

Contemporary Issues in Historical Perspective

“Down in Turkey, far away”: Human Rights, the Armenian Massacres, and Orientalism in Wilhelmine Germany*

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Famous in the annals of German drama is a scene known as the “Easter stroll,” in which the playwright takes leave, briefly, from his plot to depict a cross section of small-town humanity enjoying their holiday. Snatches of conversation drift across the stage, the everyday things that ordinary Germans have on their minds: romance (if they’re young women), sex (if young men), and (for the rest) those eternal verities: taxes, local politics—and the Eastern Question.

One townsman remarks,

On a Sunday or holiday, what can be better
Than on war and its pother to enjoy a palaver
Whenever down in Turkey, far away,
The folks are out bashing one another.

To stand at the window, toss back a glass,
[The strollers have clearly now reached a pub]
Watch the bright boats gliding past;
Then at dusk, to stroll on home,
Blessing peace and quiet times.

Whereupon his companion defensively replies,

And OK by me, mate!
Let them split each other’s skulls!
And if everything there falls apart? Whatever!
So long as all’s the same right here.¹

The play is Goethe’s *Faust*, and this brief exchange soon became proverbial in Germany: hauled out during Bavarian Landtag elections in the 1850s, when debate turned to the Crimea; in the 1870s, after the Russo-Turkish war; in the 1890s, during massacres of Christians in Szechwan—indeed, whenever talk arose of doing something to stop someone *else’s* skull from being split. The tag “down in

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¹ All translations, unless noted otherwise, are my own.

Turkey, far away,” as a metonym for torments that barbarians inflict on each other, in which “we” are happily not involved, might be invoked (not always approvingly) by anyone from Catholic journalists to Marxist revolutionaries to Wilhelmine aristocrats.² Recently, it has embellished the press conference of a German foreign minister, the sermon of a bishop, the arguments of Germany’s Muslims: it is part of the cultural repertoire of every German with a high school education.³

Yet Goethe’s lines clearly meant not to recommend but to satirize the philistinism of his countrymen, so insulated behind their town walls that the horrors on Europe’s periphery became mere titillation for comfortable *Spießbürger*, arm-chair strategists enjoying their frisson of horror (and superiority) on a sunny afternoon. Goethe’s insight—how distance destroys fellow feeling—was not, of course, unique. In 1759, Adam Smith had noted wryly that a man who knew that he was “to lose his little finger tomorrow, . . . would not sleep tonight. But, provided he never saw them, he will snore with the most profound security over the ruin of a hundred millions of his brethren.”⁴ And just six years before *Faust*, Chateaubriand had offered a chilling variation on the same theme in the form of a thought experiment that became known, after Balzac recycled it in *Père Goriot* in 1835, as the Chinese Mandarin Question. The question was this: What would you do if you could inherit a fortune, without leaving home and without risk of punishment or even discovery, simply by willing the death “of an old Chinese mandarin”? Though Chateaubriand had raised the question in order to insist that

² Examples: Otto Franke, on the Russo-Turkish war, as seen in sleepy Zerbst, *Erinnerungen aus zwei Welten* (Berlin, 1954), 21 (I owe this reference to Suzanne Marchand); Edmund Jörg, on the Bavarian Landtag and on Szechwan, “Die ‘Christen-Massacres’ in China und die Missionen,” *Historisch-Politische Blätter für das katholische Deutschland* 116 (1895): 604–25, 604; Rosa Luxemburg, “Die nationalen Kämpfe in der Türkei und die Sozialdemokratie III,” *Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung*, no. 236, Oct. 10, 1896, and “Zur Orientpolitik des ‘Vorwärts,’” *ibid.*, no. 273, Nov. 25, 1896, both reprinted in Luxemburg, *Gesammelte Werke* (hereafter *GW*) (Berlin, 1982), 1, pt. 1:67, 70; Richard von Kühlmann, merging and mangling Goethe’s lines to express nostalgia, in spite of “war and its pother,” for the life “down there in Turkey,” to Paul Weitz, May 30, 1915, *Auswärtigen Amt Abt. I* (hereafter *AAI*), NL Weitz, Bd. 6.

³ Joschka Fischer, referring to Africa: *Der Spiegel*, Dec. 20, 2003; Cem Özdemir, on fears of Islamic fundamentalism not only “down in Turkey, far away” but also “in the middle of Duisburg-Maxloh”: “Allah’u akbar,” <http://www.oeko-net.de/kommune/kommune4-98/kolcem4.html>; Haydar Isik, on Germany’s historical support for Turkey’s suppression of the Kurds: “Die Kurden: Demokratische Kraft der Region,” <http://www.nahost-politik.de/europa/kurden.htm>; Easter sermon calling for solidarity with “brothers and sisters” in Kosovo, Würzburg cathedral, April 4, 1999, http://www.kirchenserver.net/bwo/opencms/sites/bistum/bistum/bischof_em/box/1999/04_04_99.html. The tag also shows up commercially, lending products a Goethean glow, as in the title of J. Seyppel and T. Rilsky’s travel guide, *Hinten weit in der Türkei: Reisen und Leben* (Wiesbaden, 1983).

⁴ *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. A. L. Macfie and D. D. Raphael (1759; Oxford, 1976), 3 [3.4], 136–37, quoted in Thomas Laqueur, whose essay and the volume in which it appears have stimulated these thoughts: “The Moral Imagination and Human Rights,” in Michael Ignatieff et al., *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*, ed. Amy Gutman (Princeton, NJ, 2001), 133.

conscience would, in the end, prevail, Balzac's character replies, "Oh, I'm on my thirty-third mandarin."⁵

The enormous difficulty of establishing a moral connection, a sense of obligation, toward someone you can't see—indeed, never will see—is a universal one. It is the greatest obstacle that faces any NGO—Doctors without Borders, Amnesty International, and countless others—that tries to mobilize support to address what Thomas Laqueur calls "distant suffering." Even those who are neither as insouciant as Goethe's ordinary Germans nor as callous as Balzac's Bianchon, those who feel genuine dismay at hearing others' bad news, are unlikely to exert themselves in any sustained way. Our common humanity does not, in practice, compel action. As Hannah Arendt concluded upon surveying the plight of displaced persons after the world wars: "It seems that a man who is nothing but a man has lost the very qualities which make it possible for other people to treat him as a fellow man."⁶

What does it take to pry open the circle of obligation, to admit as "fellows" those whose suffering is out of sight? "Love thy neighbor!" is a commandment embedded in many religious traditions. Yet since biblical times it has elicited the evasive response, "Who *is* my neighbor?" The answer to that question, so vital to humanitarians, presupposes an answer to yet another: "Who am *I*?" And both have historically been conditioned by our answers to yet a third: "Who is *not* my neighbor?"—in academic parlance, "Who is the 'Other'?" "Brotherhood entails Otherhood," it has been said.⁷ They are two sides of the same coin. And which side is up helps explain the differential success, or failure, of human rights activists then and now.

In recent years we have come to see both identity and alterity as deeply implicated in something that Edward Said has taught us to call "Orientalism," a discourse that invents and exalts a Western Self by contrasting it to an essentialized Islamic Other. My essay puts pressure on Said's dichotomies. It takes as its starting point one of the West's earliest and most universal movements to address distant suffering, a movement occasioned by the massacre, beginning in 1894 and continuing for more than two years, of some 200,000 or more Armenians in the Ottoman Empire of Abdul Hamid II.⁸ In the epoch inaugurated by these

⁵ Chateaubriand, in *The Genius of Christianity* (1802), posed the question without using the word "mandarin." Chateaubriand and Balzac are quoted in Carlo Ginzburg, "Killing a Chinese Mandarin: The Moral Implications of Distance," *Critical Inquiry* 21, no. 1 (Autumn 1994): 46–61, 53.

⁶ *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1951), 300. A recent consideration of this problem by philosophers and political theorists: Deen Chatterjee, ed., *The Ethics of Assistance: Morality and the Distant Needy* (Cambridge, 2004).

⁷ Benjamin Nelson, quoted in John Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400–1700* (New York, 1985), 62; emphasis mine.

⁸ The English edition of Johannes Lepsius's *Armenia and Europe: An Indictment* (London, 1897) gives an 88,000-plus figure in a statistical table (330–31) taken from earlier figures compiled a year before the massacres ended. He adds subsequent deaths in his

pogroms, “down in Turkey, far away” ceased to be a metonym and became the actual site of pain. After a brief survey of countries where Armenian human rights (as they were called even then) attracted significant political support, I will turn to Wilhelmine Germany, where activists had a notably thin time of it.⁹ Many of the groups that elsewhere took up the Armenian cause were here pulled by countervailing interests. In Germany, moreover, the very discourse employed on behalf of Armenians was turned against them, and a counterdiscourse, one we might well term Orientalist, was deployed against an Armenian Other in order to champion their Muslim antagonists. Thus, to an extent that undercuts simple notions of Orientalism, German spokesmen succeeded in diluting sympathy for the victims and shifting it to the perpetrators. After offering some hypotheses to explain why German responses took this exceptional turn, I will conclude with more general reflections provoked by these responses to the Armenian-Turkish conflict: on the inevitable weakness of the category “human”; on the kaleidoscopic nature of “right here” and “far away”; and on the permeable boundaries of Germany’s (and our) “Europe” and “Orient.”

I. GEOPOLITICS AND ARMENOPHILE NARRATIVES

No one, let us stipulate, who works for another’s human rights has ever been satisfied with the public’s response, and those engaged on behalf of the Armenians were no exception. The English Quaker J. Rendell Harris was “tempted to despair.”¹⁰ Prime Minister Salisbury, who labored mightily to build a united front among the Great Powers to put pressure on Abdul Hamid, exclaimed after months of fruitless negotiations that he did not believe that, outside England, “from Archangel to Cadiz there is a soul who cares whether the Armenians are exterminated

preface (entitled “A Later Note,” xix), for a total of ca. 100,000. These did not include those who died later from wounds, exposure, or loss of breadwinner. By 1903, French and Italian commentators were putting the number of victims at 300,000. *Pour l’Arménie et la Macédoine* (Paris, 1904), vii, 64, 142, 184–85, 250–53. As in most mass killings, authoritative figures are unavailable.

⁹ The term “human rights” used by Social Democrats: “Erklärung,” *Vorwärts*, no. 265, Nov. 11, 1896; by Catholics: “Die Protestversammlung gegen die türkischen Greuel in Armenien,” *Germania*, no. 226, Sept. 30, 1896, 2. Blatt; and by Liberals: Friedrich Naumann, “Zur Armenierfrage,” *Die christliche Welt* (hereafter *ChW*) 12, no. 50, Dec. 15, 1898, cols. 1185–88, esp. 1187, and “Asia”: *Eine Orientreise über Athen, Konstantinopel, Baalbek, Nazareth, Jerusalem, Kairo, Neapel*, 5th printing (Berlin-Schöneberg, 1904), 138. Thanks to Chris Nickerson for copies of *Germania* and other papers from 1895–97. Although one can distinguish humanitarian from human rights activism, in the case of minority populations the two tend to bleed into each other, the food, shelter, and medical care emphasized by the former often being dependent upon basic political protections demanded by the latter. Carole Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878–1938* (Cambridge, 2004), does not include Armenians.

¹⁰ Harris to Johannes Lepsius, Dec. 22, 1896, in Lepsius, *Armenia and Europe*, x.

or not.” France’s ambassador to Constantinople, Paul Cambon, who shared Salisbury’s horror at the massacres, seconded the complaint.¹¹

“We see the world through the stories we tell,” notes Mark Danner. That is, we make sense of information we acquire only incrementally “by placing it in a context we have already constructed.”¹² To move the public from the default mode depicted in *Faust*, from its traditional suspicion that the mass killings “down in Turkey, far away” were simply one more round in an eternal cycle of violence—with no right, no wrong, no end, and therefore no meaning—required spokesmen who could fit Armenians and Turks into a narrative in which listeners could imagine themselves. Eventually, Armenia’s advocates succeeded in supplying such narratives, generating when they did so broad public backing. In Switzerland, activists performed this feat by figuring the Armenians as another “small mountain people,” one whose survival over the centuries, in the face of large and powerful neighbors, was testimony to their grit. In 1896, the Swiss collected a million francs for Armenian relief and more signatures of support than on any petition in their history.¹³ To the English-speaking world, the Armenians were outposts of Western enlightenment in the Ottoman Empire. The Liberal warhorse William Ewart Gladstone proclaimed that “to serve Armenia is to serve civilization,” a line quoted in New York on the masthead of *Armenia*, a monthly. Just as in Britain the Armenian cause attracted Liberals, in the United States its activists—Julia Ward Howe, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Jacob Schiff come to mind—typified those strata most invested in the progressive narrative. In all three countries a genuine mass movement, one that crossed political and religious lines, was mobilized behind the Armenian cause.¹⁴

In France, too, the paladins of the Armenians spanned the political spectrum. Both the quondam royalist Count Albert de Mun and the leader of the socialists, Jean Jaurès, lodged parliamentary interpellations in fall of 1896, demanding to know what their government planned to do about the Armenians. The anti-Catholic fire-eaters Georges Clemenceau and Anatole France joined Monseigneur Félix Charmétant, of the White Fathers, in sounding the alarm.¹⁵ The most prominent advocates, however, founders in 1900 of *Pro Arménia*, were men of the Left: Pierre Quillard, Francis de Pressensé, Bernard Lazare—all committed Dreyfusards, all members of the League of the Rights of Men. For men like these, it

¹¹ Salisbury, quoted in Roy Douglas, “Britain and the Armenian Question, 1894–7,” *Historical Journal* 19, no. 1 (1976): 113–34, 120–21; Cambon, quoted in *ibid.*, 125–26.

