French nationalism was born out of class struggle, as opposed to a competitiveness with other nations, culminating in the storming of the Bastille and the French Revolution of 1789. Arendt invokes the writings of the Comte de Boulainvilliers, who "interpreted the history of France as the history of two different nations of which the one, of Germanic origin, had conquered the older inhabitants, the 'Gaules,' had imposed its laws upon them, had taken their lands, and had settled down as the ruling class."[23] Consequently, "the French brand of race-thinking [w]as a weapon for civil war," whereas, by contrast, "German race-thinking was invented in an effort to unite people against foreign domination" and was based on "a consciousness of common origins."[24] This "foreign domination" refers to Napoleon, whose conquests, needless to say, inspired other nationalisms all over Europe, including Russia, where it subsequently generated Tolstoy's other mammoth classic, *War and Peace*. Hobsbawm echoes Arendt when he identifies "the founding acts of the new régime" as the French Revolution for the French and the Franco-Prussian War for the Germans.[25]

Emma Bovary's adulteries turn out to be concomitant with the class-based nature of French nationalism. The bourgeois heroine engages in her first extramarital relationship with the wealthy Rodolphe, carries out a pro-

longed yet unconsummated romance with the merchant Lheureux, and has one more affair with the office clerk Léon. Her suicide, it is also important to remember, is not occasioned by guilt or shame over her infidelities, or because she sees no way out of a love triangle, but because she sees no way out of the monetary debt she has accrued.[26] The novel, therefore, both in its choice of Emma's lovers and in its reason for her tragic ending, reflects the peculiar, class-inflected "French brand of race-thinking," while the novels that follow in its path negotiate the boundaries of belonging vis-à-vis a lover figure whose national authenticity is in question.

The latter half of the nineteenth century witnessed what in 1878 George Eliot, the author of *Middlemarch*, described and welcomed as "the modern insistance on the idea of Nationalities."[27] It witnessed the height of imperialism and colonialism, as well as the national uprisings that inevitably followed, and it witnessed the rise of the modern nation-state, the unification of Italy in 1861 and the unification of Germany in 1871. Replacing class, uniformity began to be viewed on the level of nationality and distinction as existing between various nationalities, which now, like individual humans, each acquired its own "character." My inquiry into the role that gender and gender relations play in defining the concept of nation and negotiating its boundaries has partly been inspired by the observation that prominent scholars of nationalism have employed the former to emphasize the importance of the latter. Benedict Anderson, for example, postulates that "in the modern world everyone can, should, will 'have' a nationality, as he or she 'has' gender."[28] The analogy is pertinent to my examination of the novel of adultery because the subgenre flourished at a time when "having" a nationality first grew to unprecedented importance but also at a time when mending the inequality between the genders first became a matter of serious debate. If the proliferation of the novel of adultery revealed the anxieties associated with the burgeoning Woman Question, then the concomitant "insistance on the idea of Nationalities" reverberated in those novels where the lover who lures the heroine away from home and hearth also happens to be of the "wrong" nationality. In defining the nation as the marriage of state and culture, Gellner creates an analogy even more pertinent to both the theme of the unfaithful wife and that of the anxious nation: "Just as every girl should have a husband, preferably her own, so every culture must have its state, preferably its own."[29] The conflict that propels the plots in the novels of empires is created by the girl who is unhappy with the husband that is her own and, therefore, vulnerable to the advances of one who is not. (Incidentally, both Effi's and Anna's unhappy marriage is the direct consequence of their society's strong conviction that every girl should have a husband, as each is pushed into a union with a man she barely knows, let alone loves, Effi by her parents and Anna by an aunt.) In the case of *Middlemarch* and *Effi Briest*, the other man comes from a culture that does not have a state but is

desperately trying to acquire one, which in turn makes the empire vulnerable to political disasters. Anna Karenina's lover, on the other hand, is guilty of fully embracing the foreign culture that had been imposed by the state since the time when Peter the Great westernized Russia, and further guilty of joining the movement that pushes the empire into war, one whose purpose is to grant other oppressed cultures their own states. The novels emerging from the stateless cultures, finally, allegorize their political woes through the figure of the wicked woman who has a husband of her own but pursues another's husband-to-be and, by implication, further thwarts the subjugated culture's strivings for a state of its own.

