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# THE CRIMEAN WAR IN THE BRITISH IMAGINATION

The Crimean War (1854–1856) was the first to be fought in the era of modern communications, and it had a profound influence on British literary culture, bringing about significant shifts in perceptions of heroism and national identity. Stefanie Markovits explores how mid-Victorian writers and artists reacted to an unpopular war: one in which home-front reaction was conditioned by an unprecedented barrage of information arriving from the front. This history had formal consequences. How does patriotic poetry translate the blunders of the Crimea into verse? How does the shape of literary heroism adjust to a war that produced not heroes but a heroine, Florence Nightingale? How does the predominant mode of journalism affect artistic representations of "the real"? By looking at the journalism, novels, poetry, and visual art produced in response to the war, Stefanie Markovits demonstrates the tremendous cultural force of this relatively short conflict.

STEFANIE MARKOVITS is Associate Professor of English at Yale University.

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