¹² “The Memo, the Press, and the War: An Exchange,” *New York Review of Books*, Aug. 11, 2005, 62, and “Iraq: The New War,” *ibid.*, Sept. 25, 2003, 88.

¹³ Hans-Lukas Kieser, “Die Schweiz des Fin de Siècle und ‘Armenien’: Patriotische Identifikation, Weltbürgertum und Protestantismus in der Schweizerischen Philarmenischen Bewegung,” in *Die Armenische Frage*, ed. Kieser (Zurich, 1999), 133–57.

¹⁴ Thomas C. Leonard, “When News Is Not Enough: American Media and Armenian Deaths,” in *America and the Armenian Genocide*, ed. Jay Winter (Cambridge, 2003), 294–308.

¹⁵ “Die orientalische Frage in der französischen Kammer,” *Germania*, no. 257, Nov. 5, 1896, 1. Blatt, 1.

was second nature to translate Armenian grievances into the language of human rights.

That Armenians themselves identified their human rights with their rights as a nation raised few eyebrows. As a Polish socialist living in Paris observed wryly, the narrative of national liberation was trumps in Western Europe. Thus Belgians identified the struggle of Turkey’s subject peoples with their own fight against the Dutch in 1830. Italians had analogous associations, the “Garibaldians of Bologna” invoking their hero’s name at pro-Armenian rallies. And the French always packaged national and individual rights together as precious inheritances of the Revolution: “No wonder, then, that the French masses demand today an armed intervention to protect the Armenians against the [Ottoman] Kurds.”¹⁶ That Armenians no longer constituted a majority in historic Armenia (not least thanks to the massacres that had reduced and dispersed them, but also, after 1912–13, because of the influx of hundreds of thousands of Balkan Muslims, expelled during the First and Second Balkan Wars) was a negligible difficulty for a public long used to writing off the Ottoman Empire as an anachronism, and for whom Turks, Kurds, Circassians, and the other Muslims populating eastern Anatolia were shadowy presences, claiming attention only when they were killing Christians.

In Germany, however, a narrative favorable to the Armenians did not succeed in crowding out alternatives. Their cause, as the same Polish socialist noted, failed to attract the Left, whose press often treated reports of massacres with skepticism. German comrades had their own story line, one that told them that they did not have a dog in this fight. As late as October 1915, after learning that some 800,000 Armenians had been slaughtered over the previous six months, the Social Democratic editor Max Grunwald could argue that “in judging [the Armenian situation] one must observe Marx’s guiding principle that historical development moves according to its own laws. If one wanted to apply European concepts of morality and politics to Turkish conditions, one would arrive at a completely distorted judgment.”¹⁷

The dismissal of “European concepts of morality” as inapplicable to Turkey was not confined to the followers of Marx. The liberal orientalist C. H. Becker, founder of the journal *Der Islam* and later minister of culture in the Weimar Republic, invoked the same argument after he learned the “horrifying details” of the fate of the Armenians from former students stationed in Anatolia during the war: “Never forget that in Turkey we do not have a *Rechtsstaat* with an educated population and effective state authority; we stand here, rather, on Asiatic soil, where European culture and the discipline of a European state are only slowly

¹⁶ Elehard Esse [Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz], “La politique internationale du prolétariat et la question d’Orient,” *Le Devenir Social* 4, nos. 7–8 (Jul.–Aug. 1898): 565–89, esp. 567–69, 574, quote on 569. Garibaldi was invoked at rallies in Milan, April 26, and Rome, May 7, 1903: *Pour l’Arménie*, 138, 141, 175, 186.

¹⁷ Quoted in “Auszug aus dem Vortrage des Dr. Johannes Lepsius vom 5.10.15 über die Lage der Türkischen Armenier,” Oberzensurstelle des Kriegspresseamts, Nov. 1, 1915, fol. 51, Ernst Jäckh Papers, Yale University Library (hereafter Jäckh-YU).

setting down roots.” Turkey would eventually “have to give up many Asiatic governmental practices” before Germans could consider it their moral and cultural equal, but for now Germany must, without flinching, stay the course that its interests prescribed: alliance with the Ottomans. Once the war was over, it would be Germany’s task “to raise Turkey culturally, so that a repeat of such events will be impossible.”¹⁸ (Dying in February 1933, Becker was spared the ultimate challenge to his Orientalist explanation for genocide.)

The argument from cultural relativism continues to be the indispensable apology for murderous regimes. Whether and when it will be employed, however, depends upon whose culture is being relativized—and on preferences growing out of narratives more geopolitical than developmental. Thus, in 1896 when the twenty-five-year-old Rosa Luxemburg, then a student in Zurich, submitted a three-part article to *Vorwärts*, Social Democracy’s premier daily, demanding that the party “declare itself without reserve for the Armenian cause,” its editor, Wilhelm Liebknecht, rejected it, invoking not Marx’s theory of historical development but a narrative with an even older pedigree on the German Left.¹⁹ The Grand Old Man of German Social Democracy, who had won his spurs in the 1848 revolution and cofounded the Second International, sympathized with all repressed humans, classes, and peoples, he averred. But Liebknecht, alert to the tsarist threat, wanted the young lady to get her priorities straight: “Fräulein Rosa Luxemburg”—Liebknecht managed to misspell Luxemburg’s name three different ways in the same piece—“who is, after all, a Pole, would perhaps find a more fruitful field if she occupied herself with the Russian atrocities in Poland, and in Russia itself. Then she would not run the danger of unintentionally serving the interests of the bulwark of European absolutism.”²⁰

Given these priorities, *Vorwärts* was not being inconsistent when, after violence erupted between Azerbaijanis and Armenians in the Caucasus in 1905, it published an Armenian appeal that accused tsarist forces of deliberately arming the

¹⁸ “Horrible details”: Becker to Jäckh, Aug. 27, 1915, NL C[arl] H[einrich] Becker, fol. 2059, Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz (hereafter GStA PK). “Never forget” etc. in C. H. Becker, “Armenier, Türken, und Wir,” *ibid.*, fol. 7836. Thanks to military censors, the piece remained unpublished. One of Becker’s most gifted students, by then a lieutenant in the Fourth Turkish Army, Tenth Division, conceded that one must “measure things [here] with other standards” but could not suppress his horror. Hellmut Ritter [brother of the historian Gerhard Ritter] to Becker, Sept. 15, 1915, *ibid.*, fol. 3521.

¹⁹ Luxemburg’s “Die nationalen Kämpfe in der Türkei und die Sozialdemokratie,” in three parts, had already been published in the *Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung*, nos. 234, 235, and 236, Oct. 8, 9, and 10, 1896; Luxemburg, *GW* 1, pt. 1:57–60, 60–63, 63–68. August Bebel apparently shared Luxemburg’s views, debating Friedrich Naumann at a Christian Social rally in Berlin. Wilhelm van Kampen, “Studien zur Deutschen Türkeipolitik in der Zeit Wilhelms II.” (PhD diss., University of Kiel, 1968), 120.

²⁰ “Erklärung,” *Vorwärts*, no. 265, Nov. 11, 1896. Liebknecht’s position was first revealed in Hermann Goltz, “Pfarrer D. Dr. Johannes Lepsius (1858–1926)—Helfer und Anwalt des Armenischen Volkes,” in *Internationales Dr. Johannes-Lepsius-Symposium*, ed. Hermann Goltz (Halle/Saale, 1986), 19–52, 39–40. Luxemburg had only sarcasm for the septuagenarian’s proof texts: conversations with Marx and the “genius” David Urquhart during the Crimean War, forty years earlier. “Zur Orientpolitik,” in *GW* 1, pt. 1:71.

“fanatic and ignorant hordes of the Mohammedan race,” inciting them to “indescribable atrocities.” This was a conflict that fit Social Democracy’s tried-and-true anti-Russian story. *Vorwärts*’ confidence in assigning blame in the Caucasus, however, did not mean that it was ready to pass judgment in Anatolia. Thus in 1918 it obligingly reprinted a declaration from the Ottoman wire service describing what was happening in Turkish Armenia as a “civil war.”²¹

An analogous geopolitical narrative—this time with England rather than Russia as the villain—was invoked by Germany’s Liberals in dismissing demands that the Reich exert pressure on behalf of Armenians. Employing the same “objectively/subjectively” distinction beloved of Marxist casuists, a popular Left Liberal leader argued at his party’s national congress in 1899 that “a position friendly to Armenians . . . means, in reality, supporting—however little one might intend it—England’s expansionist politics.”²² He was not alone in suspecting the Armenians of being—objectively, of course—allies of England. The Liberal press buzzed with such extenuations. And Hellmut von Gerlach, a scion of Junker aristocrats who would spend much of his life recycling in various autobiographies the heroic story of his journey from “Right to Left,” dutifully registering (in 1937) his revulsion at the carnage that confronted him on a trip to Constantinople in 1896, argued in 1898 at a Left Liberal Party congress against taking any position on the Armenians, those clients of England. Like many who hankered after a greater German role in Asia Minor, Gerlach preferred instead a policy toward Turkey that “improves the lot of our own people.”²³

Analogous considerations, buttressed by his own futuristic narrative, inspired Theodor Herzl’s enthusiastic response (“excellent!”) to an overture in 1896 by an agent of Abdul Hamid II suggesting that he marshal “Jewish power” on the sultan’s behalf, especially in the Armenian matter.²⁴ In a year when European sympathy for the Armenians was at its height and pressure on the Ottoman padishah was intense, Herzl used all his contacts, as Zionist leader and as newspaperman, to turn the tide. He began at the top, with a scheme to persuade Lord Salisbury to compel the Armenians to accept a reconciliation with the sultan on the latter’s terms. As an Austrian, he also tried to influence his own foreign minister.²⁵ A

²¹ “Aufruf der armenischen Sozialisten,” *Vorwärts*, no. 140, June 18, 1905; “Bürgerkrieg in Armenien: Türkische Anschuldigungen,” *ibid.*, no. 110, April 22, 1918.

²² Friedrich Naumann, quoted in Theodor Heuß, *Friedrich Naumann: Der Mann, das Werk, die Zeit*, 2nd printing (Stuttgart, 1937), 122.

²³ *Von Rechts nach Links* (Zurich, 1937), 128–30. Quote in Uwe Feigel, *Das evangelische Deutschland und Armenien: Armenierhilfe deutscher evangelischer Christen seit dem Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts im Kontext der deutsch-türkischen Beziehungen* (Göttingen, 1989), 89.

²⁴ Theodor Herzl, diary entry, May 7, 1896, *Zionistisches Tagebuch: 1895–99*, ed. Johannes Wachten and Chaya Harel, vol. 2 of *Briefe und Tagebücher* (hereafter *BT*), ed. Alex Bein et al., 7 vols. (Berlin and Frankfurt am Main, 1983–), 2:338–40. Herzl’s engagement was first reported by Marwan R. Buheiry, in “Theodor Herzl and the Armenian Question,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 7, no. 1 (Autumn 1977): 75–97, and investigated further by Yair Auron, *The Banality of Indifference: Zionism and the Armenian Genocide* (Tel Aviv, 1995; London, 2000).

²⁵ Efforts to enlist Salisbury: entries, May 11, 12, 1896, *BT* 2:341; Herzl to Max Nordau, May 11, 1896, and to Solomon Joseph Solomon, May 12, 1896, *BT* 4:101, 593; Herzl to

second prong of his attack was an approach to Armenian exile leaders, whom he hoped to shepherd “back into the [Ottoman] pen.” An Armenian insurrection was rumored for July, and the sultan wanted Herzl to get them to “submit without condition,” after which he would spontaneously grant all the reforms he deemed “possible.”²⁶ Herzl sent a secret emissary to meet with Armenian committees in Paris, Brussels, and London. He personally sought out the founder of the revolutionary Hintschaks in London and conferred with a Tbilisi Armenian leader in Vienna. A permanent peace was not part of the agenda. Herzl was acutely conscious that his leverage with the sultan would evaporate once Armenians ceased to be a threat, while Abdul Hamid himself wanted an armistice only to buy time to marshal his forces. All was very hugger-mugger: “Under no circumstances are the Armenians to learn that we want to use them in order to erect a Jewish state.”²⁷ But the wary Armenians kept Herzl at arm’s length.