Returning to Tanner's invitation to seek out the "relationships between a specific kind of sexual act, a specific kind of society, and a specific kind of narrative," it is worth considering that the political relationship between the European empires and their overseas colonies has frequently been sexualized through the trope of rape. Rape has been employed both in narratives justifying colonial oppression, by depicting the native male population as a threat to white womanhood, and in narratives critiquing imperial conquest, by depicting the subjugated land as metaphorically raped by the European invaders.[30] While the relationship between the European empires and their colonies has generated an enormous amount of scholarship and defined the field of postcolonial studies, the so-called semicolonialism occurring on the European continent—such as the Polish partitions by Austria, Prussia, and Russia or the Habsburg and Ottoman occupations of South Slavic lands—has begun to be explored only in the last couple of decades, the scholarship seemingly spurred by the end of the Cold War. *Adulterous Nations* belongs in this newer category and brings to it a gendered inflection, one that has heretofore only been explored in classic, that is, global-scale East versus West, postcolonial theory.

I borrow the term "semicolonialism" from Maria Todorova's work on the Balkans. Hers is one of the two monographs that were published shortly after the Cold War ended, in the 1990s, and have addressed, taking their lead from Edward Said's famous *Orientalism*, conceptions of otherness between East and West on the European continent itself. While Larry Wolff's *Inventing Eastern Europe* encompasses a larger geographic swath and, therefore, plays a greater role in chapter 1, which discusses English attitudes toward both Poland and Russia, Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans* is valuable for the entire scope of the book. Although her area of investigation is the Balkan peninsula, some of her key conclusions can easily be applied to Poland, such as "the issue of the Balkans' semicolonial, quasi-colonial, but clearly not purely colonial status"[31] and the observation that "unlike orientalism, which is a discourse about an imputed opposition, balkanism is a discourse about an imputed ambiguity."[32] The difference between "opposition" and "ambiguity" is the difference between "colonial" and "semicolonial," be-

tween a European empire's subjects in Africa or the Indian subcontinent and those in Poland or the Balkan provinces of southeastern Europe. Todorova notes the prevalence of the prefix "semi-" in popular descriptions of the Balkans–"semideveloped, semicolonial, semicivilized, semioriental"[33]—and these are, again, equally applicable to the perception of Poland by Western Europe, especially by Germany, whose close proximity to its Polish semicolony made the need for differentiation all the more urgent. In addition, Germany's dearth of overseas colonies and the resulting insecurity vis-à-vis England, as chapter 2 shows, marks the last term on Todorova's list–semioriental—especially significant in the adultery tale of *Effi Briest*. Both Effi's lover and Dorothea's second husband are semicolonial in the sense that they are perceived as European-yet-not-quite-European by the Prussians and the English among whom they live.

Although an imperial equal, Russia also endured, as Larry Wolff shows, using phrasing similar to Todorova's, "demi-Orientalization" by the West, whose diplomats wrote about the "demi-savages" they encountered there.[34] The Russians' self-definition was divided in the nineteenth century, as stated previously in regard to Šenoa's alternative vision, between the Slavophile and the Westernizer camp. The Slavophiles emphasized Russia's uniqueness and promoted a return to its autochthonous culture, while the Westernizers promoted reform and progress based on the English and French models. It is within this divide that the notion of *semi* becomes useful in my reading of *Anna Karenina*. The heroine's westernized lover, insofar as he falls short of Tolstoy's national ideal, is semi-Russian or, to rephrase an earlier construction, Russian-yet-not-quite-Russian. He is, therefore, appropriately sent off to fight—and, we are led to believe, die—for the liberation of the Balkan semicolonies from Ottoman rule.

