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This dissertation examines the sources of sympathy for the Ottoman Empire—what contemporaries called “turcophilism”—in Imperial Germany before World War I. It focuses on German journalists in the Ottoman Empire and the representation of Ottoman violence in the German public sphere. While the German government tried to influence news coverage coming from the Ottoman lands in times of crisis, most German newspapers with correspondents in the field attempted to provide their readers with timely information on current affairs with little regard for official “narratives” congenial to German diplomacy.
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“People need to believe that order can be glimpsed in the chaos of events.”

Author’s Note:

Naming things not only presents deep metaphysical problems in philosophy but also has practical intellectual implications for historians. Because this dissertation takes Imperial Germany and the Ottoman Empire as its subjects, I have chosen a hybrid terminology using the Anglicized “Constantinople” for the city of Istanbul, because it comes closest to the German usage of “Konstantinopel”, as well as other Anglicized versions of German names for cities of the Ottoman Empire. However, I consciously resist referring to the Ottoman Empire as Turkey or the Ottomans as Turks for reasons that are immediately understandable for Ottomanists yet still mystifying to many Western historians. Although Ottoman diplomats used “Constantinople”, “Turquie”, and “Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan” in their international correspondence beginning in the nineteenth century, “Turkey”, the “Turkish Empire”, and the “Turks” are labels that imply a distinct Western perspective. Thus quotations appear around the terms anytime I am paraphrasing Germans.
Introduction

People who take up this eastern question take it up very violently indeed. Russophobia is nearly as incurable as hydrophobia. The correlated Turcophilism is one of the very strongest isms. Probably there are not very many who take up the Turkish cause, but those who do so take it up violently. It is amusing enough at times to listen to the talk of the smoking-rooms of the clubs. The Turk is the most gentlemanly fellow. There is no Bulgarian Christian who is worthy to lick his boots. Constantinople is the most delightful place in the world. (...) On the other hand, there is a parallel enthusiasm aroused against the Turks and in favor of the Russians. (...) They abhor the "unspeakable Turk." They recognize the Russians as chivalrous crusaders. They long for the regeneration of the Christian races of Eastern Europe. They look forward to the revival of a Greek Empire at Constantinople. The general reflections which suggest themselves are that, with distinct schools of opinion so violently contrasted, it is extremely improbable that the country [Great Britain] will be dragged into war. There is then the suspicion that the main interest is chiefly confined to politicians, military men, and littérateurs, and that the general mass of the people, up to this point, are not vividly moved on the subject either in one way or the other. –London Society.


Throughout the nineteenth century, policies and opinions that championed Ottoman rule and called for the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire were dubbed “turcophile”. The Eastern Question was one of the dominant political issues in Europe before the outbreak of the First World War, and the geopolitical conflicts that arose from the declining fortunes of the Ottomans were the cause of periodic crisis, great and small. By the early years of the Wilhelmine era, turcophilism was remarkably vibrant in
Imperial Germany when discussions turned toward the fate of the Ottoman Empire. Germans were some of the greatest enthusiasts of “the Turk” around 1900, expressing sympathy for Muslim rule and disdain for Christian minorities seeking autonomy. Oriental rugs and the Fez had become standard accoutrements in upper-middle class life, and turcophile opinions appeared to drown out concerns for Ottoman Armenians during the massacres in the 1890s.¹ Hugo Zietz’s *Yenidze* tabacco factory in Dresden, modeled on a Moroccan mosque, quickly became a prominent symbol when it was completed in 1909. The building was immensely popular and proved to be an ideal marketing tool for Zietz’s tobacco, which was imported from the Ottoman domains in Macedonia.² German engineering brought railroads and other infrastructure projects to the Ottoman Empire, and a Prussian military mission tried to reform the Ottoman army, causing tension and uneasiness with the other Great Powers. From the 1880s until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, Germany invested both economic capital and military knowledge in the Ottoman state to strengthen it from within.

But growing economic ties, which continued to lag behind other Great Powers’ until the First World War, hardly explain Germany’s relationship to the Ottomans.³ What was so special about the Ottoman Empire in the minds of Germans? How and why did turcophilism and sympathy for the Ottoman Empire become so common in Imperial

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¹ Margaret Lavinia Anderson, “Down in Turkey, Far Away: Human Rights, the Armenian Massacres and
Germany? Why did Germans show such little sympathy for Christian minorities in both the Balkans and Anatolia? Or was turcophilism confined to the “politicians, soldiers, and litterateurs”, who simply spoke louder than others? Even if this was the case, how did these social groups contribute to the emergence of German turcophilia? I attempt to answer these questions, while exploring the transformations of the German public sphere that gave turcophilism traction in Imperial Germany.

Just as war reporting during the Crimean War was key to the emergence of British turcophile sympathies, German turcophilism first emerged in the pages of the German press, as war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia loomed in during the Great Eastern Crisis (1875-1878).\(^4\) Opinions and attitudes about Ottoman power unfolded in print and were buoyed by the mass market for newspapers that developed in the nineteenth century. In the wake of German unification, public interest in the Ottoman lands was stimulated by affairs of state and concerns for security. German diplomacy became a crucial factor in the Eastern Question and the maintenance of Ottoman rule. The military alliance between Imperial Germany and the Ottoman Empire was the culmination of a unique relationship, one that does not easily fit into the narratives of imperialism that predominate the historiography of Imperial Germany.

This dissertation charts the relationship between German statecraft and public opinion regarding the Ottoman Empire before World War I. First, it analyzes the importance of the Eastern Question for German unification and how the foundations of

Bismarckian foreign policy informed the German-Ottoman military alliance of 1914. Second, it investigates the relationship between state officials and the press, as well as the structure of German news reporting from the Ottoman Empire. Third, it investigates the impact of German news reporting on the German public sphere, starting with the Great Eastern Crisis of 1875-1878 and ending with the Balkan Wars of 1912-13.

The Public Sphere and the German Press

Expressions of sympathy for the Ottoman order were articulated in newspapers as part of a broader German public sphere, which had begun to emancipate itself from state influence in the nineteenth century, as mass literacy shifted the center of politics from cabinets to parliaments and the press.\(^5\) German unification in 1871 introduced universal male suffrage, and the German Press Law of 1874 codified the liberalization of the press, ending all overt forms of government coercion like censorship and unifying regulations across the empire.\(^6\)

The analytical focus for many scholars, who have written about the German press in the nineteenth century, has been its relationship with the state. Narratives of state intervention and the press policies of state bureaucracies are an understandable outcome of


scant source material from newspapers and the traditional reliance on state archives. It is undeniable that the state had a substantial role in forming the German public sphere since the Enlightenment. Yet the focus on state intervention and bureaucratic press policies has distorted the interactive nature of reading, writing, and the public sphere, leading to narratives of control, manipulation, and propaganda from above that have dominated scholarly debate.

German newspapers were not just expanding beyond the borders of provincial states as the new German nation was being consolidated in the 1870s, but across the world, as the market for international news grew with economic globalization. Studies of German foreign policy and the press have also taken a similar state-centric approach, seeing the press either as an amplifier of the Foreign Office or the extension of domestic interest groups. Debates in major newspapers have been seen either as a “mirror” of domestic political struggles or evidence of “public opinion” rallying behind a

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manipulative government.\textsuperscript{10} Many scholars of the \textit{Kaiserreich} point to the emergence of the mass media in Imperial Germany and government attempts to mobilize political support indirectly, whether it be Bismarck’s secret slush fund to bribe journalists or organizations like the German Navy League.\textsuperscript{11} Thus, a variant of the German Sonderweg thesis is often invoked to describe a German public sphere unduly influenced by state intervention and the aspirations of journalists wanting to please officials.\textsuperscript{12}

This view has cast German newspapers as passive actors in the public sphere, rather than agents who shaped representations of the wider world. Newspapers, the carriers of public opinion, were not just reflections of their readers or interest groups but institutions with their own logic, interests, and traditions. Few studies have analyzed the nexus of journalists, editors, and state officials that made up public opinion.\textsuperscript{13} Recent scholarship, such as Dominik Geppert’s study of the press and Anglo-German relations, has gone beyond state-centric paradigms, focusing on the press as a factor that influenced both diplomacy and the broader reaches of society.\textsuperscript{14} Newspapers were not simply public relations’ machines for the German Foreign Office, nor could diplomats control what was printed in the press, not even in “semi-official” papers long regarded as pliant partners of

\textsuperscript{10}Space permits only a few examples: Manfred Sell, \textit{Das Deutsch-Englische Abkommen von 1890 im Lichte der deutschen Presse} (Berlin, 1926); Diedrich Baruth, \textit{Die deutsche Marokkopolitik 1905/06 und Friedrich Holsteins Entlassung im Spiegel der Presse}, (Saarbrücken: 1978).


\textsuperscript{14}Pressekriege: \textit{Öffentlichkeit und Diplomatie in den deutsch-britischen Beziehungen 1896-1912} (München: Oldenbourg, 2007), especially pp 47-70.
the government. Technological changes like the telegraph, rising geographical mobility, and the growing network of foreign correspondents contributed to the power of the media, just as market forces were making sensationalist press coverage more common and widely disseminated. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the German public sphere was a vibrant marketplace of ideas and information, in which the state came under increasing pressure to influence public opinion but shrinking possibilities to do so.

**The Problem of Humanity and the Eastern Question**

Recently, the historical struggles of Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire have become the subject of interest among scholars of human rights and humanitarian interventionism. Since the end of the Cold War, human rights and humanitarian interventionism—either as aid, military force or both—have become important in international affairs. Traditional ideological contests like the struggles between Marxism and liberal capitalism have lost their centrality and been superseded by a paradigm of modernization, in which technocratic regimes of development and crisis management have emerged through a diffuse process of economic globalization. Although struggles over the nature and entitlements of citizenship persist in the domestic sphere, human rights and

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15 This insight has been pursued to great effect by Martin Kohlrausch, who looks at William II. See *Der Monarch im Skandal: die Logik der Massenmedien und die Transformation der wilhelminischen Monarchie* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2005).
the project of protecting endangered social groups from suffering have become a primary focal point of international politics. Political scientists and international lawyers, therefore, have devoted much attention to both the legal-doctrinal aspects of human rights as well as the significance of human rights advocacy for international politics.\textsuperscript{19}

Humanitarianism and concerns for the sufferings of others are often couched in theological terms, a “Problem from Hell”, as one prominent advocate for American military interventionism describes the dilemmas of failed-states in the 1990s and the ethnic conflicts that have flared up in the wake of the Cold War’s demise.\textsuperscript{20} Humanitarianism, thus framed, is not a political question of ends and means, but a moral question of good and evil. Recognizing and responding to distant suffering is regarded more as a moral imperative, rather than a political choice. Instead of seeing human rights’ advocacy as an extension of politics and subject to material and ideological interests, many supporters of human rights see their cause as a part of a universal project to protect all of humanity, beyond nation-states, citizenship, and local cultural practice.\textsuperscript{21}

Historians have taken up the subject of human rights as well, but many have succumbed to these post-Cold War ideas of human rights and humanitarian universalism, in which concern for human suffering in far away places is conceived in a theological language of moral struggle. They employ teleological narratives that see advocacy in the nineteenth century as heroic prefigurations of universal values that are coming to full

\textsuperscript{20}Samantha Powers, “\textit{A Problem From Hell}”: \textit{America and the Age of Genocide} (New York: Harper, 2003).
\textsuperscript{21}For some thoughtful treatments about these intellectual and political developments in the 1990s see, Michael Ignatieff, \textit{Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry} (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2001);
fruition in our own times. Christian missionaries and idealistic lawyers are the agents in these stories of human rights and humanitarianism, who were often thwarted by the power of states or the imperatives of geopolitics. The United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 is often placed at the center of these histories as the culmination of ideas that stretch back to the French Revolution, or even Greek antiquity, finally reaching their global fulfillment as a reaction to the horrors of the Holocaust. Carlo Ginzburg’s wide-ranging inquiry into the moral implications of distance also begins with Aristotelian notions of natural law and ends by acknowledging the “victory” of human rights after the Second World War, warning his readers not to forget the horrors of the twentieth century.

Other scholars have begun to rethink the history of human rights, not in terms of triumphalist continuity with past traditions of idealism, but rather in terms of material interests and state power. Abigail Green has written a sober biography of Moses Montefiore and his struggles to balance his own financial self-interests, a British culture of imperialist philanthropy, and his desire to help Jews throughout the world. Mark Mazower has looked at the legacy of the British empire in the formation of the Universal Declaration Human Rights, which, he believes, to be less a reaction to the crimes of the

Holocaust than as a way for colonial elites to retain power in former imperial territories.\textsuperscript{26} Sam Moyn has also dismissed the Holocaust as the impetus behind human rights advocacy and locates the current fascination with humanitarianism and human rights in the mid-1970s, after the failure of the Vietnam War led the Carter administration to integrate human rights into official U.S. policy to combat the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{27}

These works not only complicate our understanding of human rights but also underscore the importance of power and domestic politics for understanding the history of advocacy, which drew attention to distant suffering and championed social groups far away. Gary Bass has investigated humanitarian interventionist movements in nineteenth century Europe, which turned on conflicts between Christians and Muslims within the Ottoman Empire. While the agitation movements that arose in Europe are central to the story, Bass ignores the religious dimensions of the Eastern Question and focuses on the rhetoric of “humanity”.\textsuperscript{28} That state violence could be marshaled against a Muslim power to save fellow Christians gave these movements public resonance, not an abstract concern with humanity or the rights of suffering peoples. The power of religious difference between Christians and Muslims as well as the possibilities afforded by the growth of European state violence come into focus if we look for comparisons to other instances of distant suffering. While European publics were eager to criticize Russian repression in Poland, Belgians for atrocities in the Congo, Germans for near-genocide in Southwest Africa, or the British for the excesses of the Boer Wars, only against the Ottoman Empire

\textsuperscript{27}\textit{The Last Utopia}, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{28}Gary J. Bass, \textit{Freedom's Battle}, passim.
was armed intervention seriously considered or war between Great Powers waged. When
Russia finally went to war against the Ottomans over their bloody suppression of
Bulgarian Christians in 1877, the Russian ambassador to Constantinople, Count Nikolay
Ignatyev, claimed to be fighting for “humanity”, not just for an independent Bulgarian
state. Yet this formulation of “humanity” was a codeword for Christians and Slavs, a
political ploy designed to channel the domestic pressure by Russian imperialists and Pan-
Slavists, who wanted to reassert Orthodoxy in Constantinople and Slavic hegemony in the
Balkans. The war against the Ottomans was tied to Emperor Alexander II’s life-long
attempt to represent the monarchy as the head of a paternalistic Christian state. Liberal
nationalists like William Gladstone, who agitated in Great Britain for Bulgarian
independence too, also claimed to be concerned with “suffering Christianity”. However,
his commitment to the national self-determination of other Christian populations was
notoriously flexible when it clashed with British interests. Christian suffering was a
scourge, unless oppression was carried out by fellow Christians and helped maintain the
balance of power. Gladstone rode public frustration over the Disraeli government’s
turcophile foreign policy and used the suffering of Bulgarian Christians in 1876 to become
Prime Minister in 1880. Gladstone’s pragmatism and selective sense of outrage should
give us pause about historicizing the universalist rhetoric of “humanity”, which often

29 “Die Lage im Orient” Deutsche Rundschau 10, 1877, p. 134-135;
Princeton Univ. Press, 2000), p. 185. This was, of course, the view from the “center”. The periphery of the
Russian Empire was more complex. See Brower and Lazzerini (eds.) Russia’s Orient: Imperial Borderlands
and Peoples, 1700-1917 (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1997).
32 Ann Pottinger Saab, Reluctant Icon: Gladstone, Bulgaria and the Working Classes, 1856-1878
(Cambridge, Mass., 1991)
concealed expansionist aims and local political opportunities. Thus domestic politics were key to the reception of distant suffering.

**Framing Horror: Narratives and the News**

A chorus of writers and scholars has criticized human rights’ advocates and the discourses that they create, which tend to oversimplify violence from far-away places. By constructing narratives of victims and perpetrators that are designed to appeal to the sympathies of domestic publics, advocates often distort the underlying social dynamics of violence and push for interventionist solutions that are unrealistic, or worse, contribute to more violence.33 Putting the history of human rights’ advocacy into context requires us to look more closely at the way in which sympathy was expressed and mobilized in the public sphere. Historians of the British reaction to Ottoman atrocities against Bulgarians in 1876 have often seen the nature of news coverage as secondary to domestic politics, but newspapers and their network of correspondents abroad were important for how the horrors of violence unfolded and were given meaning in the domestic sphere.34 The potential of the media to shape reactions to the massacres of Ottoman Armenians in the 1890s has been more central to the reception of violence in Imperial Germany, as Christian missionaries and advocates of Ottoman Armenians claimed that German newspapers were intentionally distorting the news to serve the interests of the German

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government. While it is true that German newspapers were shaped by domestic political forces, less certain is the contention that news coverage was intentionally skewed to suit certain pre-ordained interpretations of Ottoman affairs. Advocates for Ottoman minorities held fast to narratives of suffering and explanations of violence that supported their own movement, just as the German government came to trumpet its own narrative of Ottoman power and potential partnership after public enthusiasm for Ottoman rule began to slacken at the turn of the century. But serious German newspapers presented a more complicated and conflicting picture of what was happening in the Ottoman lands that did not conform to the narratives of either advocates or the government. Thus German discourses on Ottoman violence were woven into larger patterns of journalistic practice and cultural contestation over the meaning of rebellion, atrocity, and massacre.

Any history of the relationship between Germany and the Ottoman Empire must reckon with the Armenian Genocide and the on-going struggle over its interpretation. Because the wartime alliance of Germany and the Ottoman Empire has raised important questions about both German culpability in the Armenian Genocide, as well as the extent to which the genocidal violence of the Nazi regime can be linked back to developments in the Kaiserreich, scholars have been quick see pathologies in German attitudes toward Armenians before World War I. None of this scholarship is convincing. This dissertation does not seek to minimize the sufferings of Ottoman Armenians, but rather to understand how suffering was transmitted and received by the German mass media as part of a larger story of conflict over the Eastern Question. It requires us to look beyond Armenians and see how German concerns for security trumped talk of humanity, from the Balkans to
eastern Anatolia. We need not abandon the search for historical precedents in our current fascination with human rights or humanitarian interventionism, but we should resist histories that reduce the complexity of the Eastern Question to overly simplistic narratives of victims and perpetrators.

**Dissertation Outline**

I use a broad range of sources in reconstructing German turcophilism. Documents from the *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes* (Berlin) include reports from diplomats and soldiers. Private papers from a number of diplomats, dragomans, and journalists are also housed here. The *Geheimes Staatsarchiv preussischer Kulturbesitz* and the *Bundesarchiv Lichterfelde* (Berlin) also provide sources on journalists and state officials from other ministries involved in press policy as well as the private papers of government officials and soldiers. The *Landesarchiv* for the city of Berlin also contains documents on local journalists and newspapers. The *Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv* (Freiburg) and the *Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, IV Kriegsarchiv* (Munich) supplement reports with memoirs and reports from Bavarian officers in the Ottoman Empire. The *Zeitungsarchiv* at the *Staatsbibliothek Westhafen* (Berlin) offers a wide selection of German-language newspapers that reported on events in the Ottoman domains.

The dissertation is divided into two sections. The first section is entitled “Geopolitics and the News”. Chapter one analyzes the geopolitics of the Eastern Question, its significance for Bismarckian foreign policy and the German-Ottoman military alliance in 1914. Chapter two recasts the history of mass literacy and the state as well as the relationship between journalists and state officials in the creation of the German public
sphere in the nineteenth. Chapter three looks at the structure of the international network of news agencies and the emergence of German foreign correspondents in the Ottoman Empire. The second section is called “Receptions” and reconstructs the reception of Ottoman violence in Imperial Germany. Chapter four charts German reporting during the Eastern Crisis, the failed attempts by Bismarck to steer the press, and German responses to the “Bulgarian horrors” and the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878. Chapter five analyzes German news coverage of the Armenian massacres, the Greco-Ottoman War of 1897, and the Kaiser’s tour of the Orient in 1898, when German sympathies for the Ottomans reached their highpoint. Chapter six charts the decline of turcophile sympathies in Germany, beginning with the Macedonian uprising of 1902 and coming to full fruition after the Ottoman defeat in the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913.
Section I

Geopolitics and the News
Chapter 1

The Promise of Partnership: The Geopolitics of German Turcophilism

*Great crises provide the weather which fosters the growth of Prussia[...]*

--Otto von Bismarck, 15 February 1854

This chapter situates the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the larger history of German unification and Great Power politics. By the turn of the century, Germany came to support the Ottoman Empire as a way of maintaining its own international position. Both Germans and Ottomans were engaged in state-building in the late nineteenth century, making their relationship unique among the Great Powers. German turcophilism emerged in the age of high imperialism, a period in which Germany’s desire for economic and cultural expansion as well as security found expression in partnership with the Ottomans rather than direct or indirect imperial control.

**Germans, Ottomans, and Empires**

The meanings attached to the “Orient” are wide-ranging and the subject of a large and growing body of scholarly literature. Originally denoting the lands to the east of Europe, the term has become freighted with an additional significance having more to do with power than geography. Edward Said’s claim that the Orient came to represent a foil for European domination in the era of high imperialism has been a lodestone for scholars

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ever since his study, *Orientalism*, was first published.\textsuperscript{36} Said’s critique of Western literature and scholarship, in which European identity was forged through encounters with an Oriental “other”, destabilized conventional boundaries between Occident and Orient, while his narrow focus on Anglo-French imperialism vexed critics who resented his assault on traditional orientalist scholarship. Subsequent research has sought to close the gaps left open by Said’s omission of Germans, Russians, Dutch, and Italians, extending the Orientalist framework to other sites of European expansion.\textsuperscript{37}

This impulse has also spawned a counter-critique that highlights the limitations of representation and discourse theory for understanding the variety of motivations that underlay the creation of knowledge and structured the experience of individuals. To demonstrate that the Orient was much more a frame of mind than an actual place was a major intellectual achievement, but it has not kept scholars from refining Said’s model or questioning the usefulness of his sweeping generalizations.\textsuperscript{38} If the juxtaposition of Europe and the East was as much an exercise in power as it was a demarcation of culture

and space, understanding encounters between Europeans and the wider world requires more careful attention to what the Orient meant in practice.  