Less fanciful were Herzl’s efforts to influence the press. Abdul Hamid’s precondition for the audience that the Zionist leader wanted to jump-start his Palestine project was Herzl’s success in persuading newspapers “in London, Paris, Berlin, and Vienna to treat the Armenian question in a manner more friendly to the Turks.” Herzl declared himself ready “à me mettre en campagne.” Proposing to “create an atmosphere” receptive to the “submission of the Armenians,” he promised not only to contact journalists throughout Europe but also to produce a series of articles in Vienna’s leading daily, his own *Neue Freie Presse*, on his favorable impressions of Constantinople’s ruling circles. A puff piece appeared the next day. Herzl gave interviews to the correspondents of *Novosti* and other Russian papers, to Israel Zangwill for the *Sunday Times*, and to Lucien Wolf, foreign affairs editor of the *Daily Graphic*.²⁸ The latter nearly blew Herzl’s cover by asking about a rumor that the sultan was angling for Jewish support against the Armenians in return for benevolence toward Herzl’s plans for Palestine. The “new Moses” indignantly denied it.²⁹

Philipp Michael de Newlinski, May 13, 15, 1896, *BT* 2:341–42, 343; entry, July 9, 1896, *BT* 2:398. Approach via the Austrian ambassador: entry, July 25, 1896, *BT* 2:381.

²⁶ Herzl to Nordau, May 11, 1896, and to Solomon, May 12, 1896: *BT* 4:100, quotes on 104; and entry, June 22, 1896, *BT* 2:375.

²⁷ Herzl to Nordau, and, similarly, to Solomon, May 11, 12, 1896, *BT* 4:101, 104. Contacts with Armenians: Herzl to Newlinski (two letters), May 15, 1896, *BT* 2:343–44; Zaikowski to Simon Lvovich Klatschko, May 30, 1896, *BT* 2:847–48; entries, May 13, 31, July 1, 2, 11, 13, 15, 1896, *BT* 2:342, 349–50, 390, 399–400, 402–3, 406. M. Şükrü Hanioglu shows Young Turks manipulating Herzl (with only brief success) in a similar fashion, with “plots proposed” that “rivaled those in the most unrealistic spy novels.” *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902–1908* (Oxford, 2001), 62.

²⁸ Quote: entry, June 22, 1896, *BT* 2:374–76. See also Herzl to Nordau, May 11, 1896, and to Solomon, May 12, 1896, *BT* 4:100–101, 103–4; entries, June 24, 25, 26, July 5, 11, 1896, *BT* 2:376, 379, 381, 382–83, 393, 399. According to Auron, Herzl also talked up the sultan with the *Daily Mail*: “Jüdische, zionistische und israelische Reaktionen auf den Völkermord an den Armeniern,” in *Der Völkermord an den Armeniern und die Shoah/The Armenian Genocide and the Shoah*, ed. Hans-Lukas Kieser and Dominik J. Schaller (Zurich, 2002), 570–91, 590 n. 2.

²⁹ Herzl continued to treat Wolf as a co-conspirator, asking on July 10, 1896: “Is the

Thus at the very time that England, France, and Russia were pressing Abdul Hamid to accept reforms, Herzl offered him a way out via “our [i.e., Jewish] power.” How? “The sultan gives us the piece of land, and for that we will put everything in order for him, regulate his finances, and determine public opinion of the entire world in his favor.”³⁰ Herzl had already taken the Ottoman debt to heart. By enlisting “our money people,” he proposed to get rid of the “shaming” European Control Commission and turn interest payments on the Ottoman debt over to a Jewish directorate, who would enable the sultan to borrow “ad libitum.” Various Rothschilds (Edmund James and Nathaniel Meyer) were approached, as were Claude Montefiore and Sir Samuel Montagu. A loan of 2 million pounds sterling, supplemented by yearly increments of 1 million, leading to a total credit of 20 million was mentioned. But talk’s cheap. And in the midst of all of it came new “horror stories.” Fresh massacres, this time in Constantinople before the eyes of European diplomats and businessmen, were the sultan’s retaliation for the seizure of the Ottoman Bank by Armenian revolutionaries. “The impression on the world is deplorable,” Herzl admitted. The financiers on whom he had pinned his hopes, “the Englishman Montagu, etc.,” would probably refuse anything connected with Abdul Hamid. “On the other hand, though,” he noted brightly, “it would be a very favorable moment to negotiate with the sultan, because he will be hard put to get money from anyone now.”³¹

Herzl did not lack information about what was going down in Turkey, far away. During his interview with the grand vizier, their interpreter had offered “pleasantly” (apparently in response to Herzl’s alarmed query about a massacre in Van) that “it was nothing—only a couple of hundred deaths.” That fall, Herzl heard a detailed account of the Constantinople bloodbath from an eyewitness.³² But geopolitics remained trumps. In 1901, it dictated a flattering telegram wired to the sultan by the Fifth Zionist Congress in Basel, only three months after fresh pogroms in Sasun and Mush.³³ The gesture outraged Armenian students in Geneva and Lausanne, as well as their Bulgarian, Polish, Russian, Macedonian, Georgian, and Jewish classmates, who telegraphed their indignation to Herzl. The protests were then published in Paris’s *Pro Arménia*. The Fifth Zionist Congress’s telegram excited the particular ire of Bernard Lazare. Himself once a Zionist, Lazare was scandalized that no one in Basel had objected to this salute to a “sultan covered with the blood of others.”³⁴ Although embarrassing, for Herzl the flap

Armenian matter progressing?” *BT* 4:117. A German translation of the fawningly pro-sultan *Daily Graphic* interview, in which Herzl also disingenuously conveyed the impression that he had already been given an audience with Abdul Hamid: *BT* 4:597–600.

³⁰ “Unsere Machtmittel.” Entry, June 9, 1896, *BT* 2:352–54.

³¹ Entry, Aug. 29, 1896, *BT* 2:437.

³² Entries, June 24, 25, Aug. [*sic*; he means Sept.] 29 (“Schreckensnachrichten”), and Oct. 24, 1896, *BT* 2:379, 381, 437, 461–62.

³³ Entry, Dec. 19, 1901; Herzl to sultan, Dec. 20, 1901, and to Grand Vizier Ibrahim Bey, Dec. 25, 1901; entry, Jan. 5, 1902. All in *BT* 3:322–24. The telegram is reprinted in *BT* 6:388.

³⁴ “Le Congress Sioniste et le Sultan,” *Pro Arménia*, no. 4, Jan. 1902, 29–30, cited in

was not without its consolations: “This may do me good with the sultan,” he noted.³⁵ The young Chaim Weizmann, leader of the Zionists’ Democratic Faction, which counted Martin Buber, now a Berliner and one of the delegates to Basel, among its members, hastened to organize rallies to denounce the anti-Herzl outcry as dishonoring the Jewish people. The declarations in *Pro Arménia* against the Zionist Congress’s telegram were reprinted in *Genveaux*, the journal of the Genevan Radical Party. Weizmann’s counterattack was published in Leopold Sonnemann’s left liberal *Frankfurter Zeitung*, one of the most influential papers in Germany, thus ensuring its publicity among an important sector of the German public.³⁶

It is difficult to gauge how far Herzl’s exertions affected (or reflected) opinion in Germany. Herzl’s *Neue Freie Presse* was a feeder journal for much of the German-language press, especially on matters Ottoman, since it was one of the few papers to have its own correspondent in the Turkish capital. Even the Catholic press relied on “the great Viennese Jewish paper” for much of its news of the Orient.³⁷ Yet reporting on Ottoman matters from the *Neue Freie Presse* was mixed (the sultan himself had complained of it), and Zionism had captured the allegiance of a relatively small number of German-speaking Jews. Nevertheless, the contrast between Jewish spokesmen in France, Britain, and the United States, including those sympathetic to Zionism, and their Central European counterparts is striking.³⁸ The former were noticeably engaged in Armenian human rights, while two of Herzl’s earliest German associates, Davis Trietsch and Dr. Alfred Nossig—although they eventually broke with him on the ways and means of colonizing Palestine—would also employ their talents in the Turkish cause.³⁹ Nossig went

Auron, *Banalities*, 104–7. Geneva was at that time a center not only of Armenian but also of Young Turk and Arab activity. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (Oxford, 1995), 159.

³⁵ Entries, Jan. 5 (quote) and 9, 1902, *BT* 3:326.

³⁶ Auron, *Banalities*, 108–11.

³⁷ Edmund Jörg’s two-part article, “Die drei aktiven Mächte in Sachen Armeniens: Die ‘armenischen Gräuelp’ insbesondere,” cited the *Neue Freie Presse* eighteen times, more than any other newspaper: *Historisch-Politische Blätter* 116 (Sept. 12, 1895): 453–71, and 116 (Oct. 23, 1895): 690–706, 706.

³⁸ In London, Israel Zangwill wrote: “I take the Crown of Thorns from Israel’s brow and place it upon Armenia’s.” Quoted in Goltz, “Lepsius,” 46–47. One of Herzl’s associates, Moses Gaster, felt the need to mollify the sultan about the Jewish press in England’s criticism of his treatment of the Armenians. *BT* 4:608, n. 827. In the United States, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Jacob Schiff, and Oscar S. Straus were active on behalf of Armenians, and in 1909 a resolution was passed by the Central Conference of American Rabbis calling on the Great Powers to protect Armenians from “Turkish barbarism.” Merrill D. Peterson, “Starving Armenians”: *America and the Armenian Genocide, 1915–1930 and after* (Charlottesville, VA, 2004), 58, 99, 147; Peter Balakian, *The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America’s Response* (New York, 2003), xvi.

³⁹ From the first, Nossig supported Herzl in the Armenian matter: Herzl to Nordau, May 11, 1896, *BT* 4:101. Later, Nossig’s writings praised the architects of the genocide: *Die Neue Türkei und Ihre Führer* (Halle/Saale, 1916); “Ein türkischer Staatsmann,” *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, no. 606, Nov. 27, 1915 (on Talât Bey); “Enver Pascha (Die Reform der

so far, in 1915, as to urge the American ambassador to Constantinople, Henry Morgenthau, “as one Jew to another,” to abandon his efforts on behalf of the Armenians.⁴⁰ The exhortation echoed an earlier appeal to Jewish identity by Chaim Weizmann, after the revisionist Social Democrat Eduard Bernstein had spoken out for the Armenians at a workingman’s rally. Weizmann reproved Bernstein for campaigning on behalf of the Armenians when he should have been championing the cause of the Jews.⁴¹

I am not suggesting that no one within these milieus—German-speaking Zionists, Social Democratic editors, Liberal scholars, journalists, and politicians—felt a twinge of compassion when they heard of mass murder down in Turkey far away. Luxemburg and Bernstein are evidence to the contrary. But as a group, Germans on the Left responded differently from their counterparts abroad. Later, I will try to explain the German difference. For now, it is enough to note that they were all answering the Chinese Mandarin Question (let us now rename it the Armenian Peasant Question) in the manner not of Chateaubriand but of Balzac.

The Armenians found only one constituency in Germany willing to provide them with sustained publicity and succor. These were Christians—but Christians of a particular kind. Catholics kept a low profile. Their national bishops’ conference did institute a nationwide collection, and a Cologne rally, graced by two bishops and three leaders of the Center Party, attracted a crowd of several thousand. Catholic newspapers usually reported Armenian suffering sympathetically and tended (unlike much of the German press) to relay official Ottoman accounts with caution. But the tone was sober, and solutions, if any, were left to the British.⁴² As for the papers of the mainstream Protestant church, their reporting initially reflected shifting points of view and degrees of engagement. *Christliche Welt*, published by the liberal theologian Martin Rade, did consistently champion the victims, but its subscribers were relatively few.⁴³

türkischen Armees),” *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, 33. Jg., n.d. [1915], fols. 45, 42, Jäckh-YU. Trietsch pooh-pooed the massacres of the 1890s in *Die Juden der Türkei, Länder und Völker der Türkei*, ed. Hugo Grothe, no. 8 (Leipzig, 1915), 20.

⁴⁰ Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau’s Story* (New York, 1918; Ann Arbor, MI, 2000), 251–52. Morgenthau describes Nossig as a German agent, but he was in fact acting on behalf of the Jewish colonization committee of Berlin. Initially unknown to bemused German diplomats, Nossig eventually gained the support of some embassy and Foreign Office personnel: E. W. Fürst zu Hohenlohe to Bethmann Hollweg, Sept. 2, 1915, in AAI *Türkei* 159, no. 1, *secr.*, “Der Sultan und seine Familie,” vol. 1, R 13785; Isaiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism, 1897–1918* (Oxford, 1977), 263–64.

⁴¹ Weizmann to Vera Khatzman, Aug. 9, 1902, *Weizmann Letters*, 22, cited in Auron, *Banality*, 111.

⁴² This judgment is based upon a reading of two years of *Germania* and scattered issues of other Catholic papers, all of which I owe to Chris Nickerson. Collection and rally: “Die Protestversammlung gegen die türkischen Greuel in Armenien,” *Germania*, no. 226, Sept. 30, 1896, 2. Blatt: 1–2.