Just as the term "colonialism" does not seem entirely fitting for describing the conquests and exploitation that took place within Europe, so rape as a sexual metaphor does not seem quite appropriate for capturing the relationship between European empires and their semicolonies. Rape is not commonly utilized in the fiction of the era, whether it be fiction produced by the oppressor or by the oppressed, nor has it been employed as a theoretical tool in the scholarly literature. Rather, it seems to be adultery, based on its prevalent use in the nineteenth-century novels of both the empires and their semicolonies, that constitutes the suitable sexual metaphor for the political relationship between the two. Tanner's most fruitful observation for my work in this regard is the etymological link he notes between "adultery" and "adulteration," the latter implying that something—a family unit at face value, but the nation in my reading—has been polluted or contaminated.[35] The fear of adulteration is especially relevant to nations inhabiting the same continental space and was felt acutely by those empires that ruled contiguous territories, which placed them in close proximity to their subjects. The

overseas colonies were not only separated by geographic distances from the centers that governed them; their inhabitants could also be conceptually distanced from those centers based on racial differences. The inhabitants of the semicolonized regions on the European continent, on the other hand, did not look all that different from those in power, although efforts were certainly made to differentiate, orientalize, and even simianize them. A look at the relations between contiguous regions of unequal power reveals that vague similarity is often experienced as much more threatening than clearly delineated difference. This was not only the case for those in power, since, as the last two chapters of this book show, the fear of adulteration went both ways. The oppressed nations fighting for independence also had to fight the many temptations to "sell out," especially when currying favor with one empire seemed to promise protection from another or when belonging under the umbrella of a particular empire afforded one the veneer of being more "civilized" than one's neighbors. Todorova also brings up the notion of pollution, as used by Mary Douglas, in discussing Western perceptions of the Balkans. If "objects or ideas that confuse or contradict cherished classifications provoke pollution behavior that condemns them,"[36] then this conclusion holds true as much for the odd in-between status of a semicolony as it does for a third person in a marriage. Both defy classification; both adulterate set categories.

A point of clarification in the terminology *empire* and *nation* is in order. An empire, by definition, consists of multiple nations, but only one of those is in an incontestable position of privilege, while the others are disadvantaged to various degrees. The example of the British Empire, with the English in charge, is probably the most widely familiar. The case of the German Empire is slightly different. Prussia, whose three successful wars—against Denmark in 1864, Austria in 1866, and France in 1870—secured German unification, was clearly in charge and could, in that sense, be compared to England in the British Empire. There is no question, however, that Bavaria, even during Bismarck's vehement anti-Catholic campaign, fared immeasurably better than Ireland did under English rule; in fact, a comparison of the two seems rather ridiculous. Poland in respect to Prussia would make for a much more apt comparison with Ireland in respect to England, including the efforts of the dominant nation to draw racial distinctions between itself and the nation that it subjugated. Austria is yet another differing example as its empire's internal problems led to the *Ausgleich* with Hungary in 1867, which resulted in the creation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The nations on both sides of that hyphen were a source of threat or "adulteration" for nineteenth-century Croatians, as shown in chapter 4. Russia stands out among all of these as a nation whose territory was significantly larger—because of, to quote from *Anna Karenina*, the "огромные незанятые пространства" (vast unoccupied spaces) (*PSS* 18:362) that Siberia comprises—than the sum of

the colonies it possessed, though its centers of power and culture were located in its smaller, European part.

If both the center and the periphery fear national adulteration, then the "national" in that phrase refers both to the nations without states and to the ruling nations within empires. The multiethnic empire is by definition adulterated, and it is its privileged nation that fears adulteration from the periphery, as the independence-seeking periphery does from the center. The appearance of the quarter Polish Will Ladislaw in *Middlemarch*, for example, does not threaten the British Empire, but rather his pursuit of the English heroine threatens England, which she embodies. *Effi Briest*'s half Polish Major Crampas does not threaten the German Empire, as he lives under and supports its dominion. He crosses both ethical and ethnic lines, however, and contaminates Prussia when he seduces the novel's eponymous Prussian heroine. Conversely, when the cuckolded Karenin drafts a solution to a rebellion occurring in one of Russia's colonies—significantly, as chapter 3 argues, in the same evening that he writes a letter to his unfaithful wife—he is dealing with a problem that belongs to the empire and to the Russian nation as its primary agent. Even when I write of empires, then, the fears I analyze as expressed in their novels of adultery are national fears.