That Germany lacked an imperial practice was Said’s most breathtaking assertion, inspiring a flurry of studies on Germany and the Orient. These works have attempted to address German creations of “otherness” as well as investigate the history of German orientalist scholarship and connections between orientalism and German state practices abroad. While this research has made an enormous contribution to European intellectual history, it has side-stepped the question of whether Germany was an imperial power in any sense akin to Great Britain, Russia, or France. Germany was a colonial power in Africa and the South Pacific, enjoying direct political and economic control. But did it exert indirect control through a preponderance of military and financial power as Great Britain and France had in Egypt and North Africa? Ever since George W.F. Hallgarten’s comparative study of imperialism, historians have tended to follow his assertion that Germany not only harbored imperial ambitions of acquisition, but actually followed through on them by obtaining indirect control of assets in the Ottoman Empire. 

According to this logic, Germany gathered archaeological artifacts, developed lasting

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40 See Suzanne Marchand, German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship (New York, 2009); Todd Kontje, German Orientalisms (Ann Arbor, 2004); Nina Berman, Orientalismus, Kolonialismus und Moderne: Zum Bild des Orients in der deutschsprachigen Kultur um 1900 (Stuttgart, 1997); Andrea Polaschegg, Der andere Orientalismus: Regeln deutsch-morgenländischer Imagination im 19. Jahrhundert (Berlin, 2005); George Steinmetz, The Devil’s Handwriting: Percoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa (Chicago, 2007). For a spirited critique of the paradigm, see Russell Berman, Enlightenment or Empire: Colonial Discourse in German Culture (Lincoln, 1998).

Yet the relationship between Imperial Germany and the Ottoman Empire has both defied and validated narratives of imperialism. Some see the Prussian military mission sent to reform the Ottoman army and official overtures of support by Kaiser William II as evidence of Germany’s aloofness to territorial aggrandizement.\footnote{Wilhelm van Kampen, \textit{Studien zur deutschen Türkeipolitik in der Zeit Wilhelms II} (Diss. University of Kiel, 1968); Yehuda Wallach, \textit{Anatomie einer Militärhilfe: die preußisch-deutsch Militärmissionen in der Türkei 1835-1919} (Droste: Düsseldorf, 1976); Jan S. Richter, \textit{Die Orientreise Kaiser Wilhelms II. 1898. Eine Studie zur deutschen Aussenpolitik an der Wende zum 20. Jahrhundert} (Diss. University of Hamburg, 1997).} The growth in German capital flowing to the Ottoman lands for the development of railroads, agriculture, and mining at the end of the nineteenth century has been taken as evidence of a German desire for development and cooperation—not domination.\footnote{Karl Helfferich, \textit{Die deutsche Türkeipolitik} (Berlin, 1921); Boris Barth, \textit{Die deutsche Hochfinanz} und die Imperialismen. Banken und Aussenpolitik vor 1914 (Steiner: Stuttgart, 1995).} Others view all of these instances as signs of a burgeoning imperialism through indirect control.\footnote{Winfried Baumgart, \textit{Deutschland im Zeitalter des Imperialismus} (Frankfurt [Main], 1972); Lothar Rathmann, \textit{Berlin-Bagdad. Die imperialistische Nahostpolitik des kaiserlichen Deutschlands} (Berlin [East], 1962); Helmut Mejcher, “Die Bagdadbahn als Instrument deutschen wirtschaftlichen Einflusses im Osmanischen Reich” \textit{Geschichte und Gegenwart} 1 (1975): 447-481; Armin Kössler, \textit{Aktionsfeld Osmanisches Reich. Die Wirtschaftsinteressen des deutschen Kaiserreiches in der Türkei 1871-1908} (Diss. University of Freiburg i. Br., 1981); Johann Manzenreiter, \textit{Die Bagdadbahn. Als Beispiel für die Entstehung des Finanzimperialismus in Europa, 1873-1903} (Bochum, 1982).} Although Germany was the strongest supporter of the territorial integrity of Ottoman empire at the close of the nineteenth century, the periodic ambivalence of German diplomats to dismemberment of
Ottoman holdings has been seen as proof that the Kaiserrreich was biding its time, waiting to take control of what it could.\textsuperscript{46} These opposing views need not be mutually exclusive. Elements of “imperialist” acquisition developed alongside activities that undermined both the aspirations and ability of Germans to control Ottoman territory. However, the Kaiserrreich consistently sought to strengthen the Ottoman Empire, and the military alliance during the First World War was the surest sign that Germany did not—or could not—treat the Ottomans as imperial subjects.\textsuperscript{47} This dynamic of cooperation and maintaining Ottoman power is the most important and unique dimension of the German engagement with the Orient. Imperialist calls for control were more rhetoric than reality.\textsuperscript{48} While German orientalist scholars and archaeologists helped Germany acquire impressive museum collections in Berlin, their activities remained largely confined to the “texts, myths, ideas, and languages” of an Orient long dead.\textsuperscript{49} German turcophilism grew out of the promise of the Ottomans as a partner, and the regeneration of the Ottoman Empire tapped into German aspirations for economic expansion that had been unleashed by German unification.

\textbf{The Eastern Question and the Ottoman State}

In the nineteenth century, the most common geographical entity evoked by “the Orient” among the German speakers of Central Europe was the Ottoman Empire. This

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item\textsuperscript{46} Especially Baumgart, \textit{Imperialismus}, pp. 135-142.
\item\textsuperscript{47} Wallach, \textit{Anatomie}, pp. 165-241; Ulrich Trumpener, \textit{Germany and the Ottoman Empire 1914-1918} (Princeton, 1968).
\item\textsuperscript{48} Malte Fuhrmann, “Visions of Turkey in Germany: Legitimizing German Imperialist Penetration of the Ottoman Empire” The Contours of Legitimacy in Central Europe Conference Paper, May 2002, Oxford University. \url{http://users.ox.ac.uk/~oaces/conference/papers.html}
\item\textsuperscript{49} Said, \textit{Orientalism}, p. 19. Suzanne Marchand carefully avoids the problem of German imperialism in her study of German Orientalism although “The Age of Imperialism” serves as the backdrop.
\end{itemize}
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popular understanding of the Orient stemmed from the presence of the Ottomans on the European periphery as well as from the attention that internal problems within the Ottoman lands created for the Sultan’s neighbors. The slow weakening of the Ottoman Empire and its implications for Great Power politics led contemporaries and subsequent historians to dub the problem the “Eastern Question”. The German understanding of the Eastern Question, *die Orientalische Frage*, was not only a commonplace expression that captured the link between the German understanding of the Orient and the Ottoman state but also signified how central the Ottoman order was to the politics of Germany.⁵⁰

Most of the scholarly literature has distinguished between the Bismarckian and the Wilhelmine eras, stressing rupture rather than continuity.⁵¹ Yet, if one takes a longer view, the (Prusso-)German relationship with the Ottomans is best characterized as a mutual dependency that arose in the shadow of the Eastern Question. The fortunes of the Ottoman Empire were important to Bismarck’s foreign policy and the unification of Germany. Thereafter, the vicissitudes of the Eastern Question threatened to undermine the status quo that he had achieved in Europe. From the Crimean War in 1854 to the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in June of 1914, events within the Ottoman Empire and its former territories were important to the fate of the German nation-state. We must, therefore,

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examine the Ottoman Empire within the context of Great Power politics and analyze the internal dynamics that made crisis so common in the late Ottoman period.

Although the Ottoman Empire often has been conceived as a subordinate player by historians of the Eastern Question, Ottoman power and diplomacy had enormous influence over Great Power politics. Some historians have argued that the conflicting interests and rivalries among the other Great Powers gave the Ottomans a disproportionate influence beyond the Empire’s military capabilities. Many of the characteristics that traditionally have been seen as the Empire’s fundamental weaknesses—internal conflicts between Christian and Muslim subjects, ethno-nationalist separatism, and financial insolvency—also helped the Ottomans play the powers off one another. The “inter-imperialist” rivalry for financial influence, for example, led to an influx of capital from Western Europe, while the imposition of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration in the 1880s was not as onerous to the Empire as historians once thought. Ethno-nationalism and communal tensions, which began to tear the Empire apart in the nineteenth century, were also skillfully manipulated by Ottoman statesmen. Ottoman rulers sought to maintain control of territories that threatened to pull away by creating their own “imperialist” forms of rule, and the threat of Ottoman dissolution was used to gain concessions from the other Great Powers. While viewing the late Ottoman Empire as the “Sick Man of Europe” continues

52 Matthew S. Anderson, The Eastern Question: 1774-1923 (New York, 1966);
53 Şükrü Hanioğlu, A History of the Late Ottoman Empire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009);
to be a powerful trope in the historiography of diplomacy, many historians of the late-Ottoman period stress the remarkable resilience and capacity of the Empire for change.

The nineteenth century brought enormous challenges upon the Ottoman Empire as it began a protracted period of state-building. The traditional narrative in Ottoman historiography privileged Westernization, nationalism, and secularization, pitting secular modernizers against religious reactionaries. For a long time, many historians of both the Empire and modern Turkey viewed the reform projects of the nineteenth century as one long crucible of modernization versus reaction. Teleological in structure, ideological in practice, the appeal of this framework has lessened in recent decades, as historians and theorists have rethought this “classic” paradigm of imperial decline and national regeneration. Emphasizing instead the struggle between a centralizing state and its unruly periphery, the transformation of the empire in the nineteenth century was less a story of struggle between modernity and backwardness than the laying bare of dilemmas inherent in a traditional imperial order that was increasingly enveloped by the power of modern European state-building and capitalist development.56

One of the most important characteristics of the traditional Ottoman order was its knotted tapestry of ethnicities and religious communities. As European powers began to encroach on the boundaries of the Empire, strengthening the Ottoman state became key to survival, and the demographic patchwork of Muslims, Christians, and Jews, who spoke a variety of languages, became the most volatile problem in an age of centralizing state

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authority. Straddling Asia and Europe, the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the nineteenth century stretched from Croatia to the Persian Gulf, but it shrank continuously throughout the century. The economic heartland of the Empire was the Levant, Asia Minor, and the Balkan hinterlands of Southeastern Europe. Together these regions historically had accounted for the bulk of state revenues but also for a majority of the empire’s problems, as nationalism and the conflicts between the center and the periphery grew. Balkan peasants—the majority of them Christian—grew restless under the burdensome taxes of their Sipahi Muslim lords, while the Arab provinces of the Empire, which had always enjoyed a large degree of autonomy, experienced periodic revolts that challenged Ottoman rule. Armenian and Greek-speaking Christians, who accounted for perhaps a third of the total population, cohabitated with Turkish-speaking Muslims in Anatolia. Although distinctions between Sunni Muslims and the dhimmi (Christians, Jews, and other non-Muslims) had been the most important organizing principle in traditional Ottoman society, ethno-nationalism and the primacy of language began to trump confession as Arabic and Albanian, for example, often united Christians and Muslims, while the Turkic language of the Ottoman state was regarded as foreign.57

The rise of Europe was painfully felt by Ottoman elites, with the territorial gains of the fifteenth and sixteenth century falling to European neighbors continuously thereafter. Between 1774 and 1829, the Russian Czars won four wars against the Ottomans and signed peace agreements whose cumulative effect allowed Russia to encircle the Black Sea and challenge Ottoman control of the Straits. Czar Alexander I proclaimed his desire

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to conquer Constantinople, after gaining formal rights to protect the Orthodox Christian
minorities within the Empire, and he envisioned himself as the ruler of all Christian
orthodoxy who was destined to free his co-religionists from Muslim rule.  

Austria, long the defender of Christendom in Europe against the Türkengefahr (“Turkish danger”),
began to see Russia as its primary competitor. Already in 1776 the Austrian chancellor
Wenzel Kaunitz had succumbed to Russenfurcht (“fear of Russia”) after the first Russian
victory against the Ottomans. His successor, Klemenz von Metternich, began to see the
Sultan as a natural ally against liberalism and the spread of nationalism, especially with
the expansion of Russian power into Central Europe after the defeat of Napoleon. Sharing
a common border with the Ottomans, Austrians viewed the further expulsion of the
Ottomans from the Balkan peninsula with trepidation as nationalist aspirations threatened
to stir up Slavic populations within the Austrian Empire, after Serbs revolted in 1804. A
popular uprising by Greeks in 1821 turned into the first successful nationalist movement
against Ottoman rule, and an independent Greek state was formed in 1829.  

Great Britain had been ambivalent towards Russian expansion in the Black Sea
region, but Greek independence and the growing importance of the Mediterranean for
British trade to India led British statesmen to reconsider. Trade with the Ottoman Empire
had also grown rapidly in the opening decades of the century, and a consensus arose
within governing circles that further Russian expansion toward Constantinople and the
Straits could not be tolerated. Thus, maintaining the status quo became a cornerstone of

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British foreign policy, and British politicians supported the Ottomans unequivocally until
the 1870s.\footnote{Keith Robbins, \textit{Britain and Europe 1789-2005} (Oxford, 2005), pp. 81-93.}

Although Britain eclipsed France as the most important imperial power in the
nineteenth century, the French had long-standing relations with the Ottoman Empire.
Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt in 1798 marked the beginning of a half-century of French
aggression against the Ottomans. Charles X invaded Algeria in 1830 in the last days of the
Bourbon restoration, conquering and colonizing a territory that had been under the
nominal possession of the Ottomans, while the French supported Mohammed Ali in Egypt
as he tried to wrestle control away from Sultan Mahmud II. During the second Imperial
period, Napoleon III supported the maintenance of the Ottomans to counterbalance Russia,
but France never regarded the Empire as a vital interest, seeing its presence there more as
a matter of prestige.\footnote{Fatma Müge Göçek, \textit{East Encounters West: France and the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century}
(Oxford, 1987); William Miller, \textit{The Ottoman Empire and its Successors} (Cambridge, 1966).}

The first official contact with Prussia came when Sultan Selim III invited a
Prussian officer to inspect the Ottoman army in 1789.\footnote{Karl Pröhl, \textit{Die Bedeutung preußischer Politik in den Phasen der orientalischen Frage. Ein Beitrag zur
Entwicklung deutsch-türkischer Beziehungen von 1606-1871} (Diss. University of Kiel, 1986), p. 11.} There had been a long history of
German ex-soldiers and adventurers from the western Europe serving in the Ottoman
military, even rising to positions of great prominence, such as Mehmed Ali Pasha, who
was born Karl Detroit in Magdeburg and became a field marshal in the Ottoman army.\footnote{Theodor Heuss, “Mehmed Ali Pascha” in \textit{Schattenbeschwörung Randfiguren der deutschen Geschichte}
(Tübingen, 1999).}

But the young Helmuth von Moltke’s four-year stay as a military advisor in the Ottoman
lands signaled the beginning of a Prussian engagement in the Empire. His memoirs from this period (1835-1839), which were published upon his return, created a lasting image of life “under the crescent” for generations of German speakers.\textsuperscript{65} Prussian foreign policy continued to be guided by Frederick the Great’s principle that his state had no immediate interest in the Ottoman Empire or the Eastern Question. A mosque was built in Potsdam under Frederick’s rule as a symbol of religious tolerance, but the building was purely decorative and housed the waterworks for a local castle.\textsuperscript{66}

Moltke’s invitation to be a military advisor was part of a broader Ottoman orientation toward Western Europe and a reorganization of the Ottoman state. The reform project under Sultan Abdülmecid, the \textit{Tanzimat}, became the most important attempt to rejuvenate the Empire. The first royal edict in 1839 promised to enact new laws guaranteeing life and property rights, end the corrupt system of tax farming, and put Muslims and non-Muslims on equal footing. The role of the Ottoman bureaucracy in drafting, codifying, and implementing the administrative reform was unprecedented, and it represented an important shift in the internal balance of power within the Ottoman state. The Sublime Porte had traditionally been the residence of the Grand Vizier, but in the Tanzimat era it came to refer to the central bureaucratic institution that took charge of reform for the next four decades. With Metternich as their model, successive Grand Viziers used the Porte and its cadres of bureaucrats to implement change and rule over the

\textsuperscript{65}Helmuth von Moltke, \textit{Unter dem Halbmond: Briefe aus der Türkei} (Berlin, 1973 [reprint]).
\textsuperscript{66}Pröhl, \textit{Bedeutung}, pp. 125-147.
Empire unimpeded until the 1870s. Traditional sources of authority, such as the imperial palace or the Islamic scholarly community, the *ulema*, withered in comparison.\(^{67}\)

Centralization and reform not only reflected a genuine desire to refurbish the Empire, but they were also well-received in Europe. The Tanzimat did not just try to improve cohesiveness by dismantling barriers among religious communities and abolishing inequitable taxation. The Ottomans also gained credibility as a European polity in which liberalism seemed to flourish. Turcophiles became prominent in Britain as imperial grand strategy crossed paths with Russian expansion in Asia. The diplomat-cum-writer David Urquhart was the most vocal turcophile in the 1830s, at a time when many Europeans were still smitten with Greek independence. He saw the Ottomans as a natural ally against Russian despotism.\(^{68}\) In the wake of the 1848 revolution, failed revolutionaries from Poland, Hungary, and Austria sought a safe haven in the Ottoman Empire, and the image of the empire as a cosmopolitan land of opportunity grew. The Anglo-French coalition that helped the Ottomans defeat Russia in the Crimean War (1853-1856) had little to do with liberal affinities or any deep sense of solidarity, but the mobilization of popular support in Britain trumpeted the virtues of the Ottoman system and demonized Russian autocracy in newspapers and popular literature.\(^{69}\)

**Bismarckian Indifference: Contradictions and Consequences**

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Although Prussia stayed out of it, the Crimean War had an enormous effect on a young Prussian diplomat in Frankfurt, Otto von Bismarck, whose ambitions were stoked by the international crisis taking place on the Black Sea. The implications of the war also led to his break with Prussian conservatism. While Bismarck hewed to the Prussian tradition of neutrality, he recognized that the Crimean War could help Prussian aspirations in the German lands. The Anglo-French coalition against Russian aggression presented Austria with a dilemma. Backing the coalition was in the strategic interest of Austria, but such a move threatened to alienate Russia, whose support had been crucial to Austria’s influence in Central Europe. Prussian conservatives around Kaiser Frederick William IV, such as Leopold von Gerlach, wanted to preserve the power of both Austria and Russia out of solidarity for the conservative principles of the Holy Alliance, while the circle around the heir apparent, Prince William, wanted to weaken Austria and push Prussia toward Great Britain and liberal reform. Bismarck attempted to square the circle. He wanted to preserve the conservative principles of the Holy Alliance while weakening Austria in the process. He envisioned Prussia’s remaining neutral as long as possible and would only support Austria’s anti-Russian policy if Prussia were granted concessions in the German Confederation.

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In contrast to conservatives like Gerlach, who agonized over the plight of Christians in the Ottoman Empire and wanted Christian emancipation without Russian influence, Bismarck rejected sympathy and what he called *Gefühlspolitik* in judging the Eastern Question. Just as Bismarck warned the Prussian government in 1848 against granting concessions to the Polish minority, fearing for the integrity of the Prussian state, he never doubted the legitimacy of Ottoman rule or the morality of suppressing minorities within the Sultan’s territory.\(^\text{73}\) While many Prussian diplomats developed reform projects for the Christian minorities in the Ottoman lands, Bismarck remained aloof to condemnation of the Ottomans. Throughout his career, Bismarck was indifferent to the internal conflicts of the Ottoman Empire. Although he was ignored during the Crimean War, the wavering neutrality of Frederick William IV and a quick allied victory in 1856 kept Prussia from entering the war.\(^\text{74}\)

Bismarck’s indifference to the internal forces of the Eastern Question led him to use the Ottoman Empire as both bulwark and bait, pivoting between undermining and strengthening Ottoman authority. The Austrian decision to back the coalition during the Crimean War as well as the Russian defeat created the international conditions for German unification in the years following. Russia was weakened and exhausted, while Austrian participation destroyed the Holy Alliance and gave Prussia a free hand to contest Austrian

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\(^\text{74}\) Gall, *Der weisse Revolutionär*, p. 56., Barclay, *Frederick William IV*, p. 383.
dominance within the German Confederation.\textsuperscript{75} Another important factor was maintaining stability in the Ottoman Empire, after Russia had stirred up nationalism among Ottoman Christians during the Crimean War. The Treaty of Paris in 1856 tried to keep the centrifugal forces of the Empire set in aspic. Greeks clamored for more territory in the Aegean Sea, and Slavic nationalism threatened the Habsburg monarchy.\textsuperscript{76} Bismarck tried to use this new constellation of forces when he came to power in 1862. He sought to undermine Austria along its southern flank by encouraging Prince Karl from the southern Hohenzollern line to take the throne of Romania in early 1866. Bismarck wanted to animate ethnic Romanians from the Austrian \textit{Siebenbürgen} and spark the beginning of Slavic nationalist movements within the Habsburg monarchy, which Prince Karl’s accession might have accomplished.\textsuperscript{77} The Ottomans were furious and threatened to invade Romania, but the Great Powers staved off war by guaranteeing Ottoman suzerainty.

Prussia’s quick victory over Austria in 1866 created a new situation in Central Europe. Bismarck offset Prussian gains by allowing compensations, signaling to Russia, for example, that he would support a revision of the Treaty of Paris, which forbade both Russian and Ottoman warships in the Black Sea. France approached Austria in 1867 in an effort to contain Prussia, but Bismarck only saw danger of a Franco-Austrian alliance in the east. Such a constellation could attract Britain into a repeat of the Crimean alliance,

\textsuperscript{76}Werner Eugen Mosse, \textit{The Rise and Fall of the Crimean System 1855-1871} (London, 1963), pp. 132-156.
\textsuperscript{77}Scherer, \textit{Adler und Halbmond}, p. 17.
leaving Prussia to either irritate Russia through neutrality or risk following Russia into a war whose outcome would have been uncertain and costly. To avoid such a scenario, Bismarck worked to cool tensions in the Ottoman Empire, as rebellions in Crete threatened to drag the Great Powers to war in 1868. Bismarck initiated a conference in Paris in 1869 that brought the crisis to a conclusion by bolstering the Ottoman army and hindering Greek ships from entering Crete. Although his intervention earned him the suspicion of Russian officials, Prussia maintained Russian goodwill in 1870, as Bismarck went to war with France. In turn, Bismarck supported the Russian revocation of the Straits clause in the Treaty of Paris and remained firm against British objections at the London Conference in 1871, but it was the last time he would unequivocally support Russia in the Eastern Question.  