⁴³ Its 5,000 subscriptions circulated widely, however, via reading groups. Axel Meißner, “Martin Rades ‘Christliche Welt’ und Armenien: Bausteine für eine internationale politis-

The core constituency for Armenian human rights lay elsewhere, with people whom Germans loosely call “awakened” (and Americans, even more loosely, “fundamentalists”): men and women whose religious sensibility and belief in the verbal inspiration of the Bible put them closer to the Anglo-American holiness movement that later fed into pentacostalism than to their contemporaries within the Wilhelmine Protestant establishment, ecclesiastical and academic.⁴⁴ Not a few were millenarians, and thus part of a broader international Protestant impulse, connected to each other and committed to evangelizing activity—from street preaching in Copenhagen to mission stations in India—in anticipation of the Second Coming.⁴⁵

Such were the foot soldiers of the movement for Armenian relief in Germany: the men and women who organized rallies, who took up collections for clinics and orphanages (amassing well over 600,000 marks by January 1897), who “adopted” children and paid the salaries of doctors and nurses.⁴⁶ They were to be found in churches as often as auditoriums, their ushers wearing the red armbands of the YMCA, their meetings opening with a hymn, closing with a prayer. Their publications reached broad audiences: *Auf der Warte*, for example, claimed an astonishing 50,000 subscribers. These were the people who brought events in Anatolia to the attention of the mainstream Protestant religious press, which eventually joined the cause.⁴⁷

While most Germans had difficulty discerning the story into which Turks and Armenians fit, evangelicals had no trouble making sense of what they heard, slotting these new horrors into traditional Christian narratives of suffering: Armenians, whose nation was the first to choose Christ (301 CE), were martyrs; Abdul Hamid II was a new Diocletian, a second Nero.⁴⁸ Especially for Germans

che Ethik des Protestantismus” (theology diss., University of Halle-Wittenburg, 2001), 69, 95, 102. Meißner’s is a work of fundamental importance and will be published as vol. 22 in *Studien zur Orientalischen Kirchengeschichte*.

⁴⁴ Jörg Ohlemacher, “Gemeinschaftschristentum in Deutschland im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert,” in *Der Pietismus im neunzehnten und zwanzigsten Jahrhundert*, ed. Ulrich Gäbler (Göttingen, 2000), 393–465. The Fellowship Movement, whose networks supplied much of the energy behind armenophile activism in Germany, was influenced theologically by Robert Pearsall Smith and Hannah Whitall Smith. Hannah’s (continuing) international best-seller, *The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life* (New York, 1870), appeared in German in 1893.

⁴⁵ E.g., Otto Eckelmann, India, to Johannes Lepsius, April 14, Nov. 19, 1896; H. L. Larsen, Copenhagen, to Lepsius, Jan. 31, 1897. Both in *Johannes-Lepsius-Archiv-Halle* (hereafter LAH), microfiche edition compiled by Hermann Goltz and Axel Meißner, NC 9, 8, 200.

⁴⁶ Lepsius, “Die Armenierhetze,” *Die Zukunft* 5, no. 18, Jan. 30, 1897, 218–22, 222.

⁴⁷ Issues of *Auf der Warte* are in GStA PK I. HA Rep. 77, Tit. 343^a, no. 177. Excellent on the strands of Protestant engagement: Feigel, *Das evangelische Deutschland*.

⁴⁸ Nero and Diocletian: “Eine große Kundgebung gegen die Greuel in Armenien,” *Der Reichsbote*, no. 214, Sept. 11, 1896, suppl. 2; *Bergische Landeszeitung*, no. 78, Sept. 26, 1896; *Kirchliche Korrespondenz für die Mitglieder des Evangelisches Bundes* 10 (1896), 714–15; *Deutsche Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* 10 (1896), 357. The first two are in GStA PK I. HA Rep. 77, Tit. 343^a, no. 177; the latter two, quoted in Feigel, *Das evangelische Deutschland*, 52 n. 15, 53 n. 21. A cornucopia of Christian tropes: “Gedenkt Armenien,”

living near Berlin, the incendiary Nero was a vivid figure. During the 1880s a popular panorama depicting the Roman emperor’s human torches, wrapped like mummies in pitch, had kept crowds aghast.⁴⁹ The immolation of so many Armenians inside their churches made the parallel seem self-evident, as did reports of crucifixions.

Christians knew that the faithful might be called on to make the ultimate sacrifice, and the nineteenth century had driven the point home, with the deaths of 40,000 Vietnamese Catholics in the 1880s and 350,000 Chinese Christians in the Taiping civil war.⁵⁰ The mass “conversions” to Islam at sword’s point in the pogrom-swept villages of Anatolia underlined the message that these “brothers and sisters” were victims of religious persecution.⁵¹ On remedies, opinion was divided. One pastor alluded enviously to the spirit of the Crusades; another expressed the hope that the sultan’s attempt to drive Christians from Turkish soil would end with the Turks being driven out of Europe; still others rejected any action except prayer as encroaching on the prerogatives of the Almighty. None had any doubt, however, that there was meaning in the Armenian agony. As Pastor Johannes Lepsius, the charismatic leader of the movement, assured his audience, “The frightful suffering of a Christian people is itself a sign that the day is not far off when the reign of Christianity will begin. The days of Islam are numbered.”⁵²

II. THE TURCOPHILE COUNTERNARRATIVE

The identity that Germany’s pietists professed with their “brothers and sisters” down in Turkey far away did not make the Armenian cause more attractive to

Grüneberger Anzeiger [Hessen], no. 102, Dec. 19, 1856, 1. Blatt, 1. Catholic papers usually steered clear of playing the religious identity card. An illuminating analysis of a similar dynamic inflecting American receptivity to massacres of Armenians, as opposed to (for example) those of Congolese: Leonard, “When News Is Not Enough,” 303–6.

⁴⁹ Panorama: Theodor Fontane, *Die Poggenpuhls: Die Welt des Adels; Familienromane* (published serially 1895–96; republished by Aufbau Taschenbuch, n.p., n.d.), 67.

⁵⁰ Thanks to Frederic E. Wakeman for figures on the Taiping civil war and to J. P. Daughton for steering me to David Marr, *Vietnamese Anticolonialism, 1885–1925* (Berkeley, 1971), 45–47, and Simon Delacroix, ed., *Histoire universelle des Missions Catholiques*, vol. 3, *Les Missions Contemporaines (1800–1957)* (Paris, 1957), 85–86; Delacroix puts Christian losses in Lebanon and Damascus in 1860 at 200,000. Massacre figures are always estimates; thus Eduard Bernstein estimates Lebanon/Damascus losses at 60,000 in *Die Leiden des Armenischen Volkes und die Pflichten Europas: Rede gehalten in einer Berliner Volksversammlung* (Berlin, 1902), 16. The larger the numbers, the more contested the responsibility, as Lebanon shows. Cf. Caesar E. Farah, *The Politics of Interventionism in Ottoman Lebanon, 1830–1861* (London, 2000), esp. 554–602.

⁵¹ Jünglingsverein der freien evang. Kirche Deutschlands (Breslau), to Lepsius, Oct. 15, 1896, LAH, NC 16.

⁵² Crusader envy: “Vortrag über Armenien,” *Bergische Landeszeitung*, Oct. 3, 1896. Expelling the Turks: report on rallies in Barmen by Polizeikommissar Schulze, Jan. 14, 1897. Lepsius quoted in “Eine große Kundgebung gegen die Greuel in Armenien,” *Der Reichsbote*, Sept. 11, 1896. Prayer alone: Robert Kusch (Breslau) to Lepsius, Sept. 1, 1896, LAH, NC 130.

those of other persuasions. Indeed, it opened a door through which turcophile writers launched their own campaign, one that did not scruple to set armenophile narratives boldly on their head. To reports of slaughtered Armenians, naysayers served up a narrative of Muslim tolerance. To depictions of Ottoman corruption and backwardness, they touted the sultan's reforms—a trope that after the regime change of 1908 morphed into Young Turk “modernity.” They countered demands for self-determination by damning the Armenians as agents of imperialism: cat's-paws for France, Russia, and especially England, whose tears for Armenians, ignoring Muslim victims of Christian brutality, revealed Albion's typically self-serving double standard. First off the mark was the journalist Hans Barth, with an over-the-top lampoon of the Armenian rights movement that appeared in *Die Zukunft*, a weekly journal of opinion whose satirical sparkle made it must reading for all sophisticated Germans with claims to being in the know. Entitled “Turk Baiting,” and soon expanded into a book, *Turk, Defend Yourself!* Barth's piece rang the changes on a turcophile narrative that would persist in Germany for at least two decades.⁵³

Barth's great insight was to recognize that in responding to faraway events, people brought their identities (and alterities) with them. Thus he opened with a full-bore attack on the armenophiles themselves. His theme? *Those Christians are at it again!* The same crowd who gave us the sack of Constantinople in 1204, the Spanish Inquisition, the conquistadors, Cesare Borgia, the Puritans and British hypocrisy (with their offshoots, General Booth and his ridiculous Salvation Army)—plus today's atrocities in the Philippines and the Congo: these folks are now whipping up another “crusade”—this time against Islam.

Logically, Barth's diatribe left everything to be desired. What Lepsius's pious Protestants, who hated the pope almost as much as the devil, had to do with the Spanish Inquisition (for example) was anybody's guess. Tactically, however, it was brilliant. The topoi of the Christian fanatic, the pious Tartuffe, the meddling “missionaries” tapped into one of the most deeply felt issues of the day, Germany's long-running culture wars, the acrimonious quarrel between religion and secular modernity. Playing upon progressive Germany's allergic reaction to the specter of “clerical politics,” Barth's identification of the campaign for Armenian human rights as a “crusade,” with a genealogy reaching back to the twelfth century, was designed to make it easy for the very stratum that in other countries joined the churches in pressing for international intervention to hesitate in Germany, for fear of being manipulated for unsavory clerical ends.⁵⁴ Even more

⁵³ “Die Türkenhetze,” *Die Zukunft* 5, no. 16 (Jan. 16, 1897), 130–32; *Türke, Wehre Dich!* 2nd printing (Leipzig, 1898).

⁵⁴ “Die achte Kreuzzug,” the title of part 1 of Barth's book, punned on the archaic spelling for *echt* (genuine) and conventions in German historiography that numbered medieval Crusades at seven, encouraging an eschatological and numerological tradition that suggested that eight (*achte*) would bring a final, apocalyptic victory. Thanks to Geoffrey Koziol for this information. After the war, “Der achte Kreuzzug” was the title of lectures to raise money for Armenian relief sponsored by Lepsius's organization. Telegram from 1925, LAH, NC 1448-14621. Labeling interventionist demands a European “crusade” was

tellingly, by dubbing Armenophile efforts a “crusade” and Pastor Lepsius a “vest-pocket Torquemada,” Barth slyly encouraged his readers to associate the movement for Armenian human rights with the West’s long centuries of antisemitism.

Easy to make, the insinuation was difficult to disprove. But in fact the missionary movement whose organizations provided the delivery system for Armenian relief has recently been credited with having offered Germany’s most vigorous *opposition* to the new political antisemitism. Familiarity with Hebrew texts led its theologians to attack charges of ritual murder leveled against Jews as ignorant nonsense; a proselytizing agenda encouraged closer contacts with real Jews and, ultimately, what one historian has described as genuine “philosemitism.”⁵⁵ Missionaries pinned eschatological hopes on the success of Zionism, greeting the twenty-two new agricultural colonies in Palestine as a “miracle” that signaled the fulfillment of scripture—an interpretation Herzl himself was pleased to exploit.⁵⁶ Lepsius, who welcomed Zionism both because it was the precondition for the conversion of Israel prophesied by Paul and because the Jewish people had a legitimate right to a national existence, immediately and credibly rejected the slur of antisemitism.⁵⁷

Nevertheless, however contrived it was for Barth to reduce the Protestant establishment to (in Lepsius’s rebuke) “a society of antisemites,” it is unlikely that the communities who supplied the heart and muscle of the armenophile movement were exempt from the negative assumptions about Jews so common in contem-

a favorite ploy of Abdul Hamid and, later, the Young Turks. Haniöğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 303. Herzl tried the same line with the Austrian ambassador to Constantinople, who retorted that if there were any crusade in Turkey, it was the Crescent’s against the Cross. Entry, July 25, 1896, *BT* 2:381.

⁵⁵ Alan T. Levenson, “Missionary Protestants and the Defense of Judaism,” in *Between Philosemitism and Antisemitism: Defenses of Jews and Judaism in Germany, 1871–1932* (Lincoln, NE, 2004), 60–90, esp. 66, 76. Earlier Lutheran and Anglican evangelicals had defended Damascan Jews against ritual murder charges. Jonathan Frankel, *The Damascus Affair: ‘Ritual Murder,’ Politics, and the Jews in 1840* (Cambridge, 1997), 284–310, 261.

⁵⁶ “Cäsarea,” *Auf der Warte, Der Freiwillige*, no. 5, suppl., GStA PK I. HA Rep. 77, Tit. 343^a; no. 177. Herzl’s attempts to enmesh the London Baptist preacher Dr. John Clifford and the Rev. William H. Hechler, chaplain at the British embassy in Vienna, in his anti-Armenian intrigues: entries, May 11, 12, July 13, 1896, *BT* 2:341, 401. Hechler, author of *The Restoration of the Jews to Palestine according to the Prophets* (1882), attended the First Zionist Congress, as did the sultan’s agent on the Armenian matter. “It will be one of my tasks,” Herzl wrote, “to keep them from seeing too much of each other.” Quoted in Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism* (New York, 1972), 99.