I use the term "nationalism" to indicate both the concern of the dominant nation within the empire to protect its advantageous position and the desire of the subjugated nations to win independence. Since Poland plays a large role in the book, I also wish to heed the warning of one of America's great Polonists, Andrzej Walicki, that in Poland "nationalism" is "a pejorative term, meaning, approximately, the same as chauvinism, narrow national egoism, state expansionism, intolerant attitudes towards national minorities, and so forth." Walicki points out that nineteenth-century Poles used the term "patriotism" and that today "the average educated Pole would be surprised and indignant if he were told that Adam Mickiewicz was not only the greatest Polish poet but also one of the greatest Polish 'nationalists.'"[37] Therefore, when discussing Poland, I have taken care to employ the terms "patriots" and "patriotism." Nationalism has acquired especially negative connotations among the South Slavs over the past few decades, when it occasionally became synonymous with ethnic cleansing because of the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia. Since the critical literature on the national awakening of nineteenth-century South Slavs employs the term "nationalism," however, I continue to use it in chapter 4.

The Woman Nation, the Chosen Nation, and the Adulterous Nation

The anthropomorphizing of nations, empires, and the earth itself as female has a long history, evident in expressions ranging from "Mother Earth" to

"Mother Russia." This latter expression—*mat' Rossiia*—might be the best known and most widely used example of gendered nations; as chapter 3 elaborates, it is closely related to the veneration of the Mother of God in Russian Orthodoxy. The case is the same for Catholic countries. The medieval Polish knights sang the anthem "Gaude Mater Polonia" (Rejoice, Mother Poland) at a time when Poland was a European force to be reckoned with, while Poland's favorite romantic poet, Adam Mickiewicz, mourned its death in the 1830 poem "Do Matki Polki" (To Mother Poland) as well as in the 1834 epic poem *Pan Tadeusz*, which contains the following poignant line: "O Matko Polsko! Ty tak świeżo w grobie / Złożona—nie ma sił mówić o tobie!" (O Mother Poland! Thou wast so lately laid in the grave. No man has the strength to speak of thee!).[38] One of Croatia's most popular patriotic songs is titled and begins with the words, "Rajska Djevo, Kraljice Hrvata" (Heaven's Virgin, Queen of the Croats). Composed by a Catholic priest who was murdered during World War II by the pro-Yugoslav *partizani*, it quickly regained its popularity after Communism fell and Croatia declared independence.[39] Anglican England is also known as "Mother England" and the British Isles as "Mother Britannia."[40] Germany, of the countries addressed in the current project, is the only one more commonly known as *das Vaterland* (the fatherland), but even so, its anthropomorphized embodiment is Germania. When Theodor Fontane, the author of *Effi Briest*, had a discussion about Bismarck's unification of Germany with fellow writer Friedrich Theodor Vischer, the latter expressed his dislike of the chancellor thus: "It pains me that it should be precisely Bismarck who succeeded. I wrote recently that Germany, after the German Michel had wooed her in vain with his songs, fell finally to the boldness of a Prussian Junker. He grabbed and had her."[41]

"The German Michel" is the male personification of Germany, as John Bull is of England or Uncle Sam of the United States of America, and these male images need to be addressed as well. They may be as ubiquitous as the female images, but they are less compelling, especially when it comes to rallying cries and mobilizing people on behalf of a nation. Uncle Sam may "want you," but a distressed Lady Liberty is more likely to stir men to action. And this—stirring *men* to action—is where the crux of the difference lies. Patriotic rhetoric is imbued with (hetero)sexual allusions. A nation, like a woman, is an entity for which men will live and die—as do, for example, Anna Karenina's husband and lover, respectively—and whose honor they will pledge to defend. Traditionally, and still overwhelmingly, it has been men who have built, conquered, and defended, as well as theorized, the nation, from statesman to soldier to scholar. The last category brings to mind the tireless efforts of the aforementioned Polonist Andrzej Walicki to make Polish history better known in the West. In the introduction to his *Philosophy and Romantic Nationalism: The Case of Poland*, he writes, "Poland was for centuries the most important country of this area [East Central Eu-