The Ottoman Empire remained a crucial bargaining chip in Bismarck’s diplomacy after unification. Hajo Holborn has characterized the Empire as an “object of power politics” with which Bismarck sought to balance his rivals. During the Great Eastern Crisis (1875-1878), when uprisings in the Balkans reopened the Eastern Question and Russia threatened war against the Ottomans, Bismarck was intent on using the crisis to foster conflict among the other powers and to avoid antagonizing Russia. Yet German neutrality irritated Russia, and the accommodation between the Habsburgs and the Czar at Reichstadt in 1877 threatened to isolate Germany. Austria was granted control of Bosnia and Herzegovina in exchange for a Russian campaign against the Ottomans. The Russo-

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79 Holborn, *Deutschland und die Türkei*, p. 7.
Turkish War (1877-78) and the Treaty of San Stefano, which would have established a greater Bulgaria within striking distance of the Ottoman capital, brought the British into the fold. They sent a fleet to protect Constantinople and hinder further expansion of Russia. Bismarck used the opportunity at the Congress of Berlin in 1878 to involve the powers on the Ottoman periphery, proclaiming no interest in territorial expansion, content to foster bilateral deals between Britain and the Ottomans as well as Austria and Russia.  

The Berlin Treaty was a triumph and the high-point of the Bismarckian era, in which Great Power politics relied on German goodwill for peace and stability. The continuation of this balance rested, as Bismarck remarked just months after the congress, on keeping the “oriental ulcer open” and the energies of the other powers focused on Ottoman territory. But Czar Alexander II blamed Bismarck for the division of Bulgaria and the reassertion of Ottoman control over the largely Bulgarian-speaking Eastern Rumelia. A slow process of estrangement between Germany and Russia set in. By 1879 Bismarck pushed for a closer engagement with Austria, and the Dual Alliance signified a shift toward shoring up Central Europe amid fears of Pan-Slavist expansion in the Balkans, although hope remained that Russia would return to an alliance with the conservative monarchies on its western border. Closer relations with Austria also meant that Bismarck had to give up whatever pretense he had maintained about German

disinterest in Ottoman territory, as Austria was being pulled into the “minefield” of Southeastern Europe by Russian expansionism. Although the Dual Alliance was defensive, Germany’s commitment to Austria extended to interests beyond the Habsburg monarchy’s borders, thereby challenging Bismarck’s old game of compensation.84

Bismarck’s desire to avoid direct involvement in the Eastern Question required commitments that seemed to contradict one another. Bismarck agreed to send officers in 1882 to ensure that the “oriental ulcer” remained open, after the historical conflict between Great Britain and Russia over Ottoman territory appeared to be weakening. Bismarck began to worry about British policy once Gladstone’s new ministry in 1880 put pressure on the Ottomans to fulfill the terms of the Berlin Treaty over the border disputes in Montenegro and Greece as well as the internal administrative reforms for Armenians.85 Gladstone’s pressure against the Ottomans was the first inkling that Britain might abandon the Empire, leaving Austria to confront Russia alone. Technical details and Bismarck’s attempts to cajole Gladstone into a less confrontational stance delayed the military mission to Constantinople until 1883, but the desire to reform the capabilities of the Ottoman army was a serious, if low priority for the Foreign Office and the Prussian army.86 While Bismarck regarded the mission as a minor tactical move designed to draw Russia closer to the Dual Alliance, it was the most obvious sign that his “balancing act”, in fact, required direct German involvement in Ottoman affairs. Bismarck himself saw the potential strategic significance of the Empire as a “cul-de-sac” (die türkische Sackgasse), which

could lure Russia into opening a front against Constantinople in case war ever developed on the continent. As early as 1880 German diplomats had become more worried about Russia, as Prince Hohenlohe, then state secretary in the Foreign Office, summed up, “If chauvinism, Pan-Slavism, and the anti-German elements of Russia should want to attack us, we cannot be totally indifferent to the protection and maintenance of Turkey[sic]. She could never be a danger to us, but her enemies could under certain circumstances become our enemies.”

Although Bismarck enticed Russia into a Three Emperors’ League in 1881, this agreement also presupposed German involvement in regulating conflicts between Austria and Russia over Ottoman territory. The subtle transposition of German interests further east was under way—more so after Romania joined the League in 1883.

Bismarck’s first priority was securing an alliance against France, and he resorted to a series of concessions to resolve the contradictions of Germany’s policy in the Eastern Question. A military coup brought the unification of Bulgaria with East Rumelia in 1885, and Serbia, backed by Austria, demanded concessions. The Serbo-Bulgarian War in November of 1885 was a disaster for the Serbs as well as the Austrians, who had refused Bismarck’s entreaties before the war for direct negotiations with Russia. Trying to save the Three Emperors’ League by granting Austrian control over Serbia and Russian influence over Bulgaria, the Iron Chancellor was rebuked by the Viennese government,

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87 Scherer, op. cit. p. 108.
89 Hillgruber, Bismarcks Außenpolitik, p. 68; Klaus Hildebrand, Deutsche Außenpolitik 1871-1918 (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2008 3rd Ed.), p. 15.
which stated publicly that it would not accept a Russian protectorate in Bulgaria.\textsuperscript{90} With the League officially dead by 1886, Bismarck worked frantically to engage Russia. Opposed to waging war against Russia—a popular option inside Germany—Bismarck instead negotiated the secret Reinsurance Treaty in the summer of 1887, which promised Russian neutrality if Germany were attacked by France and granted Russia a free hand to control the Straits.\textsuperscript{91} Although Bismarck never believed this agreement would keep the Russians neutral, he thought it would buy time. But many German officials who were privy to the terms of the treaty grumbled that Germany was sacrificing Austria to Russia. Germany, they believed, would have to choose a side if it came to general war.\textsuperscript{92} More importantly for Bismarck’s critics, agreement with Russia was only insurance, not a solution to the problem of German isolation on the continent. Granting Russian control over Constantinople was bound to be unacceptable to Austria, Germany’s only ally.\textsuperscript{93}

Although there was little space for neutrality in the Eastern Question, Bismarck found a temporary reprieve. In the crisis years between 1885 and 1887, he harnessed the English tradition of opposition to Russian domination of the Straits, feigning indifference to the fate of the Ottoman Empire. At the beginning of 1887, Lord Salisbury had returned to the Prime Ministry and believed Bismarck’s contention that Germany would stay out of any conflict over the Eastern Question, giving free reign to France in Egypt and Russia in

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Constantinople. In a conversation with the British ambassador to Berlin, Sir Edward Malet, Bismarck played up on British fears, “only if we could count on England’s assistance to maintain the status quo and her power to enforce it—just as she did during the Crimean War—would we (Germany) be able to modulate the egotistical desires of France or Russia”. The prospect of a German defeat on the continent by a Franco-Russian alliance was unsettling to Malet and Salisbury; Britain, thus, joined the Mediterranean Entente in December of 1887 in which Britain, Italy, and Austria agreed to counterbalance Russia in the East.

The remaining years of Bismarck’s tenure were marked by a fear of a Franco-Russian alliance and German isolation. While the Russian threat had lessened because of the Re-Insurance Treaty, Bismarck recognized how weak the German position had become and tried to coax Great Britain into a defensive alliance in 1889. When that effort failed, Bismarck fell back on his old strategy of using the Ottoman Empire as compensation to Austria and Russia but soon left government. Reflecting on his last years as Chancellor, Bismarck told Count Hatzfeld in 1895 that he probably could have bought Russian neutrality in a continental war by sacrificing Austrian interests in the Orient. His flexibility and indifference to the fate of the Ottomans extended to the Habsburgs as well.

Yet the logic of the Dual Alliance and the promise of Ottoman renewal had begun to

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95 Schöllgen, Imperialismus, p. 22.
96 Kröger, “Le bâton égyptien”, p. 201; Martha Graham Viator, Edward B. Malet and the Egyptian Question in Anglo-German Relations 1884-1890 (Diss. Auburn University, 1999).
98 Hildebrand, Deutsche Aussenpolitik, p.22; Schöllgen, Imperialismus, p. 24.
envelope the contortions of Bismarck’s statecraft. By the 1890s, Austria was the only reliable Great Power available for partnership and the growth of German economic interests in the Ottoman Empire undermined ambivalence toward the Ottomans as well.

**Rivalries and Illusions**

Scholars of German foreign policy have often celebrated the *Realpolitik* of Bismarck and condemned the Wilhelmine period as an era of mismanagement. Yet for all the miscalculations of German foreign policy-makers in the Wilhelmine era, German policy in the Ottoman Empire showed many continuities with the Bismarckian era. Gregor Schöllgen has suggested that Bismarck’s successors gave up his “cardinal maxim” of non-intervention in the Orient, yet the Iron Chancellor himself had started Germany down a path toward developing the Ottoman Empire as a possible ally in the 1880s. The Gladstone ministry and the potential for a broad coalition against the Ottomans brought Bismarck out of his much-lauded “reserve”.

In line with its late-comer status to Great Power politics, German economic interests in the Ottoman Empire lagged behind the other Powers. Lacking an important position in the Ottoman economy, German influence and economic activities grew from minor interventions to large-scale projects of development during Bismarck’s reign. Initially welcomed by the other Powers as a disinterested player on the margins, Germany gradually abandoned its traditional neutrality as German industry expanded and rivalries between other Great Powers over the Eastern Question receded.

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99Ibid.
100Schöllgen, *Imperialismus*, p. 29.
One of the most significant early forms of German assistance was managing the Empire’s debt after the Berlin Treaty. Josef Wettendorf, a Prussian bureaucrat and financial expert was sent to Constantinople in the summer of 1880 to oversee Ottoman finances, after the Gladstone ministry called for an international financial commission to settle Ottoman debts. Since the Crimean War, the Sultan had issued huge tranches of bonds to pay for armaments and prestige objects such as palaces and gardens. In 1875 the Ottomans defaulted on all their debt obligations, and during the years of war and crisis had not paid a cent of interest. Initially indifferent to an international commission, Bismarck soon became worried that Russia would cooperate with Britain over Ottoman finances and, together with France, create a new institution, much like the Anglo-French agreement over Egyptian finances in 1879. Seeing the potential for Great Power agreement that could heal the oriental ulcer, he recommended Wettendorf to the Porte. Although the British initiative was dropped after it garnered little support, officials in St. Petersberg, Vienna, and Rome were glad to see a Prussian bureaucrat involved, keeping Britain and France from dominating a new institution.

Wettendorf crafted a strategy wherein the Ottomans appealed directly to bond holders, circumventing governments, while his own management of Ottoman finances gained the confidence in European investors that the Ottoman government could pay. Along with two other Prussian officials, he represented the Ottoman government in

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101 Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin (hereafter, PA AA) R 12434 Hohenlohe 19 Juli 1880
103 PA AA R 12434, Note from Radowitz, 7 November 1880; Limburg-Stirum to Bismarck, 10 November 1880.
104 PA AA R 13230, Ottoman circular, 3 October 1880; Hattzfeldt to Bismarck, 31 October 1880.
negotiations with investors, while a new treaty in 1881 reduced the Ottoman debt burden from 191 to 97 million Turkish Lira. The newly created Ottoman Public Debt Administration (OPDA), consisting of representatives from all the major creditor nations—France, Britain, Italy, Austria-Hungary, Germany—oversaw Ottoman tax revenues that serviced the debt. The OPDA also created a mechanism for reapportioning debt burdens to former or suzerain territories (i.e. Bulgaria, Romania, Crete, and Eastern Rumelia). Wettendorf became a trusted advisor in Ottoman circles, and by 1883 the Ottomans were able to finance new loans. Although Germany only possessed a 5% stake of the debt, German financial officials became influential far beyond this relatively meager proportion within the Ottoman government.

Bismarck also advocated on behalf of his private banker, Gerson von Bleichröder, who represented German creditors at the OPDA. Bleichröder had acquired financial stakes in a number of ventures in the Empire, including the railroad company of Moritz von Hirsch, a Bavarian railroad magnate, who had been building rail-lines throughout the Ottoman Balkans since the 1860s. On the heels of establishing the OPDA, Bismarck helped secure a monopoly over Ottoman tobacco in 1882 for a group of investors led by Bleichröder. He persuaded Austria of the monopoly’s benefits for Ottoman finances and

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105 PA AA R 12434, Hatzfeldt to Bismarck, 31 October 1880 and after.  
107 Many have interpreted this moment as the beginning of German financial “imperialism” cf. Kössler, Aktionsfeld, p.52; Alexander Schöllch, “Wirtschaftliche Durchdringung und politische Kontrolle durch die Europäischen Mächte im Osmanische Reich” Geschichte und Gegenwart 1 (1975): 404-446.  
108 Kössler, Aktionsfeld, pp. 126-131; Manzenreiter, Bagdadbahn, pp. 8-29.  
served as a point-man for Bleichröder’s early criticisms of the project, altering terms of the deal to suit Bleichröder.\textsuperscript{110} With a capital outlay of £4 million and a thirty-year contract, the monopoly-directorate serviced the Ottoman debt through the OPDA and paid investors a dividend that was shared with the Ottoman government. Although the early years proved unsatisfactory—tobacco smuggling robbed the directorate of a large portion of its promised revenues—the monopoly became a successful enterprise for both the Ottomans and European investors. Bismarck most likely did not derive personal advantage out of the investment, but he defended the project as an indirect way to shore up Ottoman finances.\textsuperscript{111}

As new opportunities for Ottoman finance emerged, a golden age in German arms procurements began. While the German firm Krupp had supplied the Ottoman military since 1864, the 1880s were boom years for German armaments to the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{112} In 1885 Sultan Abdülhamid II ordered over 13 million Reichsmarks in artillery and munitions from Krupp.\textsuperscript{113} New firms such as Menshausen received 11 million in orders for cannons, and the Schichau AG delivered 5 torpedo boats, while the consortium of Mauser-Loewe were set to deliver over 12 million in guns, rifles, and small cannons.\textsuperscript{114} The leader of the Prussian military mission, Colmar von der Goltz, was a mediator for new firms, personally inviting Paul Mauser and Isidor Loewe to Constantinople for demonstrations, but the increase in orders was also a response to the Bulgarian Crisis and

\textsuperscript{110}PA AA R 12437, Hatzfeldt to Reuss 2 March 1883; Reuss to Bismarck 6 March and after.
\textsuperscript{111}PA AA R 13236, Hatzfeldt to Radowitz 30 October 1884; Scherer, \textit{Adler und Halbmond}, pp. 461-471.
\textsuperscript{112}Wallach, \textit{Anatomic}, pp. 212; Scherer, \textit{Adler und Halbmond}, p. 475.
\textsuperscript{113}PA AA R 4612, Goltz to Waldersee, 1 January 1886 and after.
\textsuperscript{114}PA AA R 12437, Radowitz to Bismarck 4 March 1887 and after; Kössler, \textit{Aktionsfeld}, p. 122.
the threat of a new land war in the Balkans.\textsuperscript{115} For the next ten years, German firms were the preeminent arms suppliers to the Ottoman Empire, and they remained the dominant supplier for the Ottoman army until the First World War.\textsuperscript{116}

Yet the large outlays required for such orders outstripped the Ottomans’ rising financial capacity, and the difficulties in raising cash led both German bankers and the Sultan to seek alternatives that clashed with established interests. Alfred Kaulla, director of the Württembergische Vereinsbank and a board member of Mauser-Loewe, accompanied the businessmen on their trip to the Bosporus in 1885. After the orders had officially been made, Kaulla arranged for a consortium of German banks to finance a loan to cover the arms deals and leave something for the Ottoman government.\textsuperscript{117} But loan guarantees from Ottoman taxes needed to be approved by the OPDA, and French representatives blocked this effort, laying bare both French dominance in Ottoman banking and the possibility for rivalry.\textsuperscript{118} With the rise of the Ottoman bond market after the Crimean War, French bankers solidified their position in the 1860s through the establishment of the Ottoman Imperial Bank (OIB). A private bank financed with French capital, the OIB came to serve as the central bank for the Empire.\textsuperscript{119} By 1885 credit was only possible with the consent of the French, who not only had the largest stake in the total Ottoman debt but a second seat in the OPDA through the OIB. All of Bleichröder’s

\textsuperscript{115} PA AA R 4612 Goltz to Waldersee 6 February 1886 and after; Wallach, \textit{Anatomie}, p. 104.
\textsuperscript{118} PA AA R 12438 Kiderlen to Bismarck 13 July 1887.
investments in the Empire, for example, were part of French financial consortia. While German firms began to deliver material, payments often lagged behind, and inventories destined for Constantinople piled up in German factories. Deliveries continued when monies became available, but it was an unhappy situation for German industry as well as the Sultan, who worried about French dominance as the prospect of a Franco-Russian alliance loomed. By 1888 Italian, British, and Austrian representatives in Constantinople had begun to express reservations about French dominance, but negotiations between the Porte and a French-led consortium to finance the remaining arrears to German firms were in the offing by summer.

The acquisition of the Ottoman railroad concession by the Deutsche Bank in 1888 scuppered the French-led loan and changed the pattern of Great Power rivalry. The Sultan had coupled the concession, which was to extend Hirsch’s newly completed Vienna-Constantinople rail-line into Asia, to a new loan of 27 million Reichsmarks. The concession and attendant loan drew significant amounts of German capital into the Ottoman Empire for the first time. Georg von Siemens had built Deutsche Bank into a formidable powerhouse in the 1870s and was looking for opportunities to expand. Although he had expressed an interest in buying a major stake in Hirsch’s railroad in the Ottoman Balkans in the spring of 1888, the prospect of financing the flourishing German arms trade lured him into the Ottoman Empire. Kaulla had drawn Siemens’ attention to the

121 PA AA R 13349 Goltz to Waldensee 13 January 1888.
122 PA AA R 12550 Note from Berchem 9 January 1888; R 12439 Busch to Bismarck 1 June 1888.
prospect of loans and concessions in the Empire years before, recognizing that his own bank was too small.\textsuperscript{124} In addition to the French group, an opposing group of English partners vied for the loan but soon supported the Germans as the best means of thwarting the continued hegemony of French capital.\textsuperscript{125} The British ambassador, Sir William White, supported the Deutsche Bank bid as well.\textsuperscript{126} Even the German ambassador in Constantinople, Joseph Maria von Radowitz, helped secure the necessary support from a majority of the representatives of the OPDA. Breaking the German tradition of ambivalence, Radowitz was essential to getting the concession signed in the face of French obstinacy.\textsuperscript{127}

Bismarck was taken aback upon hearing about the Deutsche Bank deal in October 1888, for he saw the railroad concession as a potential impairment to German neutrality.\textsuperscript{128} Although Siemens had asked the Foreign Office several times about the government’s reservations, Bismarck’s answer had always been a qualified “no”. He would not grant official support for the project but saw no reason to hinder German capital from strengthening the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{129} He likely envisioned a consortium arrangement, with French or British capital in the lead, but only after he received a message from Radowitz, days before the OPDA was to decide, did he begin to realize what the deal

\textsuperscript{125}PA AA R 13445 Radowitz to Bismarck 23 Juli 1888 and after.
\textsuperscript{126}Schöllgen, \textit{Imperialismus}, p. 45.
\textsuperscript{127}Radowitz was able to all the votes against the French representatives. BAB-L, AA Handels- und Schiffs-.S. Türkei Nr. 36 Bd., Radowitz to Bismarck 2 October 1888.
\textsuperscript{128}Ibid., Note from Reichardts, 4 October 1888; Scherer, \textit{Adler und Halbmond}, pp. 498-499; Holborn, \textit{Deutschland und die Türkei}.
would mean. He ordered Radowitz to desist from supporting the German concession, but
the decision had already been made by the time the chancellor’s note arrived. Bismarck
spent the rest of the year assuring British Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, that Germany
had no lasting interest in the Ottoman economy and tried to persuade the British into
establishing their own bank in Constantinople to counterbalance the OIB.\textsuperscript{130} The proposal
goed nowhere, but English banks did take a 20% stake in the Deutsche Bank
concession.\textsuperscript{131} More importantly, Russia was irritated by the deal. The loan freed up
money for the Ottomans to finance German arms, while war indemnities owed to the
Russians went unpaid. Their more pressing concern was the length of the engagement.
The concession was termed for 99 years, and the 27 million mark loan would take over 30
years to amortize.\textsuperscript{132} German industry also received orders for much of the materials to
build the new railway, and exports to the Ottoman empire doubled within one year by the
end of 1889.\textsuperscript{133} German weapons and railroads turned the Ottomans into a more
formidable enemy, which could block Russian advancement toward the Bosporus and give
Germans greater interest in an Ottoman future.