⁵⁷ “Die Armenierhetze,” *Die Zukunft* 5, no. 18 (Jan. 30, 1897), 218–22. Barth’s reply and Lepsius’s rebuttal: “Armenier und Türken,” *ibid.*, 5, no. 23 (March 6, 1897), 477–78. The charge of antisemitism, explicit in Barth’s article, was reduced to innuendo in his book, perhaps because of German libel laws that favored plaintiffs. Lepsius on Zionism: “Der Zionismus,” *ChW* 11 (1897), cols. 1015–19. In 1910, his *Reich Christi* published “Israel, der Knecht Gottes, in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart,” by C. F. Hemann, secretary of Basel’s Verein der Freunde Israel, whose praise of the Jewish people caused a fluttering in theological dovecotes. Wolfgang Heinrichs, *Das Judenbild im Protestantismus des deutschen Kaiserreichs: Ein Beitrag zur Mentalitätsgeschichte des deutschen Bürgertums in der Krise der Moderne* (Cologne, 2000), 260 n. 793, 466 n. 44.

porary Germany.⁵⁸ Moreover, although the journalist did not mention him by name, many readers would have been aware that among those “dear pastors” on whom Barth dripped his sarcasm was the former court preacher Adolf Stoecker, famous to contemporaries and historians as the founder of the antisemitic Christian Social movement. At a time when much of the conservative press, anticipating the wishes of the Foreign Office, was finding excuses for the Armenian massacres, or ignoring them, it was Stoecker who stuck his neck out by running articles in his *Deutsche Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* on the killings. In 1897, he stood up in Prussia’s House of Deputies and demanded that the interior minister explain why he had put the kibosh on church collections for Armenian relief and deported refugee speakers. More noteworthy, however, than the advocacy of Stoecker (a man whose day had passed) should have been the fact—as a pastor on the pacifist Left pointed out—that no other deputy, in any of Germany’s parliaments, including the Reichstag, had had the gumption to pose the same awkward questions.⁵⁹

Unremarked by Barth, but even more compromising, was the presence of Paul Förster on the podium at a mass rally for Armenians, sitting alongside two of the most respected officials of the Protestant church. A man of no known religious convictions, today Förster is remembered mainly, if he is remembered at all, as the brother of Bernhard Förster, Wagnerian racial enthusiast, author of the antisemitic petition of 1881, founder of the Neu-Germania settlement in Paraguay, and husband of Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche. Like his brother, Paul Förster was a lifelong swimmer in the sea of Germany’s antisemitic parties and organizations and at the time of the rally was representing one of them in the Reichstag.⁶⁰

I have found no other evidence connecting Förster to the armenophiles, and it is hard to know what to make of his presence that evening. As the rally’s sole

⁵⁸ Though not just Germany. The radical French journalist Lucien Millevoye, champion of Irish nationalism, lover of Maud Gonne and father of her two children, who spoke ardently for intervention on behalf of the Armenians during a session of the Chamber of Deputies on March 10, 1903, devoted to that issue (*Pour l’Arménie*, 63–67), was also, unlike most French armenophiles, an antisemite and important *anti*-Dreyfusard. Pierre Birnbaum, *The Anti-Semitic Moment: A Tour of France in 1898*, trans. Jeanne-Marie Todd (Paris, 1998; New York, 2003).

⁵⁹ This was the complaint of the Stuttgart pastor and peace activist Otto Umfrid, who dismissed Stoecker, although not by name, as a “political dead man.” Quoted in Helmut Donat, afterword to Heinrich Vierbucher, *Was die kaiserliche Regierung den deutschen Untertanen verschwiegen hat: Armenien 1915; Die Abschlachtung eines Kulturvolkes durch die Türken* (1930; Bremen, 1985), 89–90. Stoecker had just been expelled by the Conservatives as too leftist and forced out of the Evangelisch-Sozialer Kongress as too conservative. His speech, “Thoumajian und die preussische Regierung. Haus der Abgeordneten. 30. Sitzung am 11. February 1897,” in *Aus der Arbeit: Beiblatt*, cols. 188–89, LAH Card 002, is described in Feigel, *Das evangelische Deutschland*, 77, 91, 92. Contrast the efforts of Belgian and French deputies, including armenophiles, to dissuade their governments from banning the Young Turks’ organ *Mesveret* and from extraditing the Young Turk leader Ahmed Rıza. Hanioglu, *Young Turks*, 80–81, 111, 113, 294 n. 13.

⁶⁰ Podium description from the *Kreuzzeitung*, cited by Norbert Saupp (“Das Deutsche Reich und die armenische Frage 1878–1914” [PhD diss., University of Cologne, 1990], 129–30), who seems unaware of Förster’s identity and antisemitic affiliations.

Reichstag deputy, he was probably there for decoration, speaking roles being confined to Lepsius and another parson. Anyone who has ever been mortified during a political demonstration by the slogan on the T-shirt of a fellow marcher may be reluctant as I to convict the armenophiles of guilt by association. Nevertheless, someone must have invited the man, and Förster’s presence on that Berlin podium was bound to cast a damning shadow on the clerical worthies at his side and on the cause they held dear.⁶¹

Barth did not rest with guilt by association. Contrasted with the specter of reactionary Christian fanaticism was its mirror opposite and Barth’s second theme: Progressive Turkey, or, as the inviting title of the second half of his book put it, “The Turks as *Kulturvolk*.” Chapters on Turkey’s “National Awakening,” on Abdul Hamid’s “Reforms,” on “The Modern Turkish Woman” hammered the message home: modernity was on the march—especially in Turkey.⁶²

Except for Barth’s extravagant praise of the sultan, all these tropes would appear again and again in the German press over the next decades: the Turkish national “Renaissance”; the commitment to modernity, with reforms inspired by *German* thinkers (Friedrich List) and *German* advisors (Generals Helmut von Moltke and Colmar von der Goltz); and—much beloved by encomiasts, European and Turkish alike—the new Turkish woman. (*They* don’t need a woman’s movement to deal with prostitution, illegitimacy, low wages, etc., because Turkish women don’t become prostitutes and unwed mothers and Turkish wives don’t work outside the home—though younger women are already claiming their right to discard the veil.) I call them tropes because they were never altered by anything new, least of all by new information.⁶³

The linchpin of the turcophile counternarrative, joining its two parts—invective against the Christians and praise for the Turks—appeared in the title of Barth’s central chapter: “A People of Tolerance.” The gist? When Christians had been busy setting folks on fire, the Turks were the ones who in 1492 took in the Jews.

“Tolerance” was the trope that trumped all tropes. References to 1492 occurred

⁶¹ The other speaker was Wilhelm Faber, a student of Franz Delitzsch, founder of Leipzig’s Institutum Judaicum. A man of a thousand enthusiasms, including the conversion of Jewry, Faber may have been the one who invited Förster, since it is impossible to imagine Lepsius recruiting the man. A revealing sketch of Faber, with whom Lepsius eventually broke: Meißner, “Martin Rades ‘Christliche Welt,’” 167 n. 588.

⁶² Barth, *Türke*, 198, 265.

⁶³ The “new woman” and her emancipation became a staple of turcophile propaganda. Chap. 2 of Jäckh’s *Der Aufsteigende Halbmond* (various publishers, subtitles, editions, and languages, from 1909 to 1944) was devoted to it. See also Jäckh, “Türkische Frauen,” in *Der Schwabenspiegel*, no. 32, May 9, 1911, reprinted in “Lese,” Oct. 21, 1911; clippings in Jäckh Papers, box 14, Butler Library, Columbia University (hereafter Jäckh-CU). The Ottoman naval minister during World War I begins his memoirs with a paean to female emancipation: Ahmed Djemal Pascha [Cemal Paşa], *Memories of a Turkish Statesman, 1913–1919* (New York, 1922), 17–18. Similarly enduring is the trope that blames “missionaries” (read: tools of England) for interethnic violence. E.g., C. A. Bratter, *Die armenische Frage* (Berlin, 1915), 84; Jeremy Salt, *Imperialism: Evangelism and the Ottoman Armenians, 1878–1896* (London, 1993).

as regularly in turcophile journalism as invocations of the Declaration of Independence on the Fourth of July.⁶⁴ When Eduard Bernstein addressed a rally of workers in 1902 on behalf of the Armenians, he acknowledged the difficulties the tolerance narrative posed for those trying to mobilize opinion to put pressure on the Porte. In words that might have surprised Edward Said, Bernstein declared that a “great prejudice reigns here in Europe in favor of Mohammedanism. Out of opposition to what we have seen of Christianity in the course of history,” and by comparing its deeds with certain events in Islamic lands, Europeans had “drawn the conclusion that Mohammedanism has better precepts than Christianity and, all things considered, is superior.”⁶⁵

Bernstein was alluding to the nineteenth century’s idealized picture—propagated by romantics from Victor Hugo to Washington Irving—of a tolerant, pluralist, Islamic Spain that Ferdinand and Isabella had brought to a tragic end.⁶⁶ Bernstein had no difficulty refuting the notion that Turkish “tolerance” was what Europeans meant by the term, nor in demonstrating the irrelevance of the virtues of medieval Iberia to current events on the Anatolian plateau. Yet the fact that he found it necessary to do so suggests that Barth and his fellows knew what they were about.

But even a polemicist as gifted as Hans Barth could not avoid the subject that had, after all, necessitated such wide-ranging religio-historical reflections in the first place: What about that slaughter down in Turkey far away? This brought Barth to his third and considerably more ticklish theme: the Armenians themselves.

⁶⁴ Jäckh never failed to repeat it. E.g., “Hie Kreuz—dort Halbmond,” *Die Tat* 8 (1912–13), Jäckh-CU, box 14; similarly, Djemal’s *Memories*, 242–43; Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong? The Clash between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East* (London, 2002), 33. Turcophiles, then and now, accompanied these references with the (false) insistence that 1492 was something that “to be sure no one mentions today.” Quote: Barth, “Türkenhetze,” 132.

⁶⁵ *Die Leiden*, 11. Cf. the orientalist Enno Littmann to C. H. Becker, Jan. 23, 1915: “You spoke from my soul when you said ‘Islam is in theory the most intolerant, in practice the most tolerant of religions.’” Its wars were “still more humane than most of the wars to spread Christianity.” GStA PK, NL Becker, fol. 4579.

⁶⁶ For the powerful Jewish contribution to this picture: Bernard Lewis, “The Pro-Islamic Jews,” in *Islam in History: Ideas, Men, and Events in the Middle East* (London, 1973), 123–37. “The broad outlines of the story, in the simplified and dramatized form in which great historic events so often reach the popular imagination, were well defined,” Lewis noted. “The Jews had flourished in Muslim Spain, had been driven from Christian Spain, and had found a refuge in Muslim Turkey.” Romanticism’s “cult of Spain,” the oversimple contrast between a persecuting society in medieval Europe and a peaceable kingdom in Islamic Iberia, was a “myth” that had been “invented by Jews in nineteenth century Europe as a reproach to Christians” (135–36). See also Martin Kramer, ed., *The Jewish Discovery of Islam: Essays in Honor of Bernard Lewis* (Tel Aviv, 1999); David Cesarani, “British Jews,” in *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews, and Protestants: Minorities and the Nation State in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Rainer Liedtke and Stephan Wendehorst (Manchester, 1999), 33–55, 50–51, 53; John M. Efron, “From Mitteleuropa to the Middle East: Orientalism through a Jewish Lens,” *Jewish Quarterly Review* 94, no. 3 (Summer 2004): 490–520.

First of all, they were tools of John Bull, whose hand could be detected behind all the brouhaha. The charge was tailor-made for the audience of *Die Zukunft*, whose editor, Maximilian Harden, had made a career out of pillorying the German Foreign Office for insufficient vigilance toward English expansion. This trope, too, had legs. Armenians-as-tools-of-England (later, of the Entente) was soon joined in the turcophile repertoire by a more generalized outcry against “imperialism”—anti-imperialism appealing to the resentments of those who suspected that imperialism might be a great game they had come too late to play.

As for the recent unpleasantness? A “well-deserved ‘misfortune,’” Barth assured readers, brought on by the violence of Armenian tax resisters and terrorists.⁶⁷ Embarrassed, perhaps, by the discrepancy between these revolutionaries’ pitiful efforts at propaganda of the deed and the retaliations wreaked on a whole people, Barth then grasped the nettle of the victims’ national character. Armenians, he averred, were impossible not to dislike. In contrast to “The Turkish Peasantry: Core of the Nation” (another chapter title), these guys were usurers who “plundered” their honest, hardworking Muslim neighbors. Pretty flimsy stuff, but its appearance in *Die Zukunft* showed that serious people took it seriously. And Barth’s philippic against the Armenians gained credibility from the fact that it was joining a discourse that had existed before his intervention and would continue long after his own contribution had been forgotten.

This was a discourse that “essentialized” the Christian of the Near East. In one strand, he was the born victim, whose cries for help we have become tired of hearing. “Always beaten, always massacred, incapable of looking a warrior in the face, perpetually offering his throat to the saber”: such was the characterization by Ernest Renan (a central figure in Said’s indictment of Orientalism) of the “eternal Christian of the Orient,” applied approvingly, by *Die Zukunft’s* editor, to the Armenians.⁶⁸ As Lepsius observed mordantly, for “a good part of our cultivated society” the dictum of the critic Alphonse Karr was all too true: “Il y a quelqu’un de plus odieux que le bourreau, c’est la victime.”⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Barth, *Türke*, 1. In “Die Türkenhetze,” 132, Barth reduced Armenian casualties to “no more than 29,000 Armenians killed,” a figure whose offhandedness offered a broad target to Lepsius, no slouch himself at sarcasm.