rope] and *her* intellectual history provides many keys to a better understanding not only of *her* own history, but of European history as a whole. . . . [A] true Slavist, even if *he* specializes in Russian history, should be able to see *his* subject in an all-Slavonic perspective."[42] Walicki merely follows the long-established convention of referring to a nation in the feminine and a human professional in the masculine, but it is hard to deny that the particular gender distribution increases the emotional potency of the appeal, as it calls upon (male) scholars to rescue (female) Poland from oblivion. Walicki's book was published in 1982, but even as recently as 2008, there was a vigorous debate on the listserv for Slavic scholars, SEELANGS, on whether Russia should be referred to as "she" or "it." [43] Compared to the female images of the nation, the male images tend to be caricatures, as is immediately apparent in the contrast between visual representations of Uncle Sam and Lady Liberty, or the chubby John Bull and the regal Britannia. And, when the nation is in danger, she is usually a woman being attacked by a male and in need of male defense. As formulated by Vischer, Michel "wooed" Germany, whereas Bismarck "grabbed and had her." To use an example closer to home, a popular nineteenth-century U.S. Southern secessionist banner depicts the federal government as the bald eagle, aiming his beak at two women who represent the Southern states. The caption placed between the eagle and the woman next to him reads, "touch her if you dare," which is undoubtedly the utterance of the Southern armies, proclaiming their readiness to defend "her."

In discussing "the invention of tradition" that supported the rise of the nation-state, Eric Hobsbawm offers a valuable distinction between male and female images of the nation, using France and Germany as examples. The French Marianne, he claims, is "the image of the Republic itself" and separate from, though usually accompanied by, "the bearded civilian figures of whoever local patriotism chose to regard as its notables, past and present."[44] In the same vein, the German Michael "belongs to the curious representation of the nation, not as a country or state, but as 'the people', which came to animate the demotic political language of the nineteenth-century cartoonists, and was intended (as in John Bull and the goateed Yankee—but *not* in Marianne, image of the Republic) to express national character, as seen by the members of the nation itself."[45] The female images, then, embody the nation "as a country or a state" or "the Republic," whereas the male images embody the nation's subjects, either as a whole or through individual representations of famous men who brought her glory.

Hobsbawm's distinction in meanings behind the male and female images of the nation illuminates my analysis of the role of gender in the novelistic expression of national anxieties, specifically in the novels of empires, which are, after all, the immediate subject of Hobsbawm's inquiry in the chapter I have been referencing. The sympathetic, even beloved female protagonist,

who functions in my reading as the embodiment of the nation, finds herself stifled from the one end by the lackluster husband, typically one who in some shape or form works on the empire's behalf, and pursued from the other end by an outsider, who is perceived as a national threat. The gender distribution is different in the novels of stateless nations because the imminent threat comes from the dominant empire, which is appropriately embodied in another female figure. The hero in that case, as the expression of "national character," to use Hobsbawm's phrase, is the one pulled in opposite directions, between fighting for the subjugated nation's sovereignty and serving the evil empire.

Parenthetically, my observation of the female images of the nation as regal and the male as caricatures—the latter supported by Hobsbawm's reference to "the demotic political language of the nineteenth-century cartoonists"—is visible in the portrayal of some of the characters in the novels of empires. Dorothea Brooke, for example, is compared in the very opening of *Middlemarch* to "the Blessed Virgin" as depicted by "Italian painters," and her simple yet dignified appearance is contrasted to "provincial fashion" as "a fine quotation from the Bible—or from one of our elder poets,—in a paragraph of to-day's newspaper" (7). Dorothea's first husband, on the other hand, truly is merely the caricature of a scholar with his never-ending book project, while her second husband, at least in the beginning of the novel, is a romantic wanderer with no firm purpose in life. Anna Karenina is, before the affair unravels her, the epitome of class, grace, and poise, while the fleshless and bumbling Karenin is prone to being the object of mockery in his government committee meetings and Vronsky, who worries very much about appearing "смешным" (ridiculous) (*PSS* 18:136) in high Russian society, appears exactly so as soon as he lets his guard down and attempts to be a painter while traveling with Anna in Italy.[46]