In retrospect, Bismarck’s strategy of spurring conflict in the Eastern Question
among the other powers became increasingly illusory as time went on. In the late 1880s he
resorted to ever more desperate measures, discounting the forces of economic growth that
were enticing Germans beyond their borders and into the Ottoman Empire. After Siemens
came calling, Bismarck tried to convince Bleichröder and his connections in French

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{130}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{131}PA AA R 13445 Radowitz to Bismarck 1 December 1889 and after. Cf. Kössler, \textit{Aktionsfeld}, p. 144.
\item \textsuperscript{132}PA AA R 12439 Radowitz to Bismarck 9 October 1888.
\item \textsuperscript{133}Kössler, \textit{Aktionsfeld}, pp. 144-147; Manzenreiter, \textit{Bagdadbahn}, pp. 54-62.
\end{itemize}
finance to invest more in Hirsch’s railroads. He thought that strengthening French financial dominance in the Ottoman lands would bring the British back into the fold or perhaps isolate France from Russia.\footnote{PA AA R 13117 Radowitz to Bismarck 21 Juli 1889 and after.} When Bulgaria nationalized its portion of Hirsch’s railway in the summer of 1889, Bismarck made the absurd suggestion to the French ambassador in Constantinople that Germany and France enter the Black Sea together and besiege the coastal city of Varna.\footnote{The French ambassador did not even reply. PA AA R 13117 Rantzau to AA 25 Juli 1888; Berchem to Rantzau 26 Juli 1888.} He even tried to interest the Parisian Rothschilds in the Ottoman railroad but to no avail.\footnote{PA AA R 13118 Rantzau to AA 11 August 1888 and after.} Such measures to lure other powers into the Eastern Question and keep the Ottoman “ulcer” open failed. Both British and French capital declined relative to German capital over the next twenty years.\footnote{Pamuk, \textit{The Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism}, Tables A and B.} Bismarck may have been willing to sacrifice Germany’s military and economic interests in the Ottoman lands, but his own policies fostered lasting ties. He had stepped into the fray in the early 1880s, after Great Britain seemed to draw back from maintaining the Ottoman Empire against Russian aggression, while his constant attempts to pull the British into a confrontation with Russia over the Eastern Question irritated British officials.

This irritation only intensified in the Wilhelmine period.\footnote{Schöllgen, passim; Paul Kennedy, \textit{The Emergence of the Anglo-German Antagonism} (Allen & Unwin: London, 1977).} Until the outbreak of the First World War, an intact Ottoman Empire grew in importance as a bargaining chip for German diplomats, who sought to draw Great Britain into agreements over the Eastern Question. Resolving this question would have robbed Germany of its only true toehold on
the European periphery. As the Anglo-German rivalry emerged at the turn of the century, the Ottoman Empire became a more like a partner—not an object of imperial domination. Germans had served the long-standing project of Ottoman state-building since the 1880s and their activities accelerated under the new Kaiser.

**Power and Partnership**

Kaiser William II’s accession to the throne symbolized the transition to a younger generation and gave the period its name. The monarch’s restless energy also captured the dynamism of a growing industrial economy, which seemed to have outgrown the Iron Chancellor’s divisive political style at home and chafed at his arcane attempts to maintain the status quo abroad.\(^{139}\) While Bismarck had secured African colonies in 1884, he was dubious of German colonialism and viewed colonies as a means of guaranteeing the balance of power in Europe. The promise of territory overseas only served to transfer European conflicts to the periphery and sustain Germany’s position as an indispensable power.\(^{140}\) Many Germans wanted political and territorial expansion commensurate with the growth in German stature, but after 1884 Bismarck seemed to give away Germany’s chances at further territory and provide other powers, like France, Britain, and Russia, opportunities to expand. The “New Course”, begun after William II became emperor, attempted to assert the German Empire abroad. The Kaiser tapped into the popular desire

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for more “self-confidence” in projecting power, in part because he and his coterie saw foreign policy as a tool of social integration at home.\textsuperscript{141}

The new chancellor, Leo von Caprivi, and the Foreign Office held fast to the Bismarckian tradition of abstention in the Ottoman Empire, but they also tried to transform Germany’s economic relationship in the wider world. Caprivi was committed to liberalizing trade, and Germany signed commercial trade agreements with a number of countries.\textsuperscript{142} But the non-renewal of the Re-Insurance treaty with Russia made Germany more dependent on Britain in the Eastern Question, while Germany’s emerging economic clout clashed with British preeminence.\textsuperscript{143} The extension of the German railroad concession in Asia Minor in 1893 produced confrontation between Germany and Great Britain but ultimately helped Germany bring Britain into an understanding with the Triple Alliance.\textsuperscript{144} Caprivi threatened to relinquish support for Britain in Egypt, and Britain returned to its position of supporting German capital against the French. Although the German railroad functioned as an effective medium for recognizing common interests in the Eastern Question, the situation created no lasting arrangement.\textsuperscript{145} Conflicts between the other Powers outside of Europe did not give Germany an advantage either, as France


\textsuperscript{144}Holger Afflerbach, \textit{Der Dreibund. Europäische Großmacht- und Allianzpolitik vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg} (Vienna, 2002).

\textsuperscript{145}Kröger, “Le bâton égyptien”, pp. 162-177; Schöllgen, pp. 63.
and Britain resolved their differences—in Siam, and later Faschoda—without outside mediation. Seeing no movement in the British option, Germany turned toward Russia and signed a trade treaty in 1894. But the Russians were adamant about Germany’s being a junior partner, while British aloofness gave the Germans no credible threat with which to bind Russia, which signed an alliance with France instead. Germany pivoted between Britain and Russia, but had no concrete agreement with either side.

The Ottoman Empire was one of the few areas where Germany could influence the other Powers. After news of massacres against Ottoman Armenians reached Britain in 1895, Salisbury offered the complete “liquidation” of the Eastern Question and sought to engage Germany in a final partition of Ottoman territory. Germany refused, hoping to retain the Empire as security in any further negotiations with Russia. If the Ottoman lands were partitioned into spheres of influence, there would be no buffer between Russia and Austria. What could Germany then offer Russia after the Ottoman Empire was gone? Friedrich Meinecke pointed out that because Germany wanted to retain this option for itself there was little sense in sacrificing it for British aims. Adhering to the standard declaration of disinterest, Kaiser William and the new chancellor, Chlodwig zu Hohenlohe, moved away from neutrality after Salisbury’s partition plan, and grew suspicious of British motives. Germany withheld support for a military intervention in

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146 Friedrich Meinecke, Geschichte des deutsch-englischen Bündnisproblems 1890-1901 (Berlin, 1927); Kennedy, Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, pp. 225.
147 Afflerbach, Der Dreihund, pp. 323-412; Hildebrand, Deutsche Aussenpolitik, p. 27.
149 Bündnisproblems, p. 46.
150 Schöllgen, Imperialismus, pp. 67-89.
Crete in the summer of 1897, which sought to stabilize the island after communal violence had flared up during the Greco-Ottoman War of 1897. While members of the now-defunct Mediterranean Entente—Italy, Austria, and Britain—cooperated in a mission to pacify Crete, Germany abstained and became adamant about maintaining the Ottoman Empire.\(^{151}\)

Germany’s gambit of *Weltpolitik* in 1897 was not so much a reaction to the immediate crisis in the Ottoman Empire, as an illustration that the Great Power rivalry was moving further east. None of the Great Powers had been willing to come into conflict over Ottoman territory in the crisis period 1895-1897, and beyond the traditional realm of the Eastern Question, Central and East Asia were becoming objects of contention as well.\(^{152}\)

The chief secretary in the Foreign Office, Bernhard von Bülow, tried to stake out Germany’s “place in the sun” in the hope that he could eventually bring Britain closer to Germany. If Germany could demonstrate its vitality and independence, it would only be a matter of time before the British came calling.\(^{153}\) In 1898 the first Navy Bill passed the Reichstag, and Germany embarked on a path to a build a naval fleet. A second bill in 1900 doubled the size of the first. Intended as an oblique challenge to British naval superiority, the High Seas Fleet was supposed to force Britain into an alliance or at least repel it from attacking Germany.\(^{154}\) But the idea of a “risk fleet”, which could check and eventually

\(^{151}\) PA AA R 17896-17899.


bind Britain contained risks of its own, as did Bülow’s world policy. The fleet was bound to alienate Britain, and Bülow’s vision of a German place in the sun had little strategic unity. The “free-hand” policy of keeping on good but distant terms with Britain until the naval force could be employed was an expensive risk, while the Franco-Russian alliance, begun in 1892, undermined a Russian option. Bülow negotiated the lease of a Chinese port, Qingdao, and several Pacific islands, but Germans hoped in vain for further opportunities to expand in Asia or Africa. British fears of German aggression rose, while regions of potential conflict between the other Great Powers quickened as sites of cooperation. The entente cordiale between Great Britain and France in 1904 was the result of mutual accommodation in North Africa just as the Anglo-Russian entente of 1907 stemmed from the recognition that a peaceful division of spheres of influence in Persia and Afghanistan was better than rivalry. The Moroccan crises of 1905 and 1911 not only demonstrated Germany’s growing isolation but that German diplomats had little to offer Britain.

The peaceful “penetration” of the Ottoman Empire by German capital was a rare opportunity for expansion and leverage. The friendly ties among military officers, financial officials, and the role of German engineers in managing the existing Ottoman railway lines helped solidify a partnership by the turn of the century. After the Greco-Ottoman War in 1897, the Kaiser and the Foreign Office began to push German investors

\[\text{Wilhelm II. (Düsseldorf, 1971); Peter Winzen, Bülow's Welmbachkonzept: Untersuchungen zur Frühphase seiner Aussenpolitik 1897-1901 (Boppard a. Rhein, 1977).}\]

\[\text{155 Ludwig Dehio, Germany and World Politics in the Twentieth Century (London, 1959).}\]

\[\text{156 Ibid.}\]

more toward developing a railroad to connect Constantinople with Baghdad. The Kaiser also began a high-profile tour of the Ottoman lands in November of 1898. It was billed as a pious pilgrimage to the Holy Land for the dedication of the German Erlöserkirche in Jerusalem but ended up being an ideal occasion to stage Germany’s proclamation of partnership. William presented himself not only as an ecumenical patron of all Christians in Palestine, but also as the protector of Muslims all around the world. The trip gave William many occasions to don new costumes of imperial grandeur, and the ambiguity of his message appealed to both Germans and Ottomans alike. Coming so soon after the massacres of Armenians in the Ottoman lands, many observers in Europe were appalled by the Kaiser’s trip and his open support for Sultan Abdülhamid II, who had been styling himself as a fellow conservative monarch of Europe since coming to power in 1878. The trip melded imperialist imagery with a show of solidarity for the Ottoman Empire never before seen by a Great Power. German officials designated Germany a Friedensmacht (“peaceful power”), not bent on territorial expansion but maintaining the Bismarckian status quo, and the German press celebrated the Kaiser’s Friedenspolitik as both tough-minded politics and a timely display of religious tolerance.

Although Germany signed no formal alliance with the Ottomans, the Kaiser’s government had become such a steadfast supporter of the Sultan at the turn of the century

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158 PA AA R 13445-13449; Schöllgen, Imperialismus, passim.; Helmut Mejcher, “Die Bagdadbahn”.
159 Jan S. Richter, Die Orientreise Kaiser Wilhelms, passim.
that, after the Young Turk Revolution in 1908, German officials spent years gaining the trust of a younger generation of Ottomans now in power. Germany’s support for the Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina was less important than the complicity with Abdülhamid II’s paranoid and violent regime, which had alienated almost every major figure in the new Ottoman government.  

No sooner had Germany begun to cultivate a better relationship with the new Young Turk leaders than the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 brought a new crisis. The Ottoman Empire was routed by the Balkan League, leading to a mass expulsion of Muslims from southeastern Europe and a host of internal social problems that almost incapacitated the Ottoman state. A new military mission, headed by General Liman von Sanders, more than quadrupled the number of officers in the Empire, and the two countries signed a military alliance on 2 August 1914 after a general continental war loomed.  

But the Ottomans tried to delay entering the war as long as possible, and once committed, allowed German officers little control over war planning and periodically blackmailed the German government into sending war materials to the Ottoman front. Even if the Central Powers had been victorious, it is difficult to imagine Germany dominating the Ottomans as many radical nationalists envisioned. As it was, both empires entered the First World War as military allies fighting against enemies that were “encircled” around them.

**Isolation and War: Rising and Falling**

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163 BAMA NL Goltz, various reports and essays, 1909-1913, Folders 8 and 12.
165 Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 122-167.
Historians of Imperial Germany have blamed German ambitions since 1890 for the country’s gradual isolation and the outbreak of the First World War. According to this story, Germany antagonized Great Britain in its desire to expand and isolated the only power with which Germany could hope to counter the Franco-Russian alliance. But the evidence for this case is mixed. While the naval program and the Baghdad railroad initially caused estrangement, they did less long-term damage than many critics have presumed. British strategists had come to the conclusion by 1907 that their Dreadnoughts gave them a decisive advantage on the high seas over the German fleet and did not worry about a German naval challenge.167 Furthermore, Bülow’s calculations of Weltpolitik did provide one “victory” after the Bosnian Crisis in 1908, when Germany backed the Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina against Russian protests. As a result of this shifting balance of power, Britain began to search for accommodation with Germany along the European periphery, in places like the Ottoman Empire and the Portuguese colonies in Africa.168 Georg von Siemens had long claimed that the railroad would only be profitable in cooperation with Great Britain, and since 1911 negotiations had been underway for British capital to rejoin financing the railway as well as other German projects in Mesopotamia. A wide-ranging arrangement was signed in the spring of 1914.169 Even the nationalist wing of the Social Democrats agreed that German

167 Rolf Hobson, *Imperialism at Sea: Naval Strategic Thought, The Ideology of Sea Power and the Tirpitz Plan 1875-1914* (Brill: Boston, 2002). Hobson also stresses foreign policy as a main driver and takes direct aim at Berghahn and Kennedy, who stress the domestic functions of the Navy program.
“capitalist” involvement in the Ottoman lands was a good thing; it would not only secure jobs for the German economy but also keep the Russians at bay.\footnote{Kössler, Aktionsfeld, p. 71.}

The Sarajevo assassination not only shattered this budding accommodation but also demonstrated that the Eastern Question was still at the center of European politics. And it was moving further westward. As Paul W. Schroeder has pointed out, part of the responsibility for the instability of the alliance system was Britain’s failure to recognize that, like the Ottoman Empire, the Austrian-Hungarian Empire was a potential Sick Man in the making that could destabilize Europe. According to this logic, if Britain had been more intent on offering support to the Austrians, they would have been less reliant on the Dual Alliance and the Germans for their security.\footnote{“World War I as Galloping Gertie”, p. 337.} Germans felt isolated and increasingly desperate, clinging to the Dual Alliance and maintaining the Habsburg monarchy as a Great Power. Germany pushed the Austrians to confront Serbia, precipitating the crisis in the Balkans that ended in the outbreak of First World War. Not by accident did the Central Powers consist of states most threatened by the Eastern Question and its continual movement westward.

Since Fritz Fischer first published his \textit{Griff nach der Weltmacht} in 1961, the debate about the war’s origins has revolved around German intentions, and his study inaugurated a thorough re-working of how scholars approached the Great War. Whatever factors were in play during the lead-up to war in 1914, the most lasting legacy of the Fischer thesis was to reframe the question of war guilt and anchor analysis in the decision for war.\footnote{John Langdon, \textit{July 1914: The Long Debate 1918-1990} (Oxford, 1991).}
search for the proximate “cause” of the war has been superseded by a desire to understand the “unspoken assumptions” of the German decision for war.\(^{173}\) In the wake of the Fischer controversy, the cycle of revision and counter-revision has oscillated between domestic political imperatives in Germany and tensions in the international system of alliances. These explanations tell stories about the fear of German decline and fall from Great Power status, as well as the hope that a war could lead to a regeneration of German society and help improve the nation’s strategic position.

Building on Eckart Kehr’s work from the 1920s, scholars such as Volker Berghahn, Hans-Ulrich Wehler, and Hans-Jürgen Puhle have stressed that the domestic political situation led German elites to “flee” into war, calculating that an offensive gamble was the only way to preserve authoritarian rule against the march of political parties from below. Heavy industry and the agricultural lobby had been integral to the preservation of this system of rule, relying on government armaments and protective tariffs for their prosperity. Germany accordingly waged an aggressive war with expansionist goals to secure domestic interest groups of their continued dominance. Thus, so runs the “Kehrite” argument, elites could stave off domestic change and save German from socialism or the progressive policies of left-liberalism.\(^{174}\)

Another body of scholarship points to a gathering sense of German military and diplomatic weakness. Reflecting worries about the long-term deterioration of the country’s strategic advantage as the armaments of neighboring powers grew, both military and civilian leaders embraced war as a defense against inexorable decline. Scholars such as Klaus Hildebrand, Andreas Hillgruber, and Gregor Schöllgen suggest that launching a preemptive war was a German response to a precarious strategic predicament. Other scholars, such as Stig Förster and Annika Mombauer, find a military establishment painfully aware of Germany’s eroding strategic situation, but that it plunged the country into war anyway, knowing the chances of victory were slim. Still others point to vacillating politicians, who were pinched between the military and radical nationalists. They relented in a moment of crisis to forces that they could neither contain nor control nor fully understand, yet who nonetheless thought the opportunity for a successful war would not come again. Mark Hewitson has taken this idea of “calculated risk” further and suggested that Germans decided to escalate the crisis in the summer of 1914 in the hope that brinkmanship would bring the success that diplomacy hitherto had not. Rather than trying to avert a domestic crisis, Chancellor Theobald von Bethman-Hollweg saw


domestic forces aligned in his favor, as Russia became the bugbear of mainstream newspapers, parties, and constituencies in Imperial Germany.\textsuperscript{178}

The fear of Russia was palpable in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars, and the course of the wars played no small part in increasing German anxiety about the future.\textsuperscript{179} German news coverage during the wars had documented the depredations of the Balkan League, after Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria had attacked the Ottoman Empire in the fall of 1912, and then turned on each other in the spring of 1913. German industry hoped to develop the Balkans as a \textit{Ergänzungswirtschaftsraum} and many Germans saw both opportunities and danger in the geopolitical shifts that had taken place after the wars.\textsuperscript{180} Yet a variety of German newspapers—Catholic, liberal, socialist, and nationalist—agreed that Russia was Germany’s biggest threat, and the Ottoman Empire, which the German government had been supporting with ever increasing vigor since the turn of the century, was defeated and possibly dying.

When a general war loomed in July 1914, the Ottoman War Minister, Enver Pasha offered an alliance to ambassador Wangenheim, which the Germans accepted with little enthusiasm. Historians of Germany, therefore, have regarded the entrance of the Ottomans on the German side as secondary in the lead-up to war, while historians of Modern Turkey often view the war as a calamity that ended a once-powerful empire.\textsuperscript{181}

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\textsuperscript{178} \textit{Germany and the Causes of the First World War} (Oxford, 2004).
\textsuperscript{180} Andrej Mitrovic, “Germany’s Attitude toward the Balkans, 1912-1914”, in: Kiraly and Djordjevic (eds.), \textit{East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars, War and Society in East Central Europe Vol. XVIII} (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1987), pp. 295-316.
\textsuperscript{181} This view has been revised by Mustafa Aksakal, who sees broad support for a German alliance on the eve of war. See \textit{The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire and the First World War} (Cambridge, 2008).
\end{flushright}
Yet neither of these views recognizes the deep, structural dependency that had existed between Germany and the Ottoman Empire since Bismarck’s unification in 1871. If the promise of partnership seemed shattered after the Balkan Wars, the course of the First World War confirmed the basic assumptions that underlay German interest in a military alliance with the Ottomans since the 1880s. Once in the war, Ottoman armies fought against the Russians in Anatolia, Transcaucasia, and Persia, and against British units in Mesopotamia, the Arabian peninsula, and the Palestinian area, from which they launched two major advances and several raids against the Suez Canal. These operations benefited the Central Powers by diverting Allied troops from the European theater. Of even more importance was the successful Ottoman defense of the Straits against Allied attack in 1915, which thwarted Allied hopes of persuading Greek and Romanian governments to join their coalition. Finally, the Ottoman Empire sent army divisions to fight in Romania, Galicia, and Macedonia in the last two years of the war, making the overall Ottoman contribution to the war effort a positive one. Thus the pursuit of partnership that German officials had striven for since the turn of the century was not as unsound as many historians later claimed, but part of a larger German gamble to fight a two-front war.

Geopolitics were important for the rise of German turcophilism, and sympathy was based as much upon the fear of common enemies as the promise of partnership. German attitudes toward Ottoman power developed amid the search for security that had been inaugurated by Bismarck, ebbing and flowing with the fortunes of German diplomacy. German journalists were key actors that relayed information from the Ottoman Empire to

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the German domestic sphere, and the interaction between officials and journalists helped shape German news coverage as did the fear that rival states like Russia could dominate Ottoman territory. German expressions of sympathy for the Ottoman Empire were tied to diplomatic as well as journalistic practice, and the history of German turcophilism charts the relationship between officials and journalists active in the Ottoman lands.
Chapter 2
State and Society in the Age of Public Opinion: The Liberalization of the Press and German Unification

Is there such a thing as “public opinion”? Are there not always hundreds of public opinions that contradict one other, negate each other, and exist beside one another? [...] Especially in Germany, where the people [das Volk] is more divided by states, confessions, and class conflict than any other place in the world!

--Hans Delbrück, “Bismarck and Public Opinion”

Public opinion changes, the press is not [the same as] public opinion; one knows how the press is written; members of parliament have a higher duty, to lead opinion, to stand above it.

--Otto von Bismarck, 30 September 1862

German efforts to cultivate the Ottomans as partners dovetailed with the emergence of the mass media at the turn of the century. Public opinion was a key consideration for Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg during the July Crisis of 1914, and the press had become an important factor in German foreign policy since unification in 1871. Many historians have shown how official and popular attitudes became interwoven in the decades before World War I, as newspapers and political parties began to examine and

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Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, NL Hans Delbrück, Box 12/36, Unpublished manuscript.

discuss foreign policy more extensively than ever before. While historians have acknowledged the growing discord between the government and the German public opinion at the turn of the century, there has been little focus on the historical interdependence of journalists and government officials. This chapter investigates the liberalization of the German press in the nineteenth century, as well as the growing importance of news reporting and public opinion in political life. Bismarck’s campaign to unify the German lands under Prussia was crucial for securing press freedoms in the 1870s and had lasting consequences on the development of the German public sphere.