⁶⁸ Harden, “Der ächte Kreuzzug,” *Die Zukunft* 4, no. 51, Sept. 19, 1896: 521–25, 524. Cf. Consul Skene in 1860 (“abject” yet “insolent”), quoted in Bilâl N. Şimşir, ed., *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians* (Ankara, 1982) 1:xxx (Şimşir omits positive stereotypes on the same page). Among those uncritically mouthing negative stereotypes was William L. Langer: “One traveler after another was impressed with their [Armenian] cowardice and servility.” Conceding the “all too frequent plunderings and massacres,” Langer sighs, “So it had been for thousands of years and so it continued. The government was perfectly helpless.” *The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890–1902* (New York, 1951), 148; see also 151.

⁶⁹ Lepsius, “Armenier und Türken,” 478. At a rally in Paris, Feb. 15, 1903, Francis de Pressensé, deputy for Rhône and president of the League of the Rights of Man, mocked Europeans who reproached Armenians “for having been too moderate, too docile, for having proffered their throats like lambs, for having gone bleating to the slaughterhouse. Ah! Certainly it is easy to be heroic for others while . . . reading the newspaper with your feet on a cushion.” *Pour l’Arménie*, 25.

Cringing (yet insolent), the Armenian-as-victim was of course the flip side of the second strand: the Armenian-as-shyster, who fleeced the Turkish peasant, amassing the entire Ottoman economy into his own sticky hands.⁷⁰ Barth himself “proved” the stereotype by trotting out a “proverb” beloved of all self-proclaimed experts on the Orient from London to Petersburg: “One Greek is able to cheat two Jews, but one Armenian can cheat two Greeks.”⁷¹ Elements of this discourse had already appeared in the works of orientalist such as Alfred Körte, the archaeologist; Karl Krummbacher, founder of Byzantine studies in Germany; and Hugo Grothe, a geographer who assured readers that not Muslim fanaticism (the explanation of choice among armenophiles) but Armenian exploitation was responsible for the violence.⁷² By 1913, Grothe was arguing that Muslim looters were merely reappropriating what Armenians had stolen, an argument ready for retooling after 1933, when he joined the SA.⁷³ With the sanction of such schol-

⁷⁰ “Even Jews have their good points, but Armenians have none”: Sir Mark Sykes, quoted in G. S. Graber, *Caravans to Oblivion: The Armenian Genocide, 1915* (New York, 1996), 25–26. Tartar, mouse-trap dealer, Armenian: Otto von Bismarck’s epithets for an Austrian antagonist, quoted in Erich Eyck, *Bismarck and the German Empire* (London, 1950), 32. Extenuating the massacres in 1896 are Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, who note that in the course of the violence the sultan ordered “the government to crack down on the Armenian merchants of Istanbul to lessen their substantial economic power.” *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. 2, *Reform, Revolution, and Republic* (Cambridge, 1997), 203–4. Imagine if a historian wrote that Hitler’s government had decided to “crack down” on Berlin’s Jews.

⁷¹ Barth, *Türke*, 60. In his *Zukunft* piece, Barth omitted the couplet’s reference to “Jews,” probably in deference to the sensitivities of (the now baptized) Harden. But purged of its slur against Jews, Barth’s “proverb’s” charge against the Armenians was then multiplied tenfold: “When it comes to sharp practices, one Armenian is a match for twenty Greeks.” “Die Türkenhetze,” 130. Variations were endless. Karl May’s “Der Kys-Kaptschiji” (1896–97) puts one Jew over ten Christians, one Yankee over fifty Jews, but one Armenian over a hundred Yankees. Hans-Walter Schmuhl, “Friedrich Naumann und die ‘armenische Frage’: Die deutsche Öffentlichkeit und die Verfolgung der Armenier vor 1914,” in Kieser and Schaller, *Der Völkermord*, 503–16, 508. In Petersburg in 1898, W. T. Stead reported that “Russians are never tired of repeating that it takes two Greeks to swindle a Jew, two Jews to cheat the devil, but it takes two devils to cheat an Armenian.” *The United States of Europe on the Eve of the Parliament of Peace* (New York, 1899), 249–50. In 1922, an American pastor retailed a milder form. Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (Oxford, 2005), 8. Whatever the version, the Armenian always comes out worst.

⁷² Körte, *Anatolische Skizzen* (Berlin, 1896); Krummbacher, “Die Armenische Kunst” (1896), republished in his *Populäre Aufsätze* (Leipzig, 1909), 267–78. Axel Meißner, “Die Hamidischen Armenier-massaker—Karl Krummbacher, Heinrich Gelzer, und die byzantinische Hymnographin Kasia,” *Stimme der Orthodoxie* 3 (1997): 141–45, 142.

⁷³ Grothe wrote Lepsius in 1897 offering to use his connections to the new Provincial President of Rio to have Armenians transported to Brazil, where in three years they would earn enough to become landowners. Grothe to Lepsius, Oct. 14, 1897, LAH, NC 59. Grothe’s anti-Armenian stereotypes: “Die asiatische Türkei und die deutschen Interessen: Gedanken zur inneren Umgestaltung des armenischen Reiches und zu den Zielen der deutschen Kulturpolitik,” *Der Neue Orient* 9 (1913), 16, cited in Hilmar Kaiser, *Imperialism, Racism, and Development Theories: The Construction of a Dominant Paradigm on*

arship, the discourse of Armenian-as-exploiter made frequent appearances in newspapers close to the government, ready for quoting in other venues. It was also common in Pan-German circles.⁷⁴

The Left sometimes proved as susceptible as the Right. The democratic *Frankfurter Zeitung* published lines by the poetess Kassia, in its series “Famous Women in Ancient Greece and Byzantium,” that described the Armenians as “quite horrifying people,” malicious in low positions, worse when prosperous, and worst of all when they rose to high estate. This “apt” little epigram from the ninth century was billed by the editors as a “contribution to the current debate.” It supported, they pointed out helpfully, the “Turkish view in substance, if not in particulars.”⁷⁵

The double-dealing Armenian also turned up in travel articles by Friedrich Naumann, the charismatic Left Liberal leader whose democratic nimbus Liberals in the postwar Federal Republic have been proud to claim for themselves. (It is Naumann’s name that graces the research foundation established by the Free Democratic Party in 1958 to support liberal values in scholarship.) In describing an evening spent with German expats in Constantinople, Naumann quoted at length one who, to unanimous accord, justified the massacres as the “self-defense” of honest, upright Turks, a people exploited by the grasping Armenian, who would steal from his own brother, sell his wife and prepubescent daughter, and morally befoul the whole city.⁷⁶ Naumann’s description was immediately lifted by Karl May, the era’s most popular adventure writer. *In the Empire of the Silver Lion* (1898) quoted Naumann to add force to the novelist’s own axiom that the “hawk-nosed Armenian” was someone who (“speaking generally and on average”) could be counted on to have a hand in the game “whenever and wherever in the Orient any kind of vile thing” went down. Since May’s previous writings had long made his distaste for Armenians clear, we may wonder who was recycling whom.⁷⁷

We recognize these stereotypes, of course, but associate them with other vic-

Ottoman Armenians (Ann Arbor, MI, 1997), 16. On the repackaging of Grothe’s “Vorderasienskomitee” as the “Vorderasiengesellschaft” and then as the “Vorderasiens Institut,” none of which had much substantial reality: Jürgen Kloosterhuis, “Friedliche Imperialisten”: *Deutsche Auslandsvereine und auswärtige Kulturpolitik, 1906–1918*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt, 1994), 1:344, which also uncovers Grothe’s membership in the SA.

⁷⁴ Government outlets are listed in *Schulthess’ Europäisches Geschichtskalender* (Munich, 1896), 275–76. Pan-Germans: Kaiser, *Imperialism*, 17–18.

⁷⁵ *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Oct. 29, 1898, quoted in Nazaret Naltchayan, “Kaiser Wilhelm II’s Visits to the Ottoman Empire: Rationale, Reactions, and the Meaning of Images,” *Armenian Review* 42, no. 2/166 (Summer 1989): 47–78, 58.

⁷⁶ Naumann, “Hinter Konstantinopel,” *Die Hilfe* 4, no. 45 (Nov. 6, 1898): 5–7, 7; the lines appear again in Naumann, “Asia,” 31–32.

⁷⁷ As for the “much-talked-of Armenian disturbances,” opined May, “one knows of course how and to what end” they were “staged.” *Karl May’s gesammelte Reiseerzählungen*, vol. 27, *Im Reiche des silbernen Löwen* (Freiburg, 1898), 478–79. May’s almost verbatim quote of Naumann is noted by Schmuhl, in “Friedrich Naumann und die ‘armenische Frage,’” 508, who also quotes Naumann’s praise for the *Frankfurter Zeitung*’s turn away from its call for intervention as a sign of “the rethinking process . . . in our democracy.” “Politische Notizen,” *Die Hilfe* 6, no. 24 (June 17, 1900): 3.

tims.⁷⁸ And we have become so familiar with Edward Said's famous analogy between antisemitism and its "secret sharer," Orientalism (described by him as antisemitism's "Islamic branch"), that we have all but forgotten that these tropes were once used against a Christian people on behalf of a Muslim one.⁷⁹ This too was Orientalism. It was also, as Hilmar Kaiser's analysis of the afterlife of these tropes in a certain kind of leftist scholarship has shown, another Socialism of Fools.⁸⁰

III. EXPLANATIONS

We would be naive to assume that all those who disparaged Armenians or hyped the Turks were acting spontaneously. A half century ago, William L. Langer warned that "we know enough now about the systematic bribery of the French press by the Russians . . . to disabuse us of all exaggerated notions about the value of so-called public opinion."⁸¹ Suborning journalists, leaking "information," subsidizing both invective and accolades were common practices, then as now. In 1914, Russia quietly put the editor of *Jeune Turc* on its payroll.⁸² Young Turks were no less savvy about using the European press. And the sultan, whose experience during the 1870s gave him reason to fear an aroused European public, also did his best, as we have seen, to manipulate it.⁸³ His ambassadors, required to give a regular accounting of how the press in their respective capitals was reporting Ottoman developments, and fearful that a slender diplomatic pouch might call their diligence into question, likewise planted articles in European organs, in order to have clippings to send home. Germany's ambassador in Constantinople, after initially assuming that only insignificant papers were vulnerable,

⁷⁸ Cf. Harden: Filled with the "ugliest mercenary spirit [*Händlergeist*]," oriental Christians have taken on "all the characteristics European Christians like to ascribe to the scions of Shem [i.e., Jews]." "Der ächte Kreuzzug," 424. Shem: Gen. 9:18–29.

⁷⁹ Said: "I have found myself writing the history of a strange, secret sharer of Western anti-Semitism. That anti-Semitism and, as I have discussed it in its Islamic branch, Orientalism, resemble each other very closely is a historical, cultural, and political truth that needs only to be mentioned to an Arab Palestinian for its irony to be perfectly understood." *Orientalism* (1977; New York, 1979), 27–28, 286–87.

⁸⁰ In *Imperialism*, Kaiser has traced a dependency-theory discourse, with exploiters now dressed up social scientifically as "compradors," through footnotes to these same turn-of-the-century orientalists, geographers, and propagandists. The provenance of "Socialism of Fools," coined in the Habsburg monarchy to characterize antisemitism: Andrew G. White-side, *The Socialism of Fools: Georg Ritter von Schönerer and Austrian Pan-Germanism* (Berkeley, 1975), 338 n. 27.

⁸¹ Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism*, 59.

⁸² Ambassador M. M. Giers to Foreign Minister S. D. Sazonov, telegram no. 355, June 14, 1914, in *Die Internationalen Beziehungen im Zeitalter des Imperialismus: Dokumente aus den Archiven der Zarischen und der Provisorischen Regierung*, ed. Otto Hoetzsch (Berlin, 1933; trans. of Soviet edition), ser. 1, no. 240, 3:219.

⁸³ In addition to Herzl diaries cited above, see Hanioglu, *Young Turks*, 74, and *Preparation*, 9, 13–14. Indirect evidence: Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1909* (London, 1998), 36.

soon expressed disquiet about his Ottoman counterpart’s relationship with the Wilhelmine press, which was “in Berlin no secret.”⁸⁴

Hans Barth, employed as Rome correspondent of the left liberal *Berliner Tagblatt*, was almost certainly on the take from the Ottomans. Who else would have covered the costs of publishing *Turk, Defend Yourself!* a pamphlet on steroids, with gilt-edged pages? Of having it translated into French? Of reissuing it, in German and Turkish, over and over again—most recently in 2003, seventy-five years after the death of its author? (Its title, translated literally in the 1988 Turkish edition, has lately undergone a transfiguration: it is now *O Turk, Awake*, which echoes the title of a flaming tract by Mehmed Emin, founder of Turkey’s nationalist school of poetry.)⁸⁵ Although difficult to prove as a general proposition, the Porte’s influence on the German press helps explain why, as Rosa Luxemburg marveled in the bloody autumn of 1895, in some German papers “Turkey was still being portrayed as a utopia where ‘the different nationalities have lived next to each other peacefully for centuries’” and any dissatisfaction was the result of European diplomats’ “persuading the happy peoples of Turkey that they are oppressed.”⁸⁶

Nevertheless, armenophile fulminations against Turkey’s “lie factory” were a convenient surrogate for an anger that would have been better directed nearer home. As Stoecker surmised, Germany’s own authorities had done their best, behind the decent draperies of the *Rechtsstaat*, to smother the movement for Armenian human rights. Police and provincial governors, the ministers of religious affairs and of the interior, the foreign secretary and the chancellor, Chlodwig Fürst zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst: all intervened to rein in the clergy, prohibit rallies and collections on church property, and deport Armenian speakers.⁸⁷ Was

⁸⁴ Hugo, Fürst Radolin, to Leo von Caprivi, June 7, 1893, AAI Deutschland 127, no. 6, Bd. 1 (Microfilm no. 14160, R 1733).