The long history of gendering nations and similar collectivities as female can be traced all the way back to traditions that are considered foundational to modern European literatures and cultures. The ancient Greek myth of Europa's abduction by Zeus is one example. Another is the ancient Hebrew prophets' personification of Israel as a woman, often, more significantly for the project at hand, an adulterous woman. The biblical examples are especially relevant to the novels covered here because their authors were citizens of countries that were (and to a large extent still are) steeped in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The sacred Hebrew texts provided European Christian nations with the validation for considering themselves exceptional and with the conviction that they were the new Israel, a view that was used to justify not only a nation's right to exist but also its right to acquire the "promised land" and expel others from it. The term associated with this line of thinking is "replacement theology" or "supersessionism"—the idea that, since the ancient Jews rejected Jesus as the Messiah, the church has become the new

Israel and, hence, God's new chosen people. The idea was easily co-opted by imperialist rhetoric and is still alive and well today in American conservative Christian circles.[47]

The Puritans leaving England for Massachusetts in the seventeenth century were as convinced that they were establishing the new Israel as were the English back at home regarding their ancestors' settlement of the British Isles. The idea in England even reached a bizarre point over the course of the nineteenth century in the form of British or Anglo-Israelism—the notion that the Anglo-Saxons were the direct descendants of the lost tribes of Israel, who migrated to the Isles across Europe—which culminated in the founding of the Anglo-Israel Association in 1874. Examples of less extreme adaptations are numerous, but to offer just one from each side of the Atlantic, the English Diggers founder, Gerard Winstanley, pronounced that "the last enslaving conquest which the enemy got over Israel was the Norman over England,"[48] while the American Thomas Jefferson concluded his second inaugural address by calling upon "the favor of that Being . . . who led our fathers, as Israel of old, from their native land and planted them in a country flowing with all the necessities and comforts of life."[49] The ever perspicacious George Eliot commented on the tendency of both nations to appropriate Israel's history to suit their own political objectives in "The Modern Hep! Hep! Hep!," the same essay in which she described "the modern insistance on the idea of Nationalities":

> The Puritans, asserting their liberty to restrain tyrants, found the Hebrew history closely symbolical of their feelings and purpose; and it can hardly be correct to cast the blame of their less laudable doings on the writings they invoked, since their opponents made use of the same writings for different ends, finding there a strong warrant for the divine right of kings and the denunciation of those who, like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, took on themselves the office of the priesthood which belonged of right solely to Aaron and his sons, or, in other words, to men ordained by the English bishops.[50]

While critical of the English and their belief in "a peculiar destiny as a Protestant people," in soliciting sympathy for the Jews Eliot still found it necessary to employ the same creed: "There is more likeness than contrast between the way we English got our island and the way the Israelites got Canaan."[51] Far from being unique to England or the United States, replacement theology, with its concept of the new Israel and the idea of exceptionalism that it fostered, was part and parcel of nationalist rhetoric across Europe. The empires that occupied the dominant positions on the continent and ruled other parts of the globe saw their political and economic advantage over others as proof of their chosenness. The subjugated nations, on the other hand, expected a

future deliverance, a vanquishing of their enemies, and the full possession of their "promised land."

If the Old Testament portrays Israel as God's wife, and when "she" fails to obey God's law as an adulteress, then the New Testament carries on the gendered imagery by depicting the church as the bride of Christ. An especially potent New Testament female image, due to her role of mother, as stated previously, is the Virgin Mary, whose sexual purity bears relevance for the (desired) purity of the nation. An important antipodal image is one that is not typically opposed to the Virgin, the prostitute Mary Magdalene, but rather the Whore of Babylon from the last book of the New Testament, Revelation. Biblical scholars agree that the moniker was used as a code phrase for Rome by its persecuted Christians, which is why many a subjugated nation has employed it since. The Bible, then, has been a fecund source of national metaphors in European politics, and its various female images play a role in the novels discussed in this book. Male images of the Bible were also used for national purposes; there is the Hebrew Bible's Moses delivering his people from Egyptian bondage and his successor, Joshua, as well as the New Testament's figure of the Antichrist that was widely associated with Napoleon in the early nineteenth century. It was the female images, however, as already established, that symbolized the nation as an entity and effected the more potent patriotic emotions, from the revered Mother of God to the reviled Whore of Babylon.