**The Enlightened State and the Newspaper**

The development of the German press in the nineteenth century was intimately tied to the role of the state in managing the rise of mass literacy. Printed matter—scholarly volumes, journals, pamphlets, novels and other forms of *belles lettres*—had been a standard part of life among educated elites since the 16th century. Since 1770 the “revolution in print” had transformed the cultural life of Germany. Growing rates of literacy and the convulsions of the Napoleonic era led to an altogether new level of printed exchange. In the mid-eighteenth century, roughly 10% of the German population could read; this figure had reached 40% by 1830. Klemens von Metternich called the nineteenth century the “century of words” and *Vielrederei*. He attributed its prolixity to

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185 Mommsen, “Public Opinion and Foreign Policy in Wilhelmine Germany 1897-1914”, p. 131.
the explosive growth in publishing and to the ways in which newspapers, broadsheets, and pamphlets engendered discussions about politics.\footnote{Daniel Moran, \textit{Toward the Century of Words. Johann Cotta and the Politics of the Public Realm in Germany 1795-1832.} (Berkeley, 1990): 1; Frank Thomas Hoefer, \textit{Pressepolitik und Polizeistaat Metternichs: Die Überwachung von Presse und politischer Öffentlichkeit in Deutschland und den Nachbarstaaten durch das Mainzer Informationsbüro, 1833-1848} (Munich, 1983): 41.}

Absolutist states had been involved in the publishing and the distribution of news since the eighteenth century. France, Prussia, and Austria had granted monopolies for newspapers and employed a coterie of censors to police publication. Louis XIV had 121 censors in Paris in 1763 and handed out monopolies to the \textit{Gazette de France} and the \textit{Journal des savants}.\footnote{Theodore Zeldin, \textit{France 1848-1945, Vol. 2: Intellect, Taste and Anxiety} (Oxford, 1977), 493.} The \textit{Wiener Zeitung} was the “official” newspaper (\textit{Amtsblatt}) of the Austrian government, responsible for announcing decrees and laws.\footnote{Rudolf Holzer, “Zeitungswesen im Vormärz. Die politische Presse” in Nagl et al. (eds.) \textit{Deutsch-österreichische Literaturgeschichte, Bd. 2} (1750-1848), 852-893.} Prussia employed a series of regional intelligence gazettes (\textit{Intelligenzblätter}) for the same purpose, often requiring local officials to gather information from their regions.\footnote{Thomas Kempf, \textit{Aufklärung als Disziplinierung: Studien zum Diskurs des Wissens in Intelligenzblättern und gelehrten Beilagen der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts} (Munch: Iudicium, 1991), 106-9.}

Censorship bureaus and \textit{Amtsblätter} in the German-speaking lands were typical in the eighteenth century, although what could and should be censored varied enormously.\footnote{Andreas Gestrich, \textit{Absolutismus und Öffentlichkeit: politische Kommunikation in Deutschland zu Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts} (Göttingen, 1994).}

Newspapers in the German lands expanded rapidly in the first half of the eighteenth century, reaching circulations well above 5,000 and extending to an audience of as many as ten times that number.\footnote{A readership factor of ten has long been the favored method for gauging the extent of a publication. See Otto Groth, \textit{Die Zeitung: Ein System der Zeitungskunde. Bd.1}, (Leipzig 1928): 27-29; James Retallack, “From Pariah to Professional? The Journalist in German Society from the Late Enlightenment to the Rise of Hitler” \textit{German Studies Review 16} (1993): 175-223.} One of the leading papers, the \textit{Hamburgische...
(Unparteyische) Correspondent, had achieved a circulation of almost 50,000 by 1800, and like many papers with a regional base (in places like Erlangen, Neuwied, Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg), it was read all over the German speaking lands and even further abroad.\textsuperscript{193}

Cities and towns provided the setting for most newspapers, and the prominence of urban space in the dissemination of news turned reading into a public affair. For much of the eighteenth century, reading had been regarded as a private act, motivated by self-cultivation, reflection, and piety.\textsuperscript{194} Newspapers subverted this private realm of reading by the very nature of their content. Supplanting the town herald who shouted in the streets, newspapers were often read aloud; pubs, cafes, and inns provided the spaces in which newspapers provided information from the outside world.

While the reading of literature, philosophy, and science was usually confined to the private home or study, the temporality of news and the performative quality of its dissemination pulled the act of reading out of the private realm and into the open, making reading less reflective and more reactive.\textsuperscript{195} Prominent Enlightenment figures in Paris, such as Diderot and Voltaire, scoffed at newspapers and the writers who wrote for them, partly because they thought the medium distorted rational discourse.\textsuperscript{196} For these French

\textsuperscript{195} Kurt Koszyck, Vorläufer der Massenpresse: Oekonomie und Publizistik zwischen Reformation und Französischer Revolution (Munich, 1972)
philosophes, the newspaper—as a form of publication based on immediate events—
commercialized and sensationalized Enlightenment ideals of rationality.

Joachim von Schwarzkopf’s treatise in 1795, Ueber Zeitungen, was a powerful
articulation of the unease that educated elites developed toward newspapers. Schwarzkopf
argued that newspapers could be corrupting and dangerous if they fell into the wrong
hands. Their form, which emphasized trivial political events and sacrificed reliability for
speed, would become disorienting in an age of growing literacy. Yet Schwarzkopf saw the
rise of the newspaper as inevitable. Instead of criticizing their use, he wanted to elevate
standards and create specialized papers for peasants, young people, women, merchants,
and other groups that supported established hierarchies. Gelehrtenzeitungen, or scholarly
newspapers, would sit atop this cascade of “lower” newspapers and offer the most
sophisticated and pressing intellectual debates. And, because of their high price, these
scholarly newspapers could be kept out of reach of the common man, negating the need
for censors. Gelehrtenzeitungen would open up a space beyond the private realm of
reading, in which rulers and the ruled could engage in serious discussions about
contemporary politics. By virtue of their universality, periodicity, and hierarchy,
newspapers could become the connective tissue binding all members of society.197

That such a work was first written in German and by a scholar of the
Staatwissenschaftliche Fakultät in Göttingen spoke to the importance and position of
newspapers in the German-speaking lands, despite Schwarzkopf’s reservations. Many

197 Joachim von Schwarzkopf, Ueber Zeitungen: Ein Beytrag zur Staatswissenschaft (Frankfurt am Main,
1795), pp. 68-100. Also discussed in Otto Grøth, Die Geschichte der deutschen Zeitungswissenschaft:
German scholars saw the newspaper as “the best vehicle through which practical truths could be brought to the people” and the “most important medium (Wirkungsmittel) of the Enlightenment”. If the Enlightenment had begun as the preserve of abstract reasoning and spirited, secular discourse among the educated few, in Germany cameralist ideas like Schwarzkopf’s fed the notion of a popular Enlightenment (Volksaufklärung) that sought to bring literacy and rationalist ideas to the common man. Encyclopedias, almanacs, journals, and gazettes disseminated information on a range of subjects, from official laws and decrees to notices on bankruptcies, property sales, weather forecasts, commodity prices, and essays on agriculture and science. Such publications were thought by Enlightened officials in Germany to produce productive citizens, who had the rational comportment and ethical bearing necessary for the betterment of society. At the same time, officials also began to see news reports as an important part of statecraft and a means of administrating the far corners of the realm.

Deepening channels of communication swept over German-speaking lands in the late eighteenth century, and the rise in literacy was accompanied by a growth in writing. One of the earliest manifestations was the “craze in letter-writing” (Briefwut), which the literary renaissance in the German language had helped spawn. These private forms of writing were accompanied by public ones. Not only philosophers and literary elites in the

metropolis, but also lower state officials, professors, and local notables, such as doctors and lawyers, became writers for a growing “reading public”. They were avid contributors to journals and gazettes, augmenting their professional activities by publishing on their “hobbies” such as science, leisure, and travel. Following the ethos of Volksaufklärung, many of these writers saw their publishing activities as contributions to both progress and social discipline. The same scribes who contributed to travel journals and scientific periodicals, often used bureaucratic forms of writing in the countryside to institute new forms of surveillance, such as registries for crop yields and charting the movements of peasants.\footnote{Ian McNeely, \textit{The Emancipation of Writing: German Civil Society in the Making, 1790s-1820s} (Berkeley & Los Angeles: California University Press, 2003), 130; James J. Sheehan, \textit{German History: 1770-1866} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 215.} Merchants and traders were keen on fresh news from both near and far, and commercial newspapers added to the growing corpus of print media in the late eighteenth century.\footnote{Although well-established merchants in places like Hamburg initially resisted the publishing of sensitive information on commercial prices that gave them a competitive advantage. See Ernst Baasch, “Handel und Öffentlichkeit der Presse in Hamburg”, \textit{Preußische Jahrbücher}, Bd. 110, 1902, 121-142.}

\textbf{Napoleon’s News}

The re-ordering of Germany after the Napoleonic Wars gave this rising tide of communication a new political purpose, as the role of the state was redefined vis-à-vis the citizen-subject. The revolutionary project of Napoleon recognized the importance of news in mobilizing the masses. During the occupation of Vienna, Napoleon turned the official \textit{Wiener Zeitung} into a pro-French paper that helped support his rule.\footnote{Wolfgang Piereth, “Propaganda im 19. Jahrhundert: Die Anfänge aktiver staatlicher Pressepolitik in Deutschland (1800-1871)” in Daniel and Siemann (eds.) \textit{Propaganda, Verführung und politische Sinnstiftung (1789-1989)} (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1994), 21-43.} In the ensuing wars of liberation, a regard for “public opinion” emerged—at least for a time—in the German
states. Even Prussia, which had been unwilling to ascribe any importance to its subjects’ attitudes toward the state, sought their public’s support. The Prussian government tolerated liberal and nationalist newspapers, like the Rheinische Merkur and Johann Cotta’s Allgemeine Zeitung, in the hope of strengthening public support in the struggle against Napoleon in 1813, only to ban these papers in 1816.205

German states, responding to the rise and fall of Napoleon, created a new civic order through reforms in law, the military, economics, and education. Many of these reforms were undone in the period of reaction, but they ushered in a new emphasis on civil society and the spread of ideas and practices from below. German states that had experienced occupation and territorial expansion, such as Bavaria, Baden, Württemberg, and Hesse-Darmstadt, succeeded in far-reaching reforms, while in states like Saxony, Thuringia, and the leading antipodes of Napoleonic rule, Prussia and Austria, the reach of reform was more limited.206

Regardless of the extent of liberal reform, the intensification of state activity and the convulsions of the Napoleonic era signaled a transformation in the relationship between the press and the state. That the state had entered more spheres of everyday life required forms of mass communication, which could not be easily controlled. If merchants, lawyers, doctors, and lower government officials acted as both producers and consumers of information, no central agency or authority could completely regulate what was exchanged. The claim that Bildung opened up avenues of social mobility was tied to

205 Moran, Toward a Century of Words, 111-113.
the growth of the state and the educated bourgeoisie as a verstaatlichte Intelligenz.\textsuperscript{207} 

Verstaatlichung implied not only the cooptation of “middling classes” from above, but also the emergence of a group of actors who changed how states themselves worked from below. Ideals of Bildung buoyed literacy, education, and intellectual cultivation by the middle-classes, which Hans-Ulrich Wehler has seen as a revolutionary development.

Reform entrenched Bildung as a vehicle of social mobility that allowed the bourgeoisie to compete with the nobility for positions in the state bureaucracy.\textsuperscript{208} Armed with German traditions of Volksaufklärung, which were tied to both the intellectual commitments of the Enlightenment and the cameralist ideas of a well-ordered (police) state, newspapers satisfied the desire for more and better information.\textsuperscript{209} The advent of mass literacy and mass writing provided opportunities for both social control and emancipation. The newspaper was at their intersection.

**Between Theory and Practice: The Public Sphere**

The social theorist and philosopher, Jürgen Habermas, characterized the growth in the exchange of ideas and information during the Enlightenment as the beginnings of an autonomous Öffentlichkeit or “public sphere.” This public sphere allowed a civil society to develop beyond the coercive forces of the state, ultimately ushering in liberal governance and parliamentary rule, before it was corrupted by the forces of industrial capitalism.


\textsuperscript{208} Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte: Vom Feudalismus des Alten Reichs bis zur Defensiven Modernisierung der Reformära 1700-1815. (Beck: Munich 1991), 216.

Social theorists and scholars of the media have often seen the British press in the nineteenth century as a model for how newspapers and journalists could form a “fourth estate” independent of the state and the political classes. The hallmark of this estate was its ability to criticize and change the behavior of the other estates by virtue of its autonomy.\textsuperscript{210}

These ideas of autonomy has accorded well with classic histories of the German press. Historians of the German media have generally viewed the nineteenth century as the period in which the press gradually emancipated itself from repressive regimes. According to this story, the freedom of the press was sparked by the Napoleonic wars, experienced setbacks under the reaction, and emerged more or less triumphant after the failed revolutions of 1848.\textsuperscript{211} Abigail Green has recently called this liberal narrative into question, arguing that German states did not abandon coercive press policies after 1848. Instead, they developed a more sophisticated and secretive strategy of positive influence through the indirect provision of news to local papers.\textsuperscript{212} Yet the dissemination of news had always been infused with concerns for social order as much as with the desire for information and ideas that led to social betterment or emancipation. And Öffentlichkeit had always referred to the practices of the state. It was as much the physical space

\textsuperscript{212} “Intervening in the Public Sphere: German Governments and the Press, 1815-1870” The Historical Journal, Vol. 44. No.1 (March 2001): 55-175; here 158.
separating state from society as it was Schwarzkopf’s connective tissue binding the two together. The term öffentlich had been coterminous with the Latin “publicus” since the seventeenth century, and both terms were synonymous with state functions that only later came to embody society as a whole. 213 The term gained its emancipatory character at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but the interdependence of state authority with the published word was an implicit part of Öffentlichkeit’s meaning.214

The critical metric for Öffentlichkeit should not be the independence or autonomy of the public sphere and the newspapers, periodicals, and other publications that defined it. Instead, we should investigate the countervailing social and economic forces within the public sphere that developed along with the expansion of state power. What were the constraints that the growing market for news placed on governments’ ability to project their own representations of events? What were the opportunities for governments to manage the meaning of state affairs? Governments could impede public criticism and commentary through censorship before 1848, but they had a harder time controlling non-polemical information. The revolution of 1848 took away pre-publication censorship and expanded press freedoms, but the long-standing problem of disseminating representations congenial to governments persisted. The paradigms of state influence shifted toward positive intervention as civil society became more prominent in the nineteenth century, but

213 Terms like öffentliches Amt or “officium publicum” and öffentlicher Diener or “servus publicus” were deeply embedded in the language of the state. See “Öffentlichkeit.” In Politische Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland, ed. Brunner, Conze, and Koselleck, 4: 413-67. (Stuttgart, 1972).
214 Ibid.
the German public sphere remained interconnected with states well into the twentieth century.

The Limits of Censorship

Since Napoleon the politicization of the press had increased in line with the availability and desire for news. Attempts at reform in the German states only strengthened this trend. Reform by its very nature offered opportunities for newspapers to become political, for the reporting of even mundane details of government activities entailed constitutional questions of participation. How was the state going to interact with its subjects? How would political reform and social change affect citizen-subjects, who could read (or be read to)? What states did or did not do were, in themselves, answers to these political questions. Nationalist agitation for unification or reform was easy to recognize and suppress, but policing the everyday reporting of state action was not. What followed during the reaction was a stopgap solution to the problem of public criticism and political agitation. Yet the most important dimension of the public sphere remained the representation of everyday events. After 1815 governments not only tried to dampen the revolutionary and nationalist potential of print through “negative” techniques, like pre-publication censorship and coordinated surveillance; they also tried to influence the public sphere through “positive” techniques. Because a German newspaper market existed within the German-speaking world beyond the bounds of any one state or authority, officials were forced to reckon with dissent. German states like Prussia had not only founded their own papers, but also cultivated relationships with independent papers and journalists long before 1848. Pace Green, government press policies became more overt and less secretive
in the reaction period of the 1850s. Provisioning information in the pre-1848 era was as important to German censors as controlling it, and the liberalization of the press at mid-century was not wholesale emancipation but a renegotiation of power between journalists and state officials.

The Carlsbad Decrees of 1819 embodied the conservative reaction to calls for democratic reform and nationalist unity. These decrees not only created new rules for censoring the press, but also regulated universities, banned fraternities, eased the use of search warrants, and established a central office for public security in Mainz, which surveyed print media of all types. Yet the attempts by conservatives to combat political agitation were themselves evidence that a shift in the relationship between the state and the reading public had occurred. Metternich was not only the architect of the conservative reaction, but also one of the most astute students of Napoleon’s use of the press. He recognized that older methods of repression, like incarceration, were counter-productive, because they attracted public attention and undermined the state’s efforts to suppress revolutionary ideas. His experiences in Napoleonic Paris as Austrian ambassador had taught him that the French had mobilized the public by keeping it informed about the fortunes of the state. Public opinion was “the most important means (of governance)...that penetrates deep into the gnarled depths where administrative measures are no longer

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Hoefer, Pressepolitik und Polizeistaat Metternichs, p.50.
successful”. Governments could not ignore public opinion (die öffentliche Meinung), but had to survey and maintain a “consequential and long-lasting support (Pflege)” of it.

Metternich’s initiative in 1819 to keep public opinion free of revolutionary and nationalist ideas was a radical step that targeted newspapers. After Carlsbad any publisher wanting to print a work under 20 proof sheets (which translated into 200 printed pages) required approval by state authorities beforehand. This requirement created high burdens for newspapers and other periodicals with time-sensitive information. Editors could be held liable for damages even if their publications had been approved by the censors but drew the ire of state officials afterwards, and those found guilty were not allowed to edit publications for five years. In Prussia, the censorship laws went further. The confiscation of illegal publications required only retroactive approval by the courts, and the printer of censored publications was punished with the sealing of his machines (Versiegelung) until the case went to trial.

At the same time, economic development and the rapid growth in the market for domestic news undermined the federal censorship regime, multiplying the sources of news, just as German particularism and divergent state policies hindered full cooperation in repression. Although the Federal Constitution of Vienna in 1815 had stipulated uniform rules on press freedoms and the Carlsbad Decrees had called for “mutual responsibility” for the new censorship regime, states like Saxe-Weimar, Württemberg, and Bavaria

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217 Ibid., 40.
loosened their press laws, as Prussian and Austrian authorities strengthened theirs.\textsuperscript{220} This variation in press laws among the powerful conservative states and their more liberal neighbors was a source of constant tension. The Carlsbad Decrees were enforced selectively in Württemberg, Bavaria, and Baden. The Badenese Press Law in 1832 temporarily abolished censorship altogether, before the confederation ruled against it. Bavaria was notorious for its lax enforcement of censorship laws, often censoring material but letting legal charges against individual perpetrators languish and then die in the courts.\textsuperscript{221} The activities of publicists in neighboring countries like Switzerland, Belgium, and France also undermined the efficacy of the censorship regime.\textsuperscript{222}

Despite these economic and legal barriers to the establishment of newspapers, the German press boomed between 1820 and 1860. In the German-speaking lands in 1845 there were roughly 1000 individual titles. By 1860 the number had almost doubled to over 1900. In Prussia alone, the number of papers increased from 96 in 1824 to 182 in 1850; the total volume from leading papers more than doubled from 35,000 to 76,000 papers printed per day in the same period.\textsuperscript{223} A Prussian civil servant noted in 1854 that newspapers in Prussia could be divided according to administrative regions, from the Rhine and Weser rivers in the west to Silesia and the Vistula regions in the east. He located dominant newspapers for each of the six regions in Prussia. None of them overlapped. Each region had its own local spectrum of newspapers, from conservative to

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\textsuperscript{221}Wolfgang Piereth, \textit{Bayerns Pressepolitik und die Neuordnung Deutschlands nach den Befreiungskriegen} (Munich, 1999), especially chapters 2-4.
\textsuperscript{222}Siemann, “Ideenschmuggel.”, 78-84.
\textsuperscript{223}Grothe, \textit{Die Zeitung}, 206.
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liberal, representing the agricultural interests of farmers and the mercantile concerns of townspeople. These papers accompanied and complemented regional identities by covering local affairs and concerns, while reprinting material from larger newspapers in Berlin and from wire services abroad.

Conservatives like Metternich not only tried to suppress debate through the pre-censorship regime but also engaged in the exchange of ideas. Like many in the Old Regime, he saw the Enlightenment ideal of deliberation (Räsonnement) as necessary in combating liberalism and fighting oppositional papers throughout the German lands. Part of the reason for establishing the office for public security in Mainz was to offer counterarguments or Gegendarstellungen in other papers. Reactionary states like Austria, therefore, did not fully retreat into the negative policies of censorship after Napoleon. These were augmented by the positive policies of direct or indirect influence. Metternich abandoned any hope that the Wiener Zeitung could regain its political importance as the official newspaper of the Austrian government in the post-Napoleonic age. After a failed attempt to win over Cotta’s Allgemeine Zeitung, Metternich launched the Oesterreichische Beobachter. Its aim was to be “advanced, controlled and managed by the government without publicly acknowledging it” (von der Regierung befördert, kontrolliert und geleitet, ohne daß sie sich öffentlich dazu bekennen dürfte).

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226 Hoefer, Pressepolitik und Polizeistaat Metternichs, 45. Metternich also launched and edited the Jahrbücher der Literatur, a journal that sought to criticize liberal ideas from a scholarly point of view. 
preoccupation with keeping the hand of government hidden reflected the growth of a public unwilling to rely on state sources of information.

Thus, the older model of the Amtsblatt was an ineffective means of governance in an era of mass literacy and mass writing. Bureaucrats in Prussia, which had one of the harshest censorship regimes before 1848, also moved beyond negative policies and engaged the public through semi-official channels. Prussia had relied on the official Allgemeine Preußische Staats-Zeitung since 1819 to promulgate laws, and the paper began a semi-official section in 1827, which led to an eight-fold increase in copies sold.\textsuperscript{228} In the wake of the July Revolution of 1830, voices grew louder in the Prussian bureaucracy that public mistrust of the Amtsblätter required using papers not associated with the state.\textsuperscript{229} When he acceded to the throne in 1840, Frederick William IV wanted to revamp government press policy with a more aggressive mandate to combat “false reports” in the press and create new sources of political legitimacy. The appointment of Johann Albrecht von Eichhorn as minister of cultural affairs in 1840 brought a more systematic approach to government public relations. Eichhorn dropped all mention of the state and changed the official newspaper’s name to the Allgemeine Preußische Zeitung (APZ) in 1843, after establishing the Rheinische Beobachter as an ostensibly independent paper in Cologne in

\textsuperscript{228} Lothar Dittmer, Beamtenkonservativismus und Modernisierung. Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte der Konservativen Partie in Preußen 1810-1848/49 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1992): 111.
\textsuperscript{229} GStA PK I. HA Rep 77 Ministerium des Inneren Tit 53 Nr 29 Bd 1, Interior Minister to His Majesty, 30 April 1839.
Both papers were charged with answering critical commentary that fell outside of the censor’s purview, although the *Beobachter* was a failure and closed shop in 1848.

