

Useful Enemies: Islam And The Ottoman Empire In...

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The growth of European nationalisms also found a useful enemy in Muslims, specifically the Ottoman sultan. In the late 19th century, Greek, Serbian, Romanian and Bulgarian nationalists all began to depict the Ottoman sultan as a despot. They appealed to British liberals to break the Ottoman-British alliance on behalf of a global Christian solidarity. Anti-Ottoman British liberals such as William Gladstone argued that Christian solidarity should be important for British decisions with regard to the Ottoman empire. It is in that context that the Ottoman sultan referred to his spiritual link with Indian Muslims, to argue for a return to an Ottoman-British alliance thanks to this special connection between these two big Muslim empires.

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