The Geography of the Book

The novels that are the focus of the next five chapters were published in the 1870s (*Middlemarch*, *Anna Karenina*, *The Goldsmith's Gold*) and the 1890s (*Effi Briest* and *Quo Vadis*). I have opted to proceed in a particular geographic fashion instead of a straightforward chronological line for a couple of reasons. The more practical one is that I contextualize all of these novels in their authors' larger oeuvres and sometimes even in their national traditions, which would make it impossible to proceed chronologically without skipping back and forth from country to country. The chapter on *Effi Briest* includes the largest amount of discussion of the author's other novels because Fontane wrote several with adultery as the central topic; he also wrote a number that include Germany's Slavs in their plots and a couple in which the two threads are intertwined. The reading of his crowning masterpiece, therefore, would be impoverished if it were not preceded by the works that led up to it. Since August Šenoa, the author of *The Goldsmith's Gold*, supported the unification of the South Slavs into their own state, chapter 4 begins with a discussion of the preceding romantic period in which the movement was born and ends with a reading of a Serbian realist author

whose portrayal of the Germanic West is comparable to Šenoa's.

The other reason for the geography of the book is that it felt appropriate for a study of national anxieties to follow the path of prejudice known as orientalism, or, more suitable for the spaces in the European continent, nesting orientalisms. This latter concept was developed by Milica Bakić-Hayden, who originally employed it for discussing the relationship between the republics of the former Yugoslavia. It describes the "gradation of 'Orients'" within a more geographically circumscribed area than Edward Said had in mind, that is, "a pattern of reproduction of the original dichotomy upon which Orientalism is premised."[52] Before the breakup of Yugoslavia inspired Bakić-Hayden's amendment of Said's famous notion, Julia Kristeva had already described a similar gradation of othering in *Strangers to Ourselves*. Although her geography does not proceed in a smooth West-to-East fashion, the idea is the same, especially in its iteration of the dichotomies between civilized and barbarian, rich and poor: "In France, Italians call Spaniards foreigners, the Spaniards take it out on the Portuguese, the Portuguese on the Arabs or the Jews, and the Arabs on the blacks and so on."[53] The way in which nesting orientalisms function among the empires covered in the present volume is that Germany, as a new competitor on the colonial scene, looked up to England, but the sentiment was not returned, since England perceived the unification of Germany as a threat and ridiculed its imperial aspirations. Both countries looked down on Russia, and, even though the English expressed sympathy with the Poles seeking independence from Russia as well as with the South Slavs seeking independence from the Ottoman Empire, all of these nations in the eastern half of Europe constituted for the West that barbaric remnant whose ethnic designation—Slav—is etymologically related to "slave" and other denigrating terms, such as "slovenly." It thus seemed logical to begin part 1, "Empires," with the novel from the most powerful empire of the time, the English, and from there to proceed eastward, from England to Germany and from Germany to Russia.

As discussed previously in reference to the work of Maria Todorova and Larry Wolff, Eastern Europe has been theorized as Europe's *other* within, and these theories play a role in the first two chapters of the book. The contrast posited in the previous sentence, between Eastern Europe and Europe, is typical of the idea that what we mean by Europe is really Western Europe, though the end of the Cold War and the gradual entry of the formerly Eastern Bloc states into the European Union has begun to change that. Wolff notes the appearance of the term "Central Europe," whose advocates, he claims, "are committed to shattering intellectually the oppressive idea of Eastern Europe, to redeeming the Czech Republic and Hungary, maybe Poland, even perhaps Slovenia."[54] Since the publication of Wolff's book in 1994 the advocates of "Central Europe" have undeniably accomplished their goal as Poles, Slovenes, and Croatians not only firmly identify themselves as Cen-