Eichhorn’s appointment marked the turn towards a more sophisticated press policy in Prussia, as did the establishment of the Ministerial Newspaper Office (*Ministerial Zeitungsbureau*) in 1842, which later became the Literary Office (*Literarisches Büro*) in 1860. This office, which acted as an independent agency and was only formally integrated into the Prussian Ministry of Interior in 1892, was responsible for coordinating press policy and developing positive press strategies throughout Prussia in the 1840s and 50s. Eichhorn sought to engage “noble” (*edel*) and “responsible” liberal journalists through the government press and to increase the role of “semi-official” news, especially the attention given to arts, literature, and entertainment. He gave APZ editors free reign and helped develop the provincial press through a wide-ranging program of decentralization. At the same time, Eichhorn resisted attempts to privatize the APZ completely, which other officials thought would further increase its popularity. Instead, he saw to it that the paper remained an organ of the state.

The APZ’s success as a semi-official paper also led Prussian bureaucrats to engage and protect papers that were considered oppositional. *Räsonnierende* (deliberative, critical) papers were watched and censored, but Prussian bureaucrats were dubious about

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engaging in public battles over critical editorials. When Frederick William IV asked that the APZ include a new rubric in May 1844 to combat what he perceived to be the “lies” of the oppositional press, Ferdinand von Westphalen, the head of the Newspaper Office, reacted with skepticism. Westphalen, who later became Minister of Interior in 1850, underscored that any attempt to address critical news coverage through a paper like the APZ would undermine the credibility of its editors and give oppositional papers unnecessary attention. He also pointed to other difficulties that establishing an official rubric would present. Not only would it be hard to declare an opinion deceitful or wrong, but such a strategy would also antagonize critical papers that the government relied upon to manage its image. By sharing information with independent papers, the government disseminated its own version of events without undermining the credibility of either the APZ or independent papers. Westphalen claimed that the government could correct the factual record by pursuing false reports within the censorship regime, but the decentralized nature and sheer size of the German newspaper market made it impossible for the state to address every transgression. Even the official intelligence gazettes did not always present the news the way the Prussian authorities would have liked. It was far better for the state to use independent papers to present the state’s own account of events than the official papers. 234 Westphalen’s 1844 memorandum became the standard policy in Prussia until Bismarck came to power. It was quoted and reproduced in 1848, 1854, and 1861—all 234 GSTA PK I. HA Rep 77 Ministerium des Inneren, Tit. 53, Nr. 29, Bd I. “Die Überwachung der Tagespresse” Von Westphalen to His Royal Majesty, 7 May 1844.
moments when the king or other officials expressed the desire to tamp down the press with an official propaganda campaign.\textsuperscript{235}

The relationship between conservatives in the Prussian bureaucracy and the liberal press before 1848 was, therefore, not as adversarial as has often been claimed. While bureaucrats established their own newspapers, journals, and associations to spread conservative ideology beyond manorial estates, they just as often used liberal journalists and independent papers to manage the public sphere. In addition to sharing information with liberals to counter critical opinion, officials from the Ministerial Newspaper Office solicited these \textit{Tendenzblätter} for specific news stories, especially in cities. These stories appeared in small, liberal papers like \textit{Das Wochenblatt}, \textit{Die Weimarsche Zeitung}, and \textit{Elbinger Anzeiger} and often concerned state spending on specific projects like roads, bridges, and canals. Hence, drumming up support for the state was not limited to official or semi-official organs.\textsuperscript{236} Although conservative “modernizers” like Eichhorn wanted to create a centralized institution that coordinated with regional authorities, Westphalen tempered those designs through his pragmatic dealings with local papers. He often minimized the extent of his own cooperation with liberal journalists, while lower officials working in the Newspaper Office maintained regular contact with journalists from liberal,

\textsuperscript{235}Ibid. Von Westphalen to his Royal Majesty, 17 April 1854. See also I. HA Rep 90 A Staatsministerium Jüngere Registratur Nr. 2414, Meurebach to Manteuffel 6 January 1849. Manteuffel also regarded independent papers as crucial for disseminating government views, as did the entire cabinet in 1861: Castenohle to His Royal Majesty 21 November 1861 (signed by all members of the cabinet).

\textsuperscript{236}GStA PK I. HA Rep 77 Ministerium des Inneren, Tit. 53, Nr. 31 “Die Engagierung von Zeitungs/Schreibern, Korrespondenten pp. (1831-1848)” Dr. Gustav H. to Unknown, 21 April 1838 and after; Nr. 33, Bd. I “Die Herausgabe und Zensur periodischer Schriften, Zeitungen und Tagesblätter, sowie die Veröffentlichung amtlicher Erlasse ausschließlich durch konservative Blätter” Dr. Gustav H. to Unknown, 12 May 1841 and after.
non-official papers.\textsuperscript{237} If conservatives succeeded most when they copied the format and editorial practices of the liberal press, cooperating with liberals themselves was not a radical step. What liberal journalists got in return was protection from the censorship regime; officials who maintained contact with liberal journalists were responsible for surveillance and censorship in the first place.\textsuperscript{238} The Newspaper Office was not only an instrument of repression but also accommodated liberal papers by turning a blind eye. As Westphalen remarked, there were too many papers to control: one had to “indulge” the press as much as whip it into shape with the threat of censorship.\textsuperscript{239}

After 1848 and the lapsing of the pre-publication censorship regime, the leverage that officials had had over independent, non-official newspapers disappeared, transforming the calculus of interaction between bureaucrats and journalists. While disappointment over the Paulskirche assembly and the piecemeal reform in the various German states defused political agitation, liberal papers were emboldened in the 1850s to criticize governments openly. Publishers were still subject to censorship, but transgressors had to be prosecuted in the court system, not by bureaucratic fiat, as had been the case before. With the obligation of seeking prior approval gone, journalists had less incentive to cooperate with government bureaucracies. The old semi-official papers quickly collapsed, as editors, journalists, and readers migrated to new papers and independent,

\textsuperscript{237}GStA PK I. HA Rep 92 Nachlass Johann Eichhorn, Nr. 61.
\textsuperscript{238}See also Sieframm, “Ideensturm”, 105.
\textsuperscript{239}GStA PK I. HA Rep 77 Ministerium des Inneren, Tit. 53, Nr. 29, Bd I. “Die Überwachung der Tagespresse” Von Westphalen to His Royal Majesty, 7 May 1844
liberal stalwarts. Attempts by governments all across the German states to revive semi-official newspapers in the 1850s failed, leading to the re-establishment of official press organs that now engaged in news reporting, in addition to publishing laws and decrees.\footnote{Papers like the \textit{Adlerzeitung}, \textit{Brandenburger Zeitung}, and \textit{Allgemeine Preussische Zeitung} disappeared or were replaced by new papers in Prussia.}

The Prussian government was one of the first to change tack and emphasize the official character of the government press. The APZ was renamed the \textit{Königlicher Preußischer Staatsanzeiger} in 1848 (becoming the \textit{Deutscher Reichsanzeiger} in 1871) and focused on reaching a broader audience by publishing news on parliament and the bureaucracy.\footnote{Green misses the significance of the semi-official press of 1830s and 40s and, therefore, places state attempts in the 1850s in the wrong context. Cf. “Intervening in the Public Sphere”, 165-167; Kurt Koszyk, \textit{Deutsche Presse im 19. Jahrhundert.}, 122-128.}

The state’s retreat behind official newspapers and news reporting was a signal of liberal ascendancy. It also exposed the contradictions of Prussian conservative bureaucrats, who sought to be disinterested guarantors of the state as well as propagators of conservative ideology.\footnote{The name change happened in two steps: \textit{Preußischer Staatsanzeiger} 3 May 1848, \textit{Königlicher Preußischer Staatsanzeiger} 1 July 1851.} The toleration of liberal innovations and journalists in the semi-official and independent press were fragile accommodations that fell apart after 1848 and the emergence of constitutionalism. This new situation reduced conservatives to a political party, swimming in the currents of electoral politics and public opinion. They were no longer the undisputed arbiters of state affairs or the managers of public discourse. Although they introduced regulatory legislation banning press “misuse” such as \textit{lèse majesté}, the 1854 federal press law harmonized regulations without a return to pre-
publication censorship. Conservatives continued to dominate the state bureaucracy, yet parliamentary politics filled the public sphere with a newfound urgency and freedom.

The White Revolution and the Politics of Information

Otto von Bismarck upended the defensive stance that conservatives had taken when he became Chancellor in 1862. He shut down public criticism by enacting the Press Ordinance of June 1863, and although it was reversed a few months later, Bismarck continued to use the police to harass and confiscate liberal papers. In July he established the Provinzial-Correspondenz, an official newspaper that targeted the countryside. It supplemented the local district press, which had grown unpopular and indebted, with a uniform format that included news and editorials explaining government policy. While the headings changed according to region, giving the paper a local character, content came entirely from Berlin. The Provinzial-Correspondenz was the first official paper to intervene in the public sphere through editorials, and it became a powerful instrument that mobilized the countryside behind the Berlin government. Bismarck also concentrated his attention on influencing the press beyond Prussia. He hired publicists like Lothar Bucher and Moritz Busch to write articles and editorials in southern German and Parisian newspapers in the mid-1860s. These operatives, in turn, paid other journalists to advocate for Bismarck and his kleindeutsch solution to German unity. In reaction to Austria’s

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widespread network of journalists and newspapers in southern Germany, Bismarck aggressively tried to match Austria in a *Zeitungskrieg* for public opinion.\(^{246}\)

Focusing on the foreign press and the propagandistic power of opinion-making represented a sea change in Prussian press policy. The Prussian censors had ignored foreign news sources, and the Literary Office had no plans for influencing the foreign press.\(^{247}\) While Bismarck allowed the *Provinzial-Correspondenz* to be edited by the Literary Office, he refused to rely on the bureaucracy and conservative papers for his public relations campaign. Instead, he recognized that his project for national unification could mobilize German liberals around Prussia, and he sought to stage this gambit through the press. His associate, Moritz Busch, had been a journalist for liberal papers in the 1850s, and came to Bismarck’s attention through his reporting on Schleswig-Holstein during the German-Danish War. Bismarck supported liberal papers by enabling journalists of all stripes access to the theaters of war and to military telegrams.\(^{248}\) Whereas previous generations of conservatives had been anxious about openly engaging the independent press for fear of legitimating liberalism, Bismarck used the liberal press to legitimate his political course.

The newspaper most associated with Bismarck, the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, began as a liberal weekly, and its history demonstrated a singular example of

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247 GStA PK HA Rep 77 Ministerium des Inneren, Tit. 53, Nr. 29, Bd. 2. Von Usedom to Prince Regent 11 May 1859 and afterwards.
Bismarck’s relationship to the press. Founded in 1855 as the *Berliner Montagszeitung*, the paper was converted into a daily in 1861, when August Heinrich Braß, an old 1848-er, became editor-in-chief. He changed the name to the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine* and sought to increase its profile as an international paper, hiring Wilhelm Liebknecht to report from London and establishing a network of journalists in other European capitals. The paper was prosecuted several times before coming to Bismarck’s attention through Albrecht von Roon. Over the next several years, Bismarck’s influence over it grew rapidly. By 1864 he was sending complete articles to the editor’s desk, which required only minor additions before being published.\textsuperscript{249} The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine*’s reputation as the unofficial platform for the Berlin government emerged.\textsuperscript{250} However, Bismarck’s heavy-handed involvement led Braß to sell the paper in 1865 to Hamburg bankers close to Bismarck, while Emil Pindter, a part-time operative from the Literary Office, took over as editor. At the behest of Bismarck, he leaked sensitive diplomatic information that ignited the Luxemburg Crisis in 1867 and stymied French aspirations in Belgium a year later. Most famously, the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine* published the abridged Ems Telegram in 1870, which sparked the Franco-Prussian War. Yet the paper’s circulation declined by half to just under 5,000 copies, as the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine* became a stolid official paper completely under Bismarck’s control. By 1873 the paper was rarely read beyond elite political circles, who still regarded it as an important barometer of Bismarck’s mood.


\textsuperscript{250}Manfred Overesch, *Presse zwischen Lenkung und Freiheit: Preussen und seine offiziöse Zeitung von der Revolution bis zur Reichsgründung* (Pullach: Doku Verlag, 1974)
Pindter and his successors maintained this niche and their ties to future chancellors and the
Foreign Office, but they did not succeed in expanding the paper’s readership.251

The story of the Norddeutsche Allgemeine harkened back to the days of the semi-
ofﬁcial press of the pre-1848 era. Unlike previous generations of conservatives, however,
Bismarck was not worried about ruining the reputation of the Norddeutsche Allgemeine or
having his control over the paper exposed. He recognized that such a semi-ofﬁcial paper
could serve as a platform that offered the beneﬁt of deniability. If an article caused an
uproar, Bismarck could disavow it or claim that it had been a misunderstanding between
the editors and himself. One could send signals, test the waters of public opinion, and leak
information without taking responsibility. The Norddeutsche Allgemeine’s international
news reporting helped Bismarck gain attention at home, while the paper’s unofficial and
ambiguous relationship with ofﬁcialdom inspired scrutiny abroad. While this strategy so
corrupted the Norddeutsche Allgemeine’s reputation that it had become little more than a
shell for Bismarck by 1871, in the 1860s this type of deniability would have been
impossible with an ofﬁcial organ or the conservative press.252

More important than his naked forms of intervention were the ways in which
Bismarck adapted to the growing market for information. As the power and efﬁcacy of
censorship waned and the growth in news reporting exploded, Bismarck used the
offensive to capitalize on making the news. He regained leverage that Prussian ofﬁcials

251 Reinhard Schwarz, Emil Pindter als offiziöser Redakteur und "Kritiker" Otto von Bismarcks (Frankfurt
252 The paper did provide most of the fodder for discussion, see: Ursula E. Koch, Berliner Presse und
europäisches Geschehen 1871: Eine Untersuchung über die Rezeption der großen Ereignisse im ersten
Halbjahr 1871 in den politischen Tageszeitungen der deutschen Reichshauptstadt (Berlin: Colloquium,
1978).
had lost after 1848 by forcing journalists to come to him. Instead of seeking privileged protection from censorship, journalists sought access to privileged information. Bismarck became the lodestone of German politics, and liberal papers had no choice but to report on his political gambles.

**Professional Papers and Political Interests**

The transformation of liberal newspapers from quirky periodicals, dominated by the personality of one editor, to professionalized dailies with editorial boards, had been a key development in the first half of the nineteenth century. Jörg Requate characterized this transition from *Herausgeberzeitung* to *Verlegerzeitung* as a key factor in the professionalization of journalism and the primacy of timely and reliable information over political activism.\(^{253}\) The period before 1848 was dominated by men of letters, who printed newspapers as extensions of the their literary and political aspirations, arguing for liberalization and political unification. Writers like Philipp Jakob Siebenpfeiffer, Johan Georg August Wirth, Karl Mathy, Arnold Ruge, and Karl Gutzkow were political creatures, whose interest in news reporting came second to *Räsonnement* and critical engagement with reform in the German states.

Johann Friedrich Cotta’s *Allgemeine Zeitung* began the move toward professional *Verlegerzeitungen* in the 1820s by providing detailed and well-organized information on current political events with little or no editorializing.\(^{254}\) The emphasis on professional news-gathering provided a model for other family-run newspapers with strong regional ties, like the *Magdeburger Zeitung* of the Faber family, the *Kölnerische Zeitung* of the

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254 Moran, *Century of Words*, 133.
DuMonts, and the Voß family in Berlin, whose *Berlinerische Priviligerte Zeitung* was so closely associated with the family that it was known as the *Vossische Zeitung*\(^2\)\(^{55}\). That most of these papers were liberal followed from their readership, which consisted mostly of businessmen, merchants, lawyers, and other professional city-dwellers who wanted reliable information about the German states and the wider world. Expensive subscriptions generated steady cashflow that allowed these papers to expand their networks of correspondents across Europe and further abroad in the 1850s and 60s\(^2\)\(^{56}\). News and special reports from abroad grew in importance, as the German lands industrialized and became increasingly tied to the world economy.

The international orientation of liberal papers and editors also made them receptive to nationalism and the promise of a unified German state. Some papers like the *Nationalzeitung* were forged in the nationalist idealism of 1848 and supported the Deutscher Nationalverein and the Progressive Party in the 1860s. Only after Bismarck created the Northern German Confederation in 1867 did the paper moderate its opposition to Bismarck and support his foreign policy. The *Kölnische Zeitung* abandoned its traditional neutrality with the establishment of the National Liberal Party in 1867, becoming one of the party’s strongest supporters. The *Vossische* also favored the National Liberals, praising the nationalist project of unification, while criticizing Bismarck’s illiberal domestic policies. Even Leopold Sonnemann’s *Frankfurter Zeitung*, which had been Bismarck’s most strident detractor in the southern states, came out in favor of


unification under Prussia in 1867. These papers had suffered constant harassment throughout the 1860s by the Prussian authorities, making their volte-face all the more breathtaking.\textsuperscript{257}

The melding of party politics with publishing news extended to other milieus as Conservatives, Catholics and Socialists all established professional papers in the 1850s and 60s. The \textit{Neue Preußische (Kreuz)zeitung}, which had begun in 1848 with limited indirect state support, became the most important paper representing traditional Prussian Conservatives.\textsuperscript{258} Free Conservatives founded \textit{Die Post} in 1866, and nationalist conservatives created \textit{Der Reichsbote} in 1873. Together they had a circulation of more than 80,000 papers by 1880, mixing professional news with their ideological coloring.\textsuperscript{259} The \textit{Kölnische Volkszeitung} became the most important and widely read Catholic daily, established in 1859 as an antidote to the vehemently anti-Catholic cross-town \textit{Kölnische Zeitung}.\textsuperscript{260} The \textit{Germania} was a loud and polemical paper when it was founded in 1870, but its Berlin roots made it crucial to the development of the Catholic Center party. Although Berlin lacked a large Catholic readership, many Center politicians read the \textit{Germania} as deputies. Leaders like Ludwig Windhorst were dismayed by its shrill style in the 1870s, especially as major papers from Protestant and Socialist milieus quoted it.

\textsuperscript{257} Becker, \textit{Bilder von Krieg und Nation}, 142-158;
\textsuperscript{258} Dagmar Bussiek, "Mit Gott für König und Vaterland!": die Neue Preußische Zeitung (Kreuzzeitung) 1848–1892 (Dissertation, University of Kassel 2002): 32-38.
\textsuperscript{259} Hans-Christof Kraus, \textit{Bismarck und die preußischen Konservativen} (Friedrichsruh : Otto-von-Bismarck-Stiftung 2000):12
often. Jean Baptista von Schweitzer’s ill-fated Socialdemokrat inspired Wilhelm Liebknecht to found Der Volkstaat in 1869. Liebknecht’s experience as a journalist for a number of liberal dailies and his troubles with the Prussian authorities led him to relaunch his paper as the Vorwärts in 1876. Banned two years later, it emerged in 1890 as the preeminent Socialist daily with a professional staff, network of journalists, and a growing readership. By 1905 circulation for the Vorwärts had swelled to over 70,000 copies per day, making it the largest Socialist daily in the country.

Publicists loomed large over the political landscape and did more than print words. Many were involved in politics themselves, belonging to state and national parliamentary delegations. National Liberals like Ludwig Bamberger and Eduard Lasker had been journalists before becoming party leaders. Left Liberals like Eugen Richter, Friedrich Naumann, and Heinrich Rickert owned papers or worked for them. Antisemites such as Max Liebermann von Sonnenberg and Oswald Zimmerman, as well as conservatives like Hermann Wagener and Wilhelm von Hammerstein, edited or ran newspapers. Not only Liebknecht, but other Socialist leaders had active publishing careers like Eduard Bernstein, Karl Kautsky, and Gustav Noske. As Margaret Lavinia Anderson underscored, journalists “connected party and electorate, provid(ing) continuity between elections“. In

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no other country did newspapers and the written word play such a significant role in electoral politics as in Imperial Germany.\textsuperscript{263}

**Berlin: Metropolis and Mass Market**

With the founding of the Reich in 1871, Bismarck’s stood astride German politics like a colossus, and Berlin emerged as the new German nation’s epicenter. Every major newspaper established an office and a permanent correspondent there. The *Kreuzzeitung* originated in Berlin, and other conservative papers made it there home as well. The *Germania* had begun as a conscious attempt by Catholics to get a foothold in the Protestant capital. The *Kölische Zeitung*’s Berlin bureau became so important that it took over front-page editorial duties from Cologne in 1876.\textsuperscript{264} The *Frankfurter Zeitung* followed suite, giving its Berlin office editorial responsibilities for the political section.\textsuperscript{265} The *Vossische Zeitung* profited from its long history in Berlin and sophisticated feuilleton, while Rudolf Mosse’s newly founded *Berliner Tageblatt* used its outsider status to take aim at the *Vossische*’s readership in 1872.\textsuperscript{266} Many other papers established permanent correspondents in the new German capital as well.\textsuperscript{267}

Bismarck recognized the value of this growing network of journalists that took root in Berlin. He fought the Prussian bureaucracy, which had advocated for a much more stringent press regime, supporting instead the moderate Imperial Press Law of 1874,

\textsuperscript{266} Gerhard Schwarz, “Berliner Tageblatt (1872-1939)” in Fischer, *Deutsche Zeitungen*, 315-319.
which codified the liberal press reforms of the 1850s. To be sure, officials like the Prussian Interior minister, Friedrich zu Eulenburg, remained hostile to the liberal press. The Literary Office focused on surveillance and the day-to-day management of the *Provinzial-Correspondenz*, but Eulenburg refused to engage with non-conservative papers and argued for bureaucratic control of the entire press corps, including the training of journalists. Bismarck disagreed. He left liberal papers unmolested and even hired a press officer for the Foreign Office, Ludwig Ägidi, who was himself a liberal journalist with long-standing professional contacts with the liberal press.

