

The British Liberal International Tradition in the nineteenth century

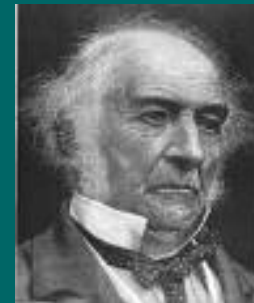
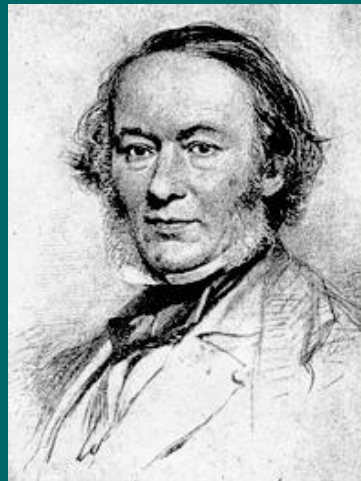
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Introduction

- The historiography of British Liberal Internationalism:
- E.g. Fournoy, Sylvest, Ceadel, Varouxakis
- Canonical exemplars: Cobden, Mill, and Gladstone
- *The Letters of Richard Cobden, 1804-65*
- 4 vols. Oxford University Press, 2007-2015



Traditions in international relations

- Hall & Bevir, 'Traditions of British International Thought', *International History Review*, 2014
- Mill & utilitarianism
- Gladstone: Christian universalism
- Cobden: from radicalism to non-intervention

Languages of Liberal Internationalism

- Liberalism and the language of political economy
- The primacy of free trade
- Cobden: 'free trade .. the only human means to effecting a universal and permanent peace'
- Gladstone: 'there is no more powerful agent [than commerce] in consolidation and in knitting together the amity of nations'
- Mill: 'it is commerce which is rapidly rendering war obsolete'
- Bertrand Russell: 'free trade ... the only sane internationalism left' (1903)

Towards free trade and peace?

- Britain and unilateral free trade
- Free trade diplomacy, 1856-75: commercial treaties as peace bond between nations
- Free trade and the common law of Europe
- From free trade to internationalism

Internationalism and Imperialism

- Was 'empire fatal to internationalism' (Sir Louis Mallet)
- Was there an imperial logic to liberalism?
- Free trade and colonies
- The primacy of self-government
- Empire and civilization
- The international logic of liberalism?
- Greater Britain or Little England? Large or small states?

Eliminating war

- The importance of the peace movement
- Disarmament from above and below
- International arbitration
- The *Alabama* arbitration: 'a precedent of priceless value to mankind' (Campbell-Bannerman, 1905)
- International law at sea: Cobden versus Mill

Non-intervention

- Palmerston and liberal interventionism
- Cobden and non-intervention: the case of Hungary in 1849
- War for non-intervention? ‘the only cause which could insure for a government of England the hearty support of the people would be a war in defence of the principle of non-intervention’ (Cobden to Chevalier, Feb. 1864)
- Schleswig-Holstein, 1864: a turning-point?

Non-Intervention

- Mill and counter-intervention
- Gladstone: 'you cannot invade a nation in order to convert its institutions from bad ones to good ones' (1862)
- 'That the collective forces of the civilized world should be organized ...is one of the best guarantees of peace' (1864)
- Updating the Concert of Europe?

Religion and internationalism

- Secularising thinking on war and peace?
- C. M. Kennedy, *The Influence of Christianity upon International Law* (1855)
- ‘I fear that we must look to the progress of physical science rather than the teachings of the New Testament for the realization of our hopes of amelioration in the international relations of mankind’ (Cobden, 1863)

Conclusion

- Unifying the Liberal 'broad church' on foreign affairs
- The other internationalism: Bismarck's 'exchange of hard knocks and blood and iron internationalism' (Sir Robert Morier)