tral Europeans, but feel offended at being called Eastern European and are quick to correct anyone who puts that label on them. The strong reaction testifies to the negative connotations the term "Eastern Europe" has acquired and shows, more generally, just how politically and socially loaded our geographic designations are. Since my book examines novels written in the last third of the nineteenth century, the period preceding by more than a century the invention of Central Europe (about which an entire follow-up to Wolff's seminal work could be written, as an analysis of the post–Cold War response to the West's invention of Eastern Europe), employing the new term would be anachronistic, so I use "Eastern Europe" when discussing both Poland and the South Slavic lands, even though I understand that it might grate on the ears of contemporary readers. It was the term in use during George Eliot's and Theodor Fontane's milieu, and using the "softer" variant would attenuate the meaning of the reaction elicited by the Slavic lover figures in their novels. Because of the ethnicity of those outsider lover figures, a review of each author's general attitude toward the Slavic world also forms an integral part of the first two chapters.

Poland, as it turns out, figures in all three chapters of "Empires" because, even though Poland is not the "problem" in *Anna Karenina*, *War and Peace*, which occupies a substantial portion of chapter 3, was written during the time of Poland's second insurrection against Russia. Poland may seem an odd choice for the chapter on the English novel, but it just so happens that the English novel most comparable to *Anna Karenina* and *Effi Briest* casts a Polish character in the lover's role. And while, as mentioned earlier, Ireland to England makes a better analogy for what Poland was to Germany (as well as to Russia), an English novel of adultery with an Irishman was not produced until D. H. Lawrence penned *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in 1928, that is, after the age of empires, the realist movement in literature, and the general novelistic fascination with adultery had already passed.

Part 2, "Nations," turns from Russia to the southwest and then moves north as it meanders through the provinces at the mercy of the empires discussed in part 1. Since chapter 3 discusses Russia's war with the Ottoman Empire on behalf of the South Slavs, South Slavic literature is the subject of chapter 4, and chapter 5 closes the circle with Poland, whose characters cause havoc in the novels of the first two chapters. Although the Ottoman Empire plays a role in both chapter 3 and chapter 4, its literature does not merit a chapter of its own because the Ottoman Empire did not participate in European culture in the way that Russia and its authors did. This difference between the two empires also accounts for why Russia was perceived as a greater threat to England. As summed up in a review of David Urquhart's *The Progress of Russia in the West, North, and South* for the *Westminster Review* in 1853, when George Eliot was its deputy editor: "The Russians are more insidious than the Ottomans three centuries before, because they

are culturally and diplomatically involved with Europe."[55] While part 1 and part 2 are meant to complement one another, I attempt throughout the book to rub the various novels against one another, so to speak, and to put their authors in conversation, not only because their themes overlap, but also because some of the authors thought highly of one another, as Tolstoy did of Eliot and Fontane of Tolstoy.

Last, the Slavic theme that is common to all five chapters of this study is somewhat accidental, at least in the sense that the book was not originally conceived as one with a broad Slavic focus. With *Anna Karenina* as one of the world's best-known novels of adultery and with Poland playing a prominent role through the lover figure in the English and German novels of the same category, the Slavic theme emerged and spread. The theme is not so accidental, however, when one considers these novels in the larger political context of nineteenth-century imperialism and nationalism, which *was* the original intention of the book. German unification entailed a reconfiguring of the meaning of Poland in Prussian politics, which resulted in the reinterpretation of Poland as an acquired colony. In Russian politics Slavophilism, with its image of Russia as the leader, unifier, and protector of all Slavs, began to play a prominent role. The Poles were not sold on the idea as they launched two insurrections, the merciless quashing of which presented a crisis for Slavophilic rhetoric of magnanimity and inclusiveness. Conversely, the South Slavs under Ottoman rule found Slavophilism incredibly useful when they rebelled against their colonizer with the full expectation of Russia's aid, which was swiftly delivered. Other voices, suspicious of Russia's imperial designs, advocated the unification of South Slavs into their own separate state. From the western end of Europe England observed all these political upheavals and, fearing both German unification and Russian expansion, ardently supported Poland while wishing that South Slavic liberations would be less entangled with Russia. The age of empires and national revivals, then, was to a great extent a Slavic age. On the literary scene, those Slavic authors whose nations were struggling for independence employed the trope of adultery to symbolize their oppression, and the Slavic theme in the empires' novels of adultery reverberated as far as England.