Many historians have argued that “party” meant more to German liberals than actual membership in an organization, but rather embodied support for an idea or set of principles. While liberal newspapers had been handmaidens that strengthened the alignment between nationalist liberals and Bismarck, as the liberal movement split in Germany, these papers remained committed to the fundamental tenets of liberal ideology. Nationalism did not trump concerns for re-casting the state for liberal aims or purging it of abuses. Loud supporters of Bismarck like Heinrich von Treitschke might have used their energies to agitate for Bismarck in the pages of the *Preußische Jahrbücher*, but liberal papers remained committed to their professional interests of information- and news-gathering. Whether it was the Military Budget Bill of 1871 or the *Kulturkampf*,

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269 Ibid.
liberal newspapers had a conflict-ridden relationship to Bismarck and the new state he was creating in the 1870s—more so than liberal politicians themselves.\footnote{Hans Wolfgang Wetzel, \textit{Presseinnenpolitik im Bismarckreich (1874-1890)} (New York: Peter Lang, 1975); Naujoks, “Bismarck und die Regierungs Presse”, 49-51.} Politics were key to editorial choices and the tenor of news coverage, but getting “the scoop” by maintaining ties to officialdom did not co-opt the independence of liberal newspapers. Their livelihood depended on information and their readers’ trust, not government subscriptions or subsidies.

As the leading paper close to the National Liberals, the \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} was read throughout the German-speaking world and abroad. It was one of the few German papers sold in London, New York, and Paris. Its circulation increased threefold, growing from 20,000 in 1861 to over 75,000 on the eve of the First World War. Although small in comparison to the circulation numbers of the mass press that dominated by 1900, the paper was read by educated elites all across Germany. The \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} had provided broad coverage of international news since the 1850s and was indispensable to both businessmen and government officials wanting to stay abreast of international affairs. Although vehemently anti-Catholic during the \textit{Kulturkampf}, the paper was a harsh critic of German military policy and a leader in investigative journalism and business news.\footnote{Potschka, “Kölnische Zeitung (1802-1945)”, 151; Helma Hink, \textit{Bismarcks Pressepolitik in der bulgarischen Krise und der Zusammenbruch seiner Regierungs Presse: 1885 - 1890} (Frankfurt [Main] : Lang, 1977): 21.}

Bismarck once remarked that the \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} could cause the value of a company to rise or fall by two million marks in the course of one day.\footnote{Helma Hink, \textit{Bismarcks Pressepolitik in der bulgarischen Krise und der Zusammenbruch seiner Regierungs Presse: 1885 - 1890} (Frankfurt [Main] : Lang, 1977): 21.} It was embroiled in a number of scandals in the late 1870s, when it exposed insider-trading schemes between officials.
and businessmen in the Prussian Ministry of Trade and Commerce. Erich Kayser, a bureaucrat in the Foreign Office responsible for observing the press, lamented in 1881 that the government had no control over the *Kölnische Zeitung*. Although its reputation as a semi-official paper stemmed from its contacts to the Foreign Office, its network was not limited to Germany. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine* decried that the *Kölnische Zeitung* was in the hands of foreign governments because of its connections to other foreign ministries. Kaiser William II, who objected constantly to the newspaper’s coverage of domestic politics, was incensed to discover that officials were smuggling in their own copies of the *Kölnische Zeitung* after he had banned it from all Prussian and Reich ministries in 1894.

The *Berliner Tageblatt* helped begin Rudolf Mosse’s vast publishing empire, and was also a key contributor to the rise of investigative journalism. Fashioned as a local paper that was open to the world, the *Tageblatt* was designed by Mosse as liberal competitor to the established *Vossische Zeitung* that was entertaining in addition to being informative. Recognizing the demands of urban life, Mosse’s paper appealed to the *Großstadtleser* in Berlin, who wanted a heterogeneous collection of items that mixed international and local news. Through its sensationalism and original news coverage, the *Tageblatt* gained a growing readership, reaching 75,000 by 1878. Initially close to Lasker’s faction of the National Liberals, the *Tageblatt* moved toward the Left Liberals in

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275 PA AA R 28-29, 13 April 1879 and after.
276 Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung [hereafter NAZ], 13 December 1880: PA AA R 29, Kayser, “Memorandum über die Verhältnisse der regierungsfreundlichen Presse und die Beziehungen der Regierungen zu derselben”.
277 Ibid.
278 BAB-Liv, R 1806/17689 Böttcher to State Secretary 14 April 1894.
the 1880s. Although readership declined throughout the 1890s, by the turn of the century subscriptions had bounced back to over 150,000.\textsuperscript{279}

Mosse also helped revolutionize the way newspapers made money. Along with August Scherl, his conservative rival and founder of the \textit{Berliner Lokal Anzeiger}, he transformed the financing of the press by relying on advertising revenues rather than subscriptions.\textsuperscript{280} By the late 1870s, this \textit{Generalanzeiger} model of revenue-generation had caught on at a number of publishing houses, leading to a greater concentration of ownership as well as segmentation of the press industry. Mosse built a sprawling concern of newspapers and magazines for a variety of readerships, ranging from the commercial \textit{Berlin Morgen Zeitung} to the highbrow magazine, \textit{Der Weltspiegel}, and the urbane \textit{Tageblatt}. In addition, he owned specialty magazines on architecture, gardening, and technology, which made him one of the wealthiest men in Germany by 1900.\textsuperscript{281}

The Left Liberal tendencies of Mosse filtered down into the editing rooms of his newspapers, but increasing professionalization also limited his control. He fired, for example, the entire staff at the \textit{Berliner Tageblatt} in 1875 for being too supportive of the \textit{Kulturkampf}, but he remained aloof to the day-to-day stewardship of his papers. This distance increased as his interests extended into diverse market niches.\textsuperscript{282} If Mosse’s inclinations came from the progressive, non-socialist Left, August Scherl’s politics seeped

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\textsuperscript{279} Gerhard Schwarz, “Berliner Tageblatt (1872-1939)”, 319.
\textsuperscript{282} Gerhard Schwarz, “Berliner Tageblatt (1872-1939)”, 321.
Into his papers from the Right. Sympathetic to Emperor William II in the 1890s, the Berliner Lokal Anzeiger was a strong supporter of the Flottenverein and modulated its international news coverage with calls for a more active German role in international affairs. Yet, like its liberal competitors, the Anzeiger remained committed to gathering reliable information and providing original news coverage for its readers. Scherl also developed or acquired additional papers and magazines such as Die Gartenlaube in niche markets, but his economic interests in business and illustrated news predominated.  

Leopold Ullstein was the third major player in Berlin to create an empire based on mass publications like the Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung and the Deutsche Morgenpost. A Left Liberal in the same mold as Mosse, Ullstein was a charismatic figure whose five sons ran the business after their father’s death in 1899. However, Ullstein’s politics did not keep him from entering into a joint venture with Scherl after both had waged an expensive newspaper war in Berlin in the 1890s to see who could get the largest readership. Scherl was granted minority shares in Ullstein’s Morgenpost in 1898, after both agreed to refrain from fighting over the Berlin market in the future.  

Other family-run papers built smaller empires outside Berlin. August Neven-Dumont spun off local Cologne news from the Kölnische Zeitung to the Kölnische Stadtanzeiger in the late 1870s and expanded the business by buying local papers up and down the Rhine. Revenue from Dumont’s Rhineland press segment subsidized the Kölnische Zeitung’s high costs, and its editors and journalists were envied for their high

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salaries and expensive postings throughout the world.  

Julius Knorr’s *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* expanded throughout southern Germany in the 1880s and 90s, making it larger than many of its competitors with a circulation of 98,000, but it remained regionally focused. Knorr incorporated local specialty papers on topics such as sport, mountain climbing, and chess into his national and international network, combining news on a wide range of topics. Originally associated with the National Liberals, the publishers of the Munich paper grew more conservative and nationalist by the turn of the century, supporting the Pan-Germans and the Kaiser’s *Weltpolitik*.  

Broader sources of financing became important, shielding journalists from the temptation of corruption and causing some established papers to stagnate or remain locked in niche markets. The *Vossische Zeitung* had been one of the most popular newspaper in the German speaking lands in the mid-nineteenth century with subscription approaching 25,000. It was also known for its travel journalism and theater criticism as well as its moderate liberalism. The paper’s support for the National Liberals waned in the late 1870s, and it aligned instead with the Left-Liberal progressives. Like all liberal papers, it never professed any direct party affiliation, and historians have often treated it as the paper of record. It earned the moniker of “Tante Voss” and appealed to educated circles from a variety of political backgrounds. Yet with subscriptions hovering around 15,000 in the

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287 For a recent example see, Florian Keisinger, *Unzivilisierte Kriege im zivilisierten Europa? Die Balkankriege und die öffentliche Meinung in Deutschland, England und Irland 1876-1913* (Paderborn, 2008)
1890s, its readership shrank. Journalists at the *Vossische Zeitung* also worked for state authorities, compromising their independence. Theodore Fontane, the paper’s most prominent theater critic, received over 30,000 marks during his career from Prussian authorities, and the paper would become a reliable place for the Foreign Office to plant articles at the turn of the century. Likewise, the *Frankfurter Zeitung* was *klein aber fein*, and enjoyed a loyal and stable readership of about 17,000. Its editorial structure was unique, as Leopold Sonnemann took decisions by consensus and let journalists choose topics and themes. While its reputation for independence under Sonnemann remained unquestioned, the paper’s journalists were notorious for their big egos and low salaries, which led some to accept secret subsidies from government officials. Its financial journalists were also well known among businessmen for writing favorable articles about firms looking for capital in exchange for stock options. A loud and critical paper on the editorial page, the *Frankfurter Zeitung* was not a leader in investigative journalism.

Both the *Vossische* and *Frankfurter Zeitung* focused on maintaining their feuilleton, and investigative journalism played a smaller role as the costs of news coverage increased. By the turn of the century, the German government was paying journalists from both papers for sympathetic news coverage.

The emergence of large press concerns in the 1890s transformed the relationship between political parties and newspapers as well. Publishers no longer relied on subsidies

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from political backers or subscriptions from party followers, but instead sought readers through cheap dailies and the marketing of advertising space. The primacy of mass papers, therefore, allowed journalists to write outside the strictures of party politics. Editors focused on the leisure interests of readers and designed layouts that appealed to broad tastes and the common problems of daily life. “Speed” and “clever spin” (Schnelligkeit mit einer geschickten Drehung) of newsworthy events to maximize attention was the common currency of the mass press, not politics. The leading three newspapers in Berlin alone had circulations over 500,000, outstripping the combined total of all party-related papers.

Party activists, both inside and outside the press, lamented the rise of mass market papers and the supposed decline of print culture. Conservative, liberal, and socialist newspapers alike saw the Generalanzeiger and Boulevardpresse as synonymous with materialist consumerism and the corrupting influence of city life, in addition to being a competitive danger to established papers’ praxis. Whereas traditional political papers argued, implored, and exposed in the name of its constituents, the Massenpresse depoliticized the news and transformed information into entertainment. Socialists criticized the popular mass press as gesinnungslos, just as conservatives, who had never gotten comfortable with journalism as a profession, were exasperated by its

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293 Stöber, “Der Prototyp der deutschen Massenpresse”, 317.
294 Stöber, Pressepolitik als Notwendigkeit, 27; Mendelsohn, Zeitungsstadt Berlin, 41.
295 Dominik Geppert, Pressekriege, 38-41. This was Habermas’ conclusion as well: Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit, 223.
By the turn of the century, newspapers in general had become less tied to the “social-moral milieus” of political parties that had traditionally undergirded the news industry in Germany. Newspapers diluted their politics in trying to capture a wider readership, which reflected the growing mutability of the German electorate and the dynamism of German society.

**Nationhood and the News**

The rise of the mass press unfolded after national consolidation had begun to affect the patterns of industrialization and social interaction. The establishment of the Empire had created not only a new state but also an expanded economic marketplace. The competitive pressures to offer more information, faster, and more reliably grew in step with economic growth. Local or regional papers took advantage of a unitary postal system, and smaller German states subsidized their local press in response to Prussian hegemony. Costs declined as technology and the increased efficiency of paper and printing machines made newspapers cheaper to print and disseminate. The attraction of journalists to Berlin in the 1870s also stemmed from the economic activity of the new imperial capital. The concentration of newspapers within large concerns was accompanied by the growth in the absolute density of newspapers across the empire. Every town and

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298 Although the Reichspostamt was first created in 1880, postal services were harmonized by 1872. Rudolf Morsey, *Die Oberste Reichsverwaltung unter Bismarck, 1867-1890* (Münster: Aschendorff 1957), pp. 122-127.  
299 Stöber, *Deutsche Pressegeschichte*, 49-51.
district, great and small, had at least one newspaper by the 1890s.\textsuperscript{300} German public opinion might have been divided into confessions, classes, and regions, but it also began to cohere around the nation-state, embodied in the idea of a distinct German as opposed to an Austrian, French, or British press.

It would be misleading to suggest that Bismarck’s Reich came to represent all of “Germany”, yet the geographical boundaries of the \textit{kleindeutsch} German state presented a compelling logic for the organization of news.\textsuperscript{301} Even though language and nationalism continued to enjoy a fraught and complex relationship among German speakers in central Europe, after 1871 \textit{Inland} and \textit{Ausland} were clear rubrics that newspapers used to demarcate space conceptually as well as on the physical page. Whether they were based in Berlin, Vienna, or Budapest, German-language newspapers and journals of every ideological and confessional stripe were bounded by the geography of states, even if their audience reached beyond national borders. Viennese newspapers, for example, enjoyed a privileged position in the German market by virtue of a common language, yet they were cited as a part of the foreign press from Munich to Kiel. Foreign papers also faced the same economic barriers that other products from abroad did in the form of tariffs and duties.\textsuperscript{302} Even Pan-Germans, who were loathe to exclude ethnic Germans anywhere, reproduced these distinctions, with the news of greater \textit{Deutschtum} placed next to news from the \textit{Kaiserreich}. If common ways of behaving and communicating were crucial to

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Isolde Rieger, \textit{Die wilhelminische Presse im Überblick 1888-1918} (Munich, 1957), p. 42.
\item Stöber, \textit{Deutsche Pressegeschichte}, p. 129.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
nationalism, newspapers were an essential, albeit contingent, conduit for the consolidation of the German nation.\footnote{303}

The crystallization of a German press after 1871 was a distinct legacy of Bismarck and the path of unification. However, the broader implications of his relationship to the press have remained elusive to scholars of the Kaisercshreich. Proponents of a German Sonderweg have often linked the German press to both the dynamism of economic modernization and the retrograde social dominance of traditional elites. Many historians of Bismarck have stressed the manipulative nature of his personality and style of politics, ascribing to him an almost omniscient ability to manufacture crisis in foreign affairs for domestic purposes.\footnote{304} By contrast, historians of the press often underline the contingent nature of his success and note the many failures he experienced in trying to manipulate the public sphere.\footnote{305} If one takes a comparative view, Bismarck was also not alone in trying to influence the press, nor were his methods particularly insidious or authoritarian. Napoleon III and the republican governments after him intervened directly in the French press, and most Parisian newspapers were little more than semi-official organs dependent on the state. Few French papers relied on advertising for revenue, and French journalists were notoriously corrupt.\footnote{306} Bismarck’s inspiration for the Provinzial-Correspondenz came from newspaper networks in England, and British journalists were agents of British

\footnotetext{303}{Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 6-7.}
\footnotetext{305}{Eberhard Naujoks, "Die offiziöse Presse und die Gesellschaft 1848-1900" Presse und Geschichte (1977): 157-170.}
\footnotetext{306}{See Zeldin, France 1848-1945, Vol. 2, 511-528; Requate, Journalismus als Beruf, 98-105;}
imperial interests in every corner of the world.\textsuperscript{307} Austrian influence over the press was far more intense and wide-ranging than Prussia’s.\textsuperscript{308}

While reluctant to yield to liberals in politics, Bismarck did not hesitate to use liberal papers as instruments of mass mobilization. He relied on liberal enthusiasm for unification, and the reports of military success published in every broadsheet in central Europe were more effective than any program of government propaganda. After 1871 liberal politicians helped Bismarck build the institutions of the Reich, but liberal papers remained a critical constituency that followed his every move. Liberals continued being liberals, no matter how much Bismarck tugged at the heartstrings of nationalists, especially in the cities, where news circulated faster than in towns and villages. The locus of the conflict was the constitution and the limits of popular sovereignty. Bismarck’s attack on the freedom of the press in 1878, when he banned socialism and “refounded” the Reich, was a rearguard action that had come at the tail end of the liberal purges from the Prussian bureaucracy in the 1870s.\textsuperscript{309} Liberal papers could be harassed in the opening decades of the Reich, but they were not hindered from bringing important news to light, nor was there a return to outright censorship. After the National Liberals went along with Bismarck’s ban in 1878 and grew increasingly reactionary, public criticism of politicians by traditional liberal papers exploded and left-liberal parties surged in the 1880s.\textsuperscript{310} As

\textsuperscript{307} GStA PK I. HA Rep. 77 Ministerium des Innern, Tit. 53 Nr. 35 Bd. 2, Bl. 66, Preußischer Botschafter an PrMinPräsid der Schreiben vom 4.1.1863.
\textsuperscript{308} Moran, \textit{A Century of Words}, 121-146.
\textsuperscript{310} Ibid.
early as 1881, Bismarck grew so desperate after the Reichstag elections that he agreed to the establishment of the *Neueste Mittheilungen*, a semi-official paper financed by the Prussian Ministry of Interior, to rally conservative forces.\(^{311}\) It was a big and expensive paper, replacing the *Provinzial-Correspondenz* in 1884. However, it failed to attract readers. The elaborate financial structure, which the Interior Ministry devised in order to keep its stake in the paper hidden, fed rumors of a massive government system to control the press, and a series of scandals surrounding Bismarck’s slush fund or *Welfenfonds* became daily news in the autumn of 1889.\(^{312}\)

Bismarck’s reach in the press was vastly overstated during his lifetime, and Westphalen’s warning in 1844 about the dangers of the state over-reaching proved prescient. Because of the long tradition of censorship and cooptation, the German press was more alive to the very possibility of state manipulation than anywhere else in Europe. Rival newspapers often accused each other of being in the back pocket of state officials in their battles over readers, which has led many historians to see fire where there was only smoke. The German press was not insufficiently independent, nor were journalists above taking bribes or working with government officials. The peculiarity of the German press after unification had more to do with the conduct and style of Bismarck than the state he had helped create. Most German newspapers remained committed to provisioning good,


reliable information, while the state tried its best to propagate interpretations of the news that suited its own purposes.
Chapter 3

The Globalization of News and the Political Economy of German Diplomacy in the

Ottoman Empire

With the influence that public opinion in many countries is having on international politics, fighting antagonistic press intrigues should be viewed as a type of national defense.

--Bernhard von Bülow, 15 November 1905

We push global traffic along narrow mental rails.

--Karl Kraus, Die Fackel 261-2:1, October 1908

Bismarck was not only central to the liberalization of the German press during unification but also left his mark on the interactions between journalists and diplomats. If liberal papers were at the vanguard of national unity by virtue of their reputations, access to information, and educated readers, they were also self-conscious about their role as arbiters of international news. Reporting from abroad was where individual self-interest and nationalism collided, as liberal newspapers wrote the news but sought to remain on good terms with officialdom. As news reporting became embedded in an international system of competing telegraph networks dominated by nation-states, foreign correspondents from German newspapers became key players in places like the Ottoman Empire, where a handful of foreign correspondents controlled coverage. The relationship between officials and journalists was also complicated by the fact that officials as often

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313PA AA R1201 Bülow to William II.
314 (Orig.) “Wir treiben einen Weltverkehr auf schmalspurigen Gehirnbahnen.”
sought information from journalists as the other way around. Otto Hammann’s public relations apparatus for the German government at the turn of the century helped the Foreign Office dampen negative publicity, but it did not change the fundamental interdependence between journalists and officials.

**Telegraphic Fetters**

Bismarck relied not only on liberal newspapers to help unify Germany but also the networks of information-sharing that buttressed international trade and capitalist development. One of his most famous interventions in the public sphere was his abridgement of King William’s exchange with the French diplomat, Vincent Benedetti, at Ems in 1870 and its publication in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*. Although Bismarck had been using the paper for years to leak information to the public, his calculation relied on the institutions of international news in order to succeed. Bismarck knew that the French wire service, the *Agence Havas*, would survey the German press and reprint the redacted dispatch in France, where it would antagonize Napoleon III.\(^{315}\) The dispatch—originating in Ems, published in Berlin, and read in Paris—underscored the position of the telegraph agencies in the web of information-gathering and news dissemination that had become crucial to the modern press. Technological innovations like the telegraph were as important as declining publishing costs to the proliferation of written communication. Bismarck was well versed in the business of the telegraph agencies, having helped shape Prussian influence over the wire-services since the 1860s.