⁸⁵ *Le droit du croissant* (Paris, 1898); *Türk savun kendini* (Istanbul, 1988), now *Ey Türk uyan* (Istanbul, 2003). German printings in 1980 and 1988, title pages bearing no imprint of publisher, place, or any other indication of origin, are noted in Meißner, “Die Hamidischen Armenier-massaker,” 145 n. 40. Another appeared in 1989 in Communist East Germany (Altenburg: Stephan Geibel & Co). Gilt pages: Feigel, *Das evangelische Deutschland*, 63.

⁸⁶ “Die nationalen Kämpfe in der Türkei und die Sozialdemokratie I,” *GW* 1, pt. 1:57–58. Whether Luxemburg’s inverted commas indicate irony or direct quotation is unclear. Bernstein made similar complaints: *Die Leiden*, 3. An undated five-page memo in the British Foreign Office describing the Constantinople correspondents of many of Berlin’s leading dailies, mostly liberal, as on the Porte’s payroll is cited in Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide* (Providence, RI, 1997), 97, 100 n. 38. But its own origins (a Russian paper “of World War I vintage”) are not unimpeachable.

⁸⁷ Quote: Pastor Suderow, *Bergische Landeszeitung*, no. 79, Oct. 3, 1896. Similar charges were made by Lepsius, Sept. 23, 1896, reported by the Berlin police. In Barmen, Pastor Weber extended the bribery charge to the Austrian press. GStA PK I. HA Rep. 77, tit. 343^a (Polizeisachen), no. 177, Bl. 39, 85, 91. This file contains 103 pages of correspondence between German authorities, 1896–97, on suppressing armenophile agitation. Germany was not alone in obliging the Porte by silencing the sultan’s opponents. British authorities moved against Ibrahim al-Muwaylihi, Italian authorities against Wasif Bey, and

this illegitimate? The Protestant church was conceded even by its own members to be under state authority. The press, however, was supposed to be free. True, certain newspapers (*offiziöse*, in common parlance) lived on government subsidies. One of the duties of an aspiring diplomat was to draft articles destined for such outlets, articles quoted freely by other papers—but with attribution. Such organs were offering the government’s take on foreign affairs. They knew it, and their readers knew it. But German readers, enjoying what was probably the most varied press landscape in the world, thought they knew which papers were independent. Few were aware of a system of story laundering whereby material Berlin wanted disseminated was leaked to a newspaper abroad in hopes that enterprising domestic editors would reprint it, citing the foreign journal as an unimpeachable source. And most would have been shocked to learn how far the long arm of the Foreign Office extended into Germany’s own liberal democratic press. The savvy Austrian newshound Heinrich Kanner, although certainly not born yesterday, was astounded in 1916 to hear from the lips of a veteran German diplomat that a celebrated columnist at the once fiercely independent *Frankfurter Zeitung* had been for the past two decades, unbeknownst to his readers (and probably his editors), “actually an official of the Foreign Office,” from which he drew a considerable salary. Bribery, of course, was expensive. A cheaper incentive, and perhaps as effective, was “access” to official sources, which the Wilhelmstrasse conferred upon a few privileged journalists.⁸⁸

Is it government influence that explains why Armenian grievances were systematically downplayed in the German press, while stories hostile to their cause were never officially contradicted? Germany’s ambassador to Constantinople in February 1913, in urging a shift of Berlin’s *Orientpolitik* in a direction more friendly to Armenians, conceded as much. For among the corollaries of such a reorientation, he listed a reversal in the Wilhelmstrasse’s press policy: the German press would have “to give up its previous rejection of everything Armenian” and adopt “a moderate and understanding attitude” toward Armenian interests.⁸⁹ Here was an implicit acknowledgment of just how heavy Berlin’s hand had been.

Yet however unsavory their methods, all governments had reason not to want their options limited by public agitation and to mistrust the “answers” offered by

the Swiss deported Emrulla Efendi and Tevfik Nevzad, publishers of *Hidmet*, the latter with close ties to the Young Turks. Hanioglu, *Young Turks*, 68–69.

⁸⁸ August Stein was the columnist. Interview with Count Anton Monts, Oct. 14, 1916, Hoover Archives, Kanner Papers, box 1, vol. 1:173. More generally: Irmgard Farah, *Die Deutsche Pressepolitik und Propagandatätigkeit im Osmanischen Reich von 1908–1918 unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des ‘Osmanischen Lloyd’* (Beirut, 1993), 61 and 61 n. 3; Gerhard Hense, “Kommunikationsobservanz in Wilhelminischer Zeit (1890–1914),” in *Deutsche Kommunikationskontrolle des 15. bis 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Heinz-Dietrich Fischer (Munich, 1982), 153–84, 169; Isolde Rieger, *Die Wilhelminische Presse im Überblick* (Munich, 1957), 42–43.

⁸⁹ Baron Hans von Wangenheim to Bethmann Hollweg, Bericht 58, Feb. 24, 1913, Türkei 183, Bd. 29, in *Die Grosse Politik der europäischen Kabinette, 1871–1914: Sammlung der Diplomatischen Akten des Auswärtigen Amtes*, ed. J. Lepsius, A. Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and F. Thimme, 40 vols. (Berlin, 1926) 38:14.

armenophile activists—when they offered any answers at all. Lepsius, for example, believed in Germany’s duty, by virtue of its moral superiority (thanks to the Reformation) over Latin and Slavic peoples, to lead the other powers in establishing the Kingdom of God on earth—an agenda not widely shared. Some armenophiles were fervent pacifists. The French and Italian radicals demanding intervention do not give the impression of having thought very hard about ways and means.⁹⁰ The British public, aware of their empire’s power, seem less aware that eastern Anatolia, the Armenian heartland, was landlocked and, as Lord Salisbury noted in another context, “We are fish.”⁹¹ One must look very hard, at least until 1912, to find anyone wondering how national liberation for Armenians would square with the national aspirations of Turks and Kurds. As for Russia, when Salisbury suggested to Nicholas II that they depose Abdul Hamid if he did not accede to the Great Powers’ reforms, the tsar retorted, in an unwonted access of wisdom, that any successor installed by Christian powers would be the target of assassination. And then? “The intolerable burden of pacifying or governing the Turkish empire would be thrown upon the Russians”—an early version of Colin Powell’s “Pottery Barn principle”: You break it, you own it.⁹² Salisbury was similarly checked by his sense that any action of Britain’s was “very likely to bring down the Turkish Empire with a run.”⁹³

Thus, while the powers could threaten to put the Ottoman Empire out of its misery, the Ottomans themselves could threaten to die.⁹⁴ And lurking in the shadows of any Ottoman demise, statesmen knew, was the specter of communal chaos and a general War of Ottoman Succession that might turn Europe itself into a charnel house. These were dilemmas that England, France, and Russia, with concrete and important stakes already in the region, *had* to grapple with. Germany, however, whose stake in the Near East was more abstract, did not. Its interest lay in taking advantage of opportunities within the empire and in making sure that, in whatever reconfiguration might follow the empire’s unraveling, the resulting balance of power in Europe and the Near East did not shift to its detriment. We should not be surprised that it too preferred the devil it knew to the devil it didn’t know.

Still, if it seems clear why the Wilhelmstrasse did its best to push Armenian grievances out of the news, it is less obvious why its efforts did not meet stronger

⁹⁰ One pacifist “solution” was an international tribunal. *Die Waffen nieder* 4, no. 12 (1895): 407, 450, 459–60, cited in Feigel, *Das evangelische Deutschland*, 48–49. Lepsius’s agenda, as characterized by a critic: “Wochenschau,” *Die Hilfe* 6, no. 24 (June 17, 1900): 2. French and Italian demands: *Pour l’Arménie*.

⁹¹ Quoted in Paul Schroeder, “The 19th-Century International System: Changes in the Structure,” *World Politics* 39, no. 1 (Oct. 1986): 1–26, 9.

⁹² Nicholas quoted in Douglas, “Britain and the Armenian Question,” 129.

⁹³ Salisbury to Ambassador Sir Philip Currie, Aug. 12, 1895, quoted in Peter Marsh, “Lord Salisbury and the Ottoman Massacres,” *Journal of British Studies* 11, no. 2 (May 1972): 68–83, 77.

⁹⁴ I am reframing A. J. P. Taylor’s comment about postwar Germany and the powers in *The Origins of the Second World War* (1961; New York, 1968), 29.

counterpressure from civil society, pulling them back in. Economic interests are not the culprit: as late as 1914, German investment in the Ottoman Empire was still only a quarter of that of the British and French.⁹⁵ Our temptation is to reach for “political culture,” the historians’ eject button, its red light blinking “Hit me!” when all else fails. With a closer look at the protagonists, however, perhaps we can avoid a bailout.

Some of the explanation for the German difference surely lies in the depth of Germany’s confessional antagonisms. In England and America the humanitarian coalition that evangelicals had forged around antislavery in the first half of the nineteenth century proved sturdy enough to incorporate Unitarian, Jewish, and freethinking elites around the cause of Armenian Christians by its end. In France, for all the battles between republicans and Catholics at home, anticlericalism stopped at the water’s edge.⁹⁶ But in Germany, where the religious Other played a far more central role in the construction of identities, so leery were secular intellectuals and Jews of the endeavors of the pious that even a whiff of “clerical politics” could prove toxic. As C. H. Becker remarked to a fellow orientalist, for many people “the very appearance of a mission man [at a meeting] is a red rag.”⁹⁷

As for Christians themselves, mutual suspicion between Protestants and Catholics structured all their relationships.⁹⁸ Whether or not the armenophile movement can be convicted of antisemitism, there can be little doubt of its automatic, almost programmatic anti-Catholicism, Lepsius not excepted. Martin Rade, his ally in publicizing the Armenian plight, a man who would break a lance for the Jews of Russia in 1905 and for the Muslims of Bulgaria in 1913, was a founding member of the militant Protestant League (Evangelischer Bund), one of Germany’s largest mass organizations, whose mission, in the words of one of its leaders (himself passionately engaged on the Armenians’ behalf), was to “break the power of Rome on German soil.”⁹⁹ Protestant League gatherings, along with those of the equally anti-Catholic Gustav-Adolf Association, provided important

⁹⁵ Ulrich Trupener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 1914–1918* (Princeton, NJ, 1968), 10. Even the much-cited Anatolian railway was internationally financed, although the Deutsche Bank held, almost unwillingly, a leadership position. Lothar Gall, “Die Deutsche Bank von ihrer Gründung bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg, 1870–1914,” in *Die Deutsche Bank, 1870–1995*, ed. Gall et al. (Munich, 1995), 1–137, 71–82.

⁹⁶ J. P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1885–1914* (Oxford, 2006).

⁹⁷ Becker to Martin Hartmann, Dec. 17, 1914, in *Islamkunde und Islamwissenschaft im Deutschen Kaiserreich: Der Briefwechsel zwischen Carl Heinrich Becker und Martin Hartmann (1900–1918)*, ed. Ludmila Hanisch (Leiden, 1992), 81.

⁹⁸ See, e.g., Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Politics, and Ideology, 1870–1914* (Princeton, NJ, 1995), esp. Adolf Harnack’s comment, 13.

⁹⁹ Willibald Beyschlag, quoted in Smith, *German Nationalism*, 52, 58. Beyschlag as armenophile: Meißner, *Martin Rade’s “Christliche Welt,”* 69–72, 109, 129–30. Rade’s efforts for Jews and Muslims: *ibid.*, 102, 102 nn. 306–7, 211, 240–42. The Protestant League: Gangolf Hübinger, *Kulturprotestantismus und Politik* (Tübingen, 1994), 239; Heinrichs, *Das Judenbild*, 433.

venues for soliciting support for Armenian human rights. Could such gatherings have sought Catholic participation in a broad armenophile coalition? And if they had, would they have succeeded? The coverage of Pastor Lepsius’s biggest rally in Berlin by the city’s Catholic daily, normally sympathetic to Armenians, suggests not. It relegated the rally to a single paragraph on a back page (right below an account of a local chess champion) and devoted half of that paragraph to reprinting the negative commentary of an *offiziöse* organ.¹⁰⁰ In such an environment, the very narratives that encouraged some Germans to identify with distant sufferers, recognizing them as “neighbors,” implicitly marked as “Other” the rest of their countrymen, erecting impassable barriers to coalition building.

Moreover, susceptibility to the turcophile narrative owed much, especially after the turn of the century, to the perception that Germans themselves had a future in the Orient. Associations to further the study of Islam, encourage German-Turkish cultural exchange, facilitate tourism and investment in Anatolia vied for members with even more ambitious organizations aimed at financing clinics along the Baghdad railway and founding a university in Constantinople.¹⁰¹ With most of the globe carved up by the other powers, what sunnier spot for German energies than down in Turkey far away, where they might flourish at the invitation of the Ottoman government—so long, at least, as it remained independent? The German Empire’s increasingly manifest destiny as bulwark of Islam against the imperialist rapacity of the Entente, a favorite theme among public intellectuals, contributed to the sense of German proprietorship in an Anatolian place in the sun.

That sense of proprietorship was important. The point of turcophile propaganda all along had been not only to ward off European intervention, nor even to purvey hopes of a radiant Ottoman spring made glorious summer by the sun of German investment, but also to encourage Germans to identify with Turkish power. In this, it succeeded. As early as the 1890s, if we can believe the novelist Theodor Fontane, it was fashionable among Berlin heads of households to wear a fez in the family circle.¹⁰² By 1900, the Byzantinist Heinrich Gelzer was marveling that “it is now the ‘in’ thing to enthuse over the Turks, and anyone who doesn’t automatically go along with this fashion is considered narrow-minded and a person with backward views.”¹⁰³ Even the Adana pogrom of 1909, which took another 20,000 Armenian lives, did not dampen enthusiasm for the New Turkey’s allegedly rising crescent.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ “Local-Nachrichten . . . Der armenischen Greuel,” *Germania*, no. 212, Sept. 13, 1896, 2. Blatt.

¹⁰¹ For these and similar organizations: Kloosterhuis, “*Friedliche Imperialisten*,” 2: 563–697.

¹⁰² *Die Poggenpuhls*, 106. Cf. Leipzigers with red fezzes: Naumann, “Hinter Konstantinopel,” 7.

¹⁰³ Heinrich Gelzer, *Geistliches und Weltliches aus dem türkisch-griechischen Orient: Selbsterlebtes und Selbstgesehenes* (Leipzig, 1900), quoted in Meißner, “Die Hamidischen Armenier-massaker,” 144.

¹⁰⁴ Saupp points out that, “surprisingly” in contrast to the Catholic *Germania*, only on May 9, almost a month after the massacres, did the Liberal *Frankfurter Zeitung* publish

In 1911, the liberal journalist Ernst Jäckh, well connected with progressive intellectual and business circles and now embarking on a career in promoting the New Turkey, ushered a convoy of Ottoman dignitaries on an informational junket through Germany in the service of closer relations. Everywhere, he reported, that East met West and the “representatives of the New Turkey” came into contact with the “*neudeutschen Volk*,” they both experienced a shock of recognition. Jäckh quoted an Ottoman visitor to the effect that if some catastrophe destroyed European civilization, leaving “only the German type,” it would be possible to recreate “all of Europe” from that alone. His German hosts, in return for being credited with what amounted to the DNA of Western civilization, reportedly expressed similar delight: “*That’s what the Turks are like? So cultivated and clever, so imposing and simpatico, so European, ja—so German!*”¹⁰⁵

Praise for Turks meant praise for Germans.¹⁰⁶ The hosannas reached their height, of course, during the Great War, when a military alliance provided additional reasons for seeking Self in the Other. At the very moment when Turks were marching Armenians to their deaths, Jäckh (a self-described “Zivil-Apostel,” who ended his career as Carnegie Professor of International Relations at Columbia) edited a series of pamphlets extolling Turkey’s genocidal leadership and writing articles with such titles as “Ex Oriente Lux.”¹⁰⁷

IV. EASTS AND WESTS

Was it wise for the Armenian cause in Germany to become so closely associated with the particular vision of Bible Christians and their narratives of martyrdom rather than with more universal discourses, such as the rights of man? Probably not. But Lepsius’s efforts to mobilize a movement that would encompass every confessional and political current went nowhere. Anticipating by more than half a century Hannah Arendt’s observations about the weakness of the category “humanity” as a basis for obligation, he remarked bitterly, “Humanity on this occasion has failed in Germany—indeed, has failed completely. . . . Not *one* man, who wasn’t from Christian circles, has come to any of our rallies.”¹⁰⁸ Lepsius exaggerated. But not by much.

an extended account, not from its own correspondent but from Paris’s *Figaro*. *Das Deutsche Reich*, 198–99.

¹⁰⁵ Jäckh, “Der Gentleman des Orients,” *Reclams Universum* 29, no. 7 (1912), Jäckh-CU, box 14.

¹⁰⁶ Turkey’s “Renaissance” was mediated by German initiative and German science: Jäckh, “Die Bagdadbahn,” in *Die Flotte* 14, no. 11 (Nov. 1911), Jäckh-CU, box 14.

¹⁰⁷ “Ex Oriente Lux,” *Das Größere Deutschland* 2, no. 12 (March 20, 1915): 369–72, and “Das Licht aus dem Morgenland,” *Deutsche Politik* 1, no. 52 (Dec. 22, 1916): 2217–22. In the former case, “East” meant Rumania. “Zivil-Apostel” and even “Weltbotschafter” appear in Jäckh’s outline for an autobiography, “Erntefrucht des Goldenen Pflugs,” dated 1958–59, Jäckh-CU, box 1.

¹⁰⁸ “Die Gräuël und der Notstand in Armenien,” *Lokal-Anzeiger*, Sept. 19, 1996; punctuation added for clarity. Quote recorded by police at a rally in Barmen, Jan. 14, 1897,

We should not be surprised. Human rights take their color and their shape from the vessels into which they are poured. As Lepsius’s movement and reactions to it demonstrate, the question “who is my neighbor?” is inevitably a question about oneself and a question about the Other, a question of identification and rejection, of affection and distance. Toward people who are really far away, one can be indifferent; but the closer the distant sufferer is brought to home, the more the discussion of his “human” rights gets drawn into older debates and established identities, and the more it becomes a colloquy among people whose own narratives shape and color these conversations. As Americans saw during the Balkan wars of the 1990s, for some of us the Bosnians were “Czechs” (1938); for others, “Jews” (1941); for still others, “Nazi collaborators” (1941–45).

Thus, human rights campaigns—as Michael Ignatieff has lately reminded us—are always campaigns for particular humans, even when advocates speak the language of universality: “Everyone’s universalism ultimately anchors itself in a particular commitment to a specifically important group of people whose cause is close to one’s heart or conviction.” Although NGOs claim to be an “anti-politics,” Ignatieff argues, “in practice” their activism “means taking sides and mobilizing constituencies powerful enough to force abusers to stop. As a consequence, effective human rights activism is bound to be partial and political.” Nor is it surprising that when interventions grow out of these campaigns, the demand for “human rights is increasingly seen” by the targets of such interventions “as the language of moral imperialism.”¹⁰⁹ Ignatieff is speaking of the past two decades, but his words would have applied as well a century ago. Lepsius himself rejected the charge of a double standard, offering to support any relief effort Hans Barth cared to organize for suffering Turks. The issue, he insisted, was not whether one preferred Armenians to Turks or vice versa. Rather, “the butchers have a priori my antipathy; the victims, however I might otherwise think of their value, have my sympathy.”¹¹⁰

But Lepsius failed to acknowledge that conflicts are often between victims. As historians know, the fall of empires, however tyrannical, and the founding of new nation-states—Greece, Bulgaria, Ireland, Czechoslovakia, Israel, Croatia, and, after 1988, the republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia—inevitably create minorities who become new victims.¹¹¹ And when victims are in conflict, human rights

GStA PK I. HA Rep. 77, Tit. 343^a no. 177. Even after the war, efforts to put Lepsius’s movement on a secular basis failed. At “monstrous” expense it distributed materials to youth organizations, educational groups, *Volksvereine*, and several thousand women’s associations. Only a dozen responded, the woman employed for outreach finding that “no interest for our work is to be expected in those circles.” Richard Schafer concluded that religious donors, although often reactionary, still “alone are the ones who are carrying the mission and the emergency relief efforts now.” Schafer to Alice Lepsius, Jan. 18, 1926, LAH, NC 14632.

¹⁰⁹ Michael Ignatieff, “Human Rights as Politics,” in Gutman, ed., *Human Rights*, 3–52, 9, 20.

¹¹⁰ Lepsius, “Armenier und Türken,” 478.

¹¹¹ E.g., Stephan Astourian, “Armenian Migration Crises in the South Caucasus and Their Consequences, 1988–2000,” *Contemporary Caucasus Newsletter* 9 (Fall 2000): 6–10.

movements are in competition.¹¹² Ignatieff did not cite Hegel's commentary on Antigone, but he might have: a tragedy is not the conflict between Good and Evil, but between Good and Good.

The war that ended the Armenian Question so murderously ended the Eastern Question as well. It marked the transformation of the state system from one that still had a place for empires, with their fuzzy frontiers and mixed but unmixable populations, to one based on nation-states, with hard (though disputed) borders and aspirations to a homogenous population. This transformation lit the fuse for even worse explosions. It also meant the relinquishing of a part of Europe's own heritage: the Near East, once called "the Orient."¹¹³

The Near East has disappeared from our geography, mental and political. All our talk today is of the Far East—and, of course, of the Middle East. We know what the Middle East is: job searches in history departments define it interchangeably with Islam. But few ask what happened to the Near East, or even where it was. In Metternich's famous pronouncement, "Asia begins at the Landstrasse," Vienna's third district. Yet if you google "Asia" with "Landstrasse," you will find that as often as not *Asien* is given as "the Balkans," with the remark interpreted either as a sign of xenophobia or the quip of a frivolous aristocrat. But what if Metternich was serious—and right? Friedrich Naumann's best-selling travelogue, entitled "*Asia*" (1900), begins in Athens, wanders around the eastern Mediterranean, and ends in Naples. When the revolutionary journalist Alexander Helpand announced a three-month trip to the "Orient," his destinations were Belgrade and Sofia.¹¹⁴ Arnold Toynbee, struggling in 1916 to characterize what he called "the Janus-character" of the Near East, agreed with Metternich that "Vienna is the most conspicuous boundary-mark," but he felt that Trieste, L'vov, or even Prague would also do. Syria (then one-third Christian) was definitely in it, but geographers, he said, might extend it to the edge of the Sahara. Thus the Near East "encroaches," Toynbee believed, on both the German-speaking and the Arabic-speaking worlds.¹¹⁵ The essential characteristic of the Near East, it seems clear, was that it was neither Islamic nor Christian, but precisely a belt of mixed Christian, Muslim, and Jewish populations.

Thus their Orient was not quite so far away (or indeed so Other) as our own age and notions of Orientalism suppose. Bismarck's oft-quoted line about the

¹¹² Ignatieff, "Human Rights as Politics," 20, 8–9.

¹¹³ An equation Adolf Grabowsky makes explicit: "Die Grundlagen der Orientpolitik," in *Deutschland und der Orient* (Berlin, 1915), 3.

¹¹⁴ Rosa Luxemburg to Konstantin Zetkin, Sept. 20, 1910, in Luxemburg, *Gesammelte Briefe*, 6 vols. (Berlin, 1982–) 3:232–33.

¹¹⁵ *The Treatment of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915–16: Documents presented to Viscount Grey of Fallodon, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs*, by Viscount Bryce (London, 1916; Beirut, 1979), 595, and notes. A witty chronology of the supersession of Near East by Middle East: Roderic H. Davison, "Where Is the Middle East?" in *The Modern Middle East*, ed. Richard H. Nolte (New York, 1963), 13–19. Similar reflections: K. E. Fleming, "Orientalism, the Balkans, and Balkan Historiography," *American Historical Review* 105, no. 4 (Oct. 2000): 1219–33, 1228.

“Balkans” not being worth the bones of a Pomeranian musketeer never mentioned, it turns out, the Balkans. It was “the whole Orient” for which his humble musketeer was too dear a price to pay. That is, the Ottoman Empire. That is, “Turkey.”¹¹⁶ But if when Bismarck said the “ganzen Orient” what he really meant was the Balkans (so, at least, anglophone historians who misquote him assume), then Goethe, writing in 1808 that “down in Turkey, far away, / The folks are out bashing one another,” was surely referring to events taking place not in *our* Turkey, the Anatolian peninsula, but rather where the first Serbian rebellion was then reaching its climax: that is, in what was ever Europe’s Orient, an East that might at any given moment be either “down in Turkey, far away” or very, very near.¹¹⁷ For Europeans, this Orient, the *Near East*, was both Other and Self. And, as the varying responses to the Armenian-Turkish conflict reveal, that Self might well be Muslim; and the Other, the Christian “Levantine.”

¹¹⁶ *Stenographische Berichte des deutschen Reichstags*, Dec. 5, 1876 (Berlin, 1876): 585. Misquotes are too numerous to mention. Even in World War I, Germans might use “Balkans” and “Turkey” interchangeably, as when the official *Zensurbuch* referred to the abolition of the capitulations in Turkey and then urged reporters to exercise “the greatest reservation . . . in judging all Balkan matters.” Quotation in Kurt Muhsam, *Wie wir belogen wurden: Die amtliche Irreführung des deutschen Volkes* (Munich, 1918), 65.

¹¹⁷ The Ottomans themselves put their empire’s “heartland” in the Balkans. Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700–1922* (Cambridge, 2000), 2, 111; Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faiths, and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (Oxford, 2001), 13.