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In 1900, Herman Diez, the co-director of the Continental-Telegraphien-Compaigne, pointed to the all-encompassing influence that telegraphic communications had on every sphere of modern life. From statecraft to trade and industry, the speed and accuracy of information from around the world was not only a convenience, but also a necessary part of any successful venture. The speed of the news agency was the “indispensable tool and the beginning of a new worldview and philosophical modus that extends beyond the Heimat to the entire world[...]thereby creating a medium for the extension of our world, which is at the root of international politics, the world economy, and the cosmopolitan bourgeoisie”.316

The company for which Diez worked was better known under its previous name, Wolff’s Telegraphisches Bureau (WTB), whose namesake, Bernhard Wolff had founded it in the 1850s. Wolff’s biography resembled that of the other great telegraph-agency founders, Ernst Reuters and Charles-Louis Havas. All three started out as book-traders, who worked for various newspapers before founding companies that traded in news from abroad. Havas established the first agency in the 1830s in Paris. Both Reuters and Wolff worked for the Agence Havas in the 1840s, when the emergence of electrical telegraphy transformed the company from an office that had provided translations of articles from foreign newspapers to a critical juncture from which foreign wire reports were sold to the French press. Modeled on Havas, Wolff’s service began with the idea of providing Berlin with wire reports after a cable connection had been established with Aachen. Reuters

established his own service in the Rhineland and Hanover, before moving to London, where he built a telegraph and news agency that was soon more powerful than Wolff’s.\textsuperscript{317}

By the late 1860s, Bismarck realized the value of maintaining the independence of the agency, after Havas and Reuters had attempted takeovers. Although the initiative originally came from the WTB, many leaders, including Bismarck, saw that Prussia could not be dependent on other powers for its news. In 1869 the WTB was transformed into a limited partnership (\textit{Kommanditgesellschaft auf Aktien}) with the Prussian government as a majority stakeholder. Although the contact between the government was indirect and mediated by agents such as Gerson Bleichröder, the WTB received over 300,000 Thalers in interest-free loans from the state.\textsuperscript{318} Telegrams from the WTB with political content were given priority on the state telegraph networks, and WTB’s services were sold to government offices at a reduced price. The WTB also promised to share all political news with the Prussian ministries and to give special attention to increasing the “publicity” (\textit{Publicität}) of news that the Prussian government deemed important. All political telegrams also had to receive the approval of Prussian censors before being sold to other newspapers.\textsuperscript{319}

Historians have seen this close cooperation between the Prussian state and the WTB as proof of the manipulative relationship between the German press and a semi-

authoritarian state—a Sonderweg narrative in which Bismarck steered public opinion. Elsewhere, however, state influence was similar. In Paris the editors of the Agence Havas were close to the Quai d’Orsay, and all foreign-news telegrams published by Havas needed the approval of a censor in the French foreign ministry. By 1877 the Viennese wire-service, Politischer Korrespondenz, was practically run by the Austrian ministry for trade and finance. Even Reuters stood in direct contact with British agencies and diplomats abroad, and the ethos of its employees was similar to that of other British institutions of empire. The telegraph agencies in all the major European capitals were semi-official monopolies heavily influenced by their respective states.

The monopoly status of the telegraph agencies was crucial to the exchange of global cable traffic, fostering competition and cooperation as well as resentment. A year after Wolff’s agency had been secured by the state in 1869, it signed a cartel agreement with Havas and Reuters that divided the world news market into spheres of influence. All three agreed to exclusivity arrangements, whereby each agency had the right to publish the others’ news reports in its domestic market, paying only the telegraph fees. In practice, the WTB published Havas and Reuters news reports in Germany, while Havas and Reuters were dependent on the WTB for news from Germany. This arrangement put distinct geographical limits on each agency’s reach. The WTB held the monopoly over wire reports from Germany, Scandinavia, St. Petersburg, and Moscow, while Reuters was

321 PA AA R 37, Beckmann to Hohenlohe, 16 March 1877 (Paris).
322 PA AA R 37, Stolberg to Bülow, 2 April 1877 (Vienna).
granted exclusive rights to South Africa, China, Japan, and both the British and the Dutch colonies. Havas maintained exclusive access to France and its colonies, as well as to the Mediterranean countries Spain, Portugal, and Italy. Only in Belgium and the Ottoman Empire (including Egypt) did Havas and Reuters share access rights, but in Athens and Constantinople, Havas was the only agency to establish a permanent office. Switzerland and the Austro-Hungarian Empire were the only regions in which all three agencies competed for news.\textsuperscript{324}

Although these agreements were looked upon negatively by Prussian authorities, they remained relatively unchanged until 1908.\textsuperscript{325} It proved to be a durable and advantageous system for the WTB, although it limited the German government’s ability to influence the news outside Mitteleuropa. Bismarck failed to change the agreements in 1882 and 1887, when he tried to align the news agencies of Italy and Austria to the political logic of the Triple Alliance.\textsuperscript{326} The Chancellor was especially keen to break the telegraph monopoly of Havas and Reuters in the Ottoman Empire, which had become a flashpoint for international crises. With Havas solely responsible for sending reports from Athens and Constantinople, Bismarck complained, France dominated public opinion about the Orient with its pronounced anti-German bias. Yet his plans met resistance from both the WTB and powerful shareholders such as Gerson Bleichröder. A re-alignment would have to include a renegotiation of the entire monopoly framework, and it was deemed far too costly for the promised benefits, as Reuters insisted on concessions in the continental

\textsuperscript{324}PA AA R 533, \textit{Europa Generalia 86} contains a complete list of the defined areas. The contract from January 1870 can be found in R 37 Europa Generalia 1a 33, Bd. 1.
\textsuperscript{325}BAB-L, NL Hammann, N2106/62, Berlin, November 1913.
\textsuperscript{326}PA AA R 532-535, \textit{Europe Generalia 86}
news market. The German embassy in Constantinople also was not allowed to use its own telegraph system, which had been installed in 1881, to send wire reports directly to the WTB in Berlin. In the late 1880s, Austrian and German officials discussed establishing a “Correspondence Orientale”, but only in 1890 was the monopoly over the Ottoman lands loosened, when the Viennese Politische Korrespondenz established an office in Constantinople after Reuters dropped its insistence on concessions in Europe. But the Korrespondenz only dealt with commercial and economic news from the Balkan states, and Havas continued its monopoly over political news in Constantinople.

In order to circumvent the telegraph monopoly, most original news from the Ottoman Empire that reached Germany came from newspapers with foreign correspondents. The wire reports of Havas had long dominated German news coverage of the Ottoman territories, with the WTB receiving reports from Paris and then selling them to German newspapers. Local editors could criticize the reports as propaganda or warn readers about the tentativeness of the information, but the quest for speed meant that German newspapers invariably used Havas wire reports when the demand for the latest update ran high. Only those papers with the resources to fund foreign correspondents could circumvent the wire services and offer their own coverage of unfolding events. Using either the German or Austrian postal system in Constantinople, letters traveled by

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327 PA AA R 533, Bismarck to State Secretary, 12 November 1883, and afterwards.
329 When a paper wanted to call a report into question, it underscored that it was from Havas, otherwise it was printed as a report from the WTB.
steamship to Italy and arrived in Berlin via courier. Couriers also sent letters up the Danube to Vienna, where their content could be telegphoned to editors in Berlin, Frankfurt, Cologne, or Munich.\textsuperscript{330} The German embassy in Constantinople had little control over what these journalists reported, for the postal system was privately run and the Ottomans only instituted a registration protocol for foreign correspondents during the Balkan Wars.\textsuperscript{331} Beyond the wire reports, the German public’s view of the Empire turned on what foreign correspondents and their editors thought was newsworthy. As the German ambassador to London, Paul Wolff-Metternich zur Gracht, remarked in 1905 “every good paper wants to have as many things ‘from their special correspondent’ as possible”.\textsuperscript{332}

The potential for violence in the Ottoman lands meant that public attention quickly turned toward the region in times of upheaval. During the Great Eastern Crisis (1875-1879), the Kölnische Zeitung was the sole paper that sent a journalist to report from the zones of conflict in 1876. When the Russo-Turkish War began in 1877, the Vossische Zeitung and the Berliner Tageblatt also sent special correspondents. The Tageblatt began keeping permanent correspondents in the region in the early 1880s; its journalists reported from places like Athens, Bucharest, and Constantinople and competed with the Kölnische Zeitung, which had maintained a permanent correspondents in those cities since the early 1870s. When war broke out in 1885 between Serbia and Bulgaria, both the Tageblatt and the Kölnische Zeitung had correspondents reporting from Sofia within the week. The protracted crisis that ensued and the German fascination with Alexander von Battenberg

\textsuperscript{330}PA AA Botschaft Konstantinopel [hereafter BotKon] 266, “Postamt”
\textsuperscript{331}PA AA R 14163-64, BotKon 73.
\textsuperscript{332}PA AA R 1486 Wolff-Metternich to State Secretary (Berlin) 4 November 1905.
meant that original news from the Ottoman territories was a tangible asset to editors. The number of papers with correspondents on the ground soared. By 1893 the German ambassador at Constantinople, Prince von Radolin, added the *Berliner Lokal Anzeiger*, *Müchener Neueste Nachrichten*, and the *Schlesische Zeitung* to the list of those German papers with permanent correspondents in the Ottoman Empire. Many more newspapers used the same pool of journalists for original, ad hoc coverage from the Ottoman lands. In 1900 the *Vorwärts* began using the Orientalist scholar Friedrich Schrader, who reported regularly from the Ottoman capital. In 1908-1909, at least ten German papers sent their own correspondents to cover the Young Turk revolution and the Bosnian annexation crisis. During the first Balkan War in 1912, twenty-three newspapers had requested clearances from the Foreign Office to send correspondents to report from the battlegrounds of Rumelia and Western Thrace.

As the web of international trade and commerce grew denser, so too did reporting on international politics. After unification, the young German nation developed an insatiable desire for information beyond its borders and the telegraphic fetters of the wire monopolies. News from the Ottoman Empire became a fixture on the front pages and in the feuilletons of German newspapers, while the common practice of citing long passages from other papers extended the reach of original news coverage. The increase in correspondents who reported from the Ottoman lands also led to an explosion of travel 

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333 PA AA R 1733 Radolin to Berlin, 7 June 1893.  
335 PA AA BotKon 73; R 14271-14272.
literature and essays on the contemporary politics of the Empire.\textsuperscript{336} Although the German public sphere was becoming more sensationalist with the spread of the \textit{Boulevardpresse} and illustrated newspapers at the turn of the century, these newcomers maintained and expanded interest in the Ottoman Empire, which offered an emporium of horrors to pique the curiosity of readers.\textsuperscript{337}

\textbf{Ottoman Diplomacy and the Public Sphere}

The Ottomans had also begun to take an interest in European public opinion and how they were viewed by their neighbors. In 1821 the government established the Translation Bureau (Tercüme Odası), which was charged with translating articles about the Ottoman Empire from the most important European newspapers. Serving as the basis for the diplomatic service of the late Empire, the Bureau culled stacks of gazettes from Paris, London, and Frankfurt for anything on the Ottoman domains day after day.\textsuperscript{338} After having narrowly escaped occupation by the Russians in 1829, Sultan Mahmut II focused more and more resources on the diplomatic services, seeing that his armies had failed to protect the state. He renamed the Translation Bureau in 1834, creating the Ottoman Foreign Ministry and diplomatic institutions responsible for stationing permanent representatives abroad. His envoys sent back clippings and even entire newspapers to

\textsuperscript{336} Malte Fuhrmann, “Visions of Turkey in Germany”, pp. 1-3.
\textsuperscript{337} The \textit{Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung} regularly ran images of violence from Macedonia starting in 1902. See Chapter 6.
Constantinople, and their successors continued on the practice well into the twentieth century.  

The Ottomans also began to orient themselves more towards Europe by stressing the importance of French as opposed to the historically more prominent diplomatic languages of Arabic and Persian. The expansion of the diplomatic service did not incorporate new social groups from Ottoman society; rather, Ottoman diplomats and high officials continued to come from traditional elite backgrounds, mostly from the bureaucracy as well as the wealthy Greek families of Constantinople, who had been bankers and courtiers to the Sultan for centuries. By the 1850s, French became the dominant language at the foreign ministry, and education in a French lycée and experience in European capitals became the *sine qua non* for Ottoman high officials.  

Ottoman statesmen also founded their own official newspapers and journals in both Ottoman Turkish and French. One of the earliest, *Moniteur Ottoman*, was founded in 1830 by the state and run by a Frenchman, Alexandre Blacque, who had previously headed an anti-Russian French paper in Smyrna in the 1820s. The same problems that plagued official papers in Europe also held true in Constantinople, where the official press was supported by government subscriptions but hardly read beyond official circles. More popular were the private newspapers that sprouted up in major cities like Smyrna, Salonica, and Constantinople in the 1840s. Most were English and French-language newspapers, but Arabic and Ottoman Turkish language papers grew as well—all of which

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received subsidies from the Porte once they became popular. Papers like *Journal de Constantinople, La Turquie*, and the *Levant Herald* were at various times considered semi-official by foreigners and eagerly read by European journalists as barometers of Ottoman public opinion, but the list of subsidized papers was long and continued to grow into the 1870s.\(^{341}\)

Although the Ottoman Press Bureau was established in 1862 to license, censor, and monitor the local press, its officials spent much of their time exhorting local papers to exercise moderation rather than censoring or banning them outright. Roderic Davison has suggested that the Porte’s press policy in the 1850s and 60s was fairly liberal as pre-publication censorship was impractical, considering the limited reach of the urban press. An 1864 law forbade the importation of foreign papers from exiled Ottoman dissenters such as the New Ottomans, whose opinions were often critical of the government. But despite attempts to stem the flow of illegal periodicals into the empire, oppositional papers and journals circulated regularly—albeit surreptitiously—throughout the major Ottoman cities.\(^{342}\)

The Porte’s activities also took aim at the European press abroad, and the Ottomans grew sensitive to bad publicity in European newspapers. Like many other Great Powers, Ottoman diplomats serving in the capital cities paid journalists to write sympathetic articles about the empire.\(^{343}\) More often they planted articles written themselves in major newspapers or soft-pedaled unflattering news stories. Aristarchi Bey,

\(^{341}\) Davison, “The Press Bureau and Ottoman Newspapers 1820-1878”, p. 36; See also PA AA R 13165 Hatzfeldt to Berlin 10 September 1880.

\(^{342}\) Ibid.

\(^{343}\) PA AA R 1211 Metternich to Schön, 1905.
the chief Ottoman diplomat in Berlin in the 1870s, was notorious for inviting local journalists to dinner during which he would give his own version of what was happening in the Empire. As a Greek Christian he was a poster-child for confessional harmony and used his religious affiliation to ingratiate himself among journalists in Berlin. The wire services were the easiest targets for Ottoman diplomats. Reuters, Havas, and the WTB depended on the quantity of news stories as much as they did on quality. Cemil Pasha, the London ambassador in the 1870s did not even pay Reuters to print his news items—the company was eager for as many news items about the empire it could get from an official source, even if the stories were tendentious or false.

**Floods and Rainmakers: The Primacy of Information**

In this world of semi-official wire services, enterprising journalists, and dissembling ambassadors, German officials needed reliable information to conduct diplomacy. Amid the flood of telegrams, news reports, and rumors that circulated during times of crisis, having steady and accurate information was a real instrument of power. Although Great Power diplomacy in the nineteenth century was often limited to the social milieu of aristocratic elites, the growing power of public opinion and the prominence of international news reporting brought diplomats into close contact with journalists. In contrast to the domestic sphere, where German officials primarily tried to censor, manipulate, and provide their own information about the conduct of government to the reading public, in the international sphere, officials were also required to be information

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344 [PA AA R 31 Werther to Bülow 14 October 1875; R 12416, Note from Werther to Bülow 14 September 1876; R 12417 Bülow to Werther 5 December 1876]

gatherers for the state. The challenge of finding reliable information was particularly acute in the Ottoman capital, where cultures, religions, and the Great Powers collided.

Bismarck cast a long shadow over the Foreign Office and the relationship between the German press and the diplomatic corps. Although Bismarck had fostered the development of the liberal press, he kept a tight rein on diplomatic interventions in the public sphere. Recognizing after 1871 that the new Reich was producing resentment even as he affirmed Germany’s position as a sated power, Bismarck grew weary of public opinion and at times found himself hostage to its effervescence and unpredictability. The increased ideological difference among states that came with the emergence of French revanchism, Pan-Slavism, Pan-Germanism, irredentism, and nationalist xenophobia changed the calculus of diplomacy and complicated the conditions for consensus.346 News coverage and the desire for sensation amplified the primacy of domestic political forces, as the interlocking network of wire agencies enabled newspapers to provide fast and often sensationalist depictions of political life from other countries.347

Bismarck’s reliance on personal interventions into the public sphere required his enormous energy to determine when and where to engage the journalists. Attempts to break this mold in the 1870s did not come to fruition. When Bismarck hired Ludwig Ägidi to be his press operative at the Foreign Office in 1871, Ägidi brought with him an ambitious plan that included not only surveillance but maintaining regular contact with

journalists from the liberal press. Following the Military Budget Bill in the autumn of 1871, Bismarck refused contact with liberal papers and thought that their news coverage of parliament was deepening the rift within the National Liberals. Nevertheless, Ägidi maintained strong ties to liberal journalists like the Kölnische Zeitung’s editor and Berlin correspondent, Heinrich Kruse, and disseminated information through him. Yet Kruse used information from Ägidi selectively, and Ägidi faced increasing pressure to break off contact with liberal papers after it became apparent that his contacts were using information in interests of their papers, rather than the Foreign Office. When Ägidi was fired in 1876, liberal papers like the Kölnische Zeitung were marginalized and lost all contact to Bismarck’s government.

Bismarck saw inherent dangers in bureaucratic press techniques like Ägidi’s, which stressed constant contact with a selected group of journalists. He was also chastened by Germany’s new position within Europe. The “War-in-Sight Crisis” in the summer of 1875 had demonstrated the dangers of both renewed war-baiting and outsourcing his interventions to underlings. His plan to test the viability of a preventive war against France led him to intervene in both the Parisian and the Berlin press. The eagerness of his Parisian operative, Rudolf Lindau, resulted in a heavy-handed series of articles that every informed observer linked to Bismarck. Whereas he had benefited from the attention that his interventions had generated during the wars of unification, he began

350 Requate, Journalismus als Beruf, pp.281-287; HHID NL Kruse
to see that public attention could do more harm than good. The inherent ambiguity of indirect influence proved difficult to diffuse, for he could neither deny nor confirm something he did not officially say.\textsuperscript{351} After Ägidi’s departure, “press work” in the Foreign Office was limited to surveillance, with all interventions left to Bismarck himself.\textsuperscript{352} Even after he agreed to the let the Minister of Interior manage the Neueste Mittheilungen in 1881, Bismarck killed Minister Robert von Puttkamer’s attempts to apportion money to the Literary Office for foreign policy purposes.\textsuperscript{353}

This personalized regime of press relations proved to be less than desirable in times of diplomatic crisis, when states were eager to collect fresh information from zones of conflict. When the Great Eastern Crisis began in 1875, the German Foreign Office could barely manage the onslaught of information that diplomats and other officials were sending Bernhard Ernst von Bülow, the state secretary in charge of the political section in Berlin. Uprisings in the Ottoman provinces of Herzegovina, and later in Bosnia and Bulgaria, destabilized the Balkans, and the violent suppression by Ottoman forces threatened to bring war among the Great Powers. A year prior to the Crisis, the German consulate in Constantinople had been raised to the status of an embassy, and with a new building under construction, the German ambassador, Karl von Werther, was


\textsuperscript{353} PA AA R 29 Dr. Kayser to State Secretary (Hatzfeldt-Wildenburg) 2 December 1882.
overwhelmed with administrative duties and a lack of staff.\textsuperscript{354} The embassy served as the contact point for reports from all consulates in the Ottoman territories as well as from Greece. In normal times, the German ambassador could sort, amalgamate, and synthesize the most important information into his own embassy reports, but the crisis required the speedy transmission of the latest developments, and Werther sent on a flood of reports from Athens, Bucharest, Ruse, Sarajevo, and Salonica to Berlin. The Foreign Office, a cramped building in the Wilhelmstrasse that had served as the Prussian foreign ministry for the last century, did not have a secure telegraph connection in the 1870s, but relied on the Prussian military post for the delivery of embassy letters. While this system allowed reports from London or Paris to arrive in Berlin within two days, letters from Constantinople could, at this juncture, take up to two weeks. Compounding the delay was Bismarck’s periodic illness in 1876, which left him immobile at his residence in Varzin, so communications with Bülow went through his son Herbert.\textsuperscript{355}

These arrangements caused confusion among Germany’s representatives in the Ottoman Empire. Bülow remarked after the Russo-Turkish War had ended in 1878 that the Foreign Office needed a better system of surveillance. In addition to official diplomatic correspondence, Bülow had to gauge reports flowing into Berlin from German military officers, who were seconded to the Russian army as observers or had chosen to fight in Bulgaria as volunteers. German soldiers were active in the Ottoman army as well and wrote reports that German officials forwarded to Berlin. In addition to the large

number of reports from sources in the field, coverage by the press had made the tasks of
German diplomacy even tougher. Both Ottoman and Russian diplomats surveyed German
newspapers for signs of policy shifts or changes in German public opinion. Bülow
concluded that German interests were not served by letting rumors from the press distort
or inflect the official position of the German government. Nor should tentative newspaper
reports from the field be taken out of context and influence public opinion when such
information was not favorable to German interests. He suggested instituting a coordinated
system to observe the German press and manage public opinion inside the Foreign Office.
But he died in 1879 before anything came of his project.356

Bülow’s critique of the Foreign Office during the Crisis took aim at the liberal
papers that had been reporting from the Ottoman Empire. Although Bismarck was
ambivalent about the fate of the Ottomans, he was at pains to appease Russia after German
unification and to remain on favorable terms with the Czar. While the Vossische Zeitung
came to the aid of Bismarck and his desire for Russian-friendly publicity, war
correspondents from the Kölnische Zeitung and the Berliner Tageblatt were critical of the
Russian war effort and sent original reports to Germany that were sympathetic to the
Ottomans. After the Berlin Congress of 1878, publications by liberal war correspondents
and others, who had traveled to the region, tapped into the fear of Slavic dominance of the

356PA AA R 13160 Bülow “Unser Nachrichtenwesen” 1878 (undated); Herman von Petersdorff, “Bernhard
350–355.
Balkans, which the Russian victory over the Ottomans had awoken.\textsuperscript{357} Neither Bismarck nor Bülow welcomed the weight that public opinion was coming to play in the delicate balancing act between Austrian and Russian interests in the Balkans.\textsuperscript{358} To add insult to injury, the Literary Office, not the Foreign Office, had arranged for the \textit{Vossische Zeitung}’s switch to pro-Russian coverage by bribing its foreign correspondent.\textsuperscript{359}

By the early 1880s, the role of military expertise and the tendency of the Prussian army to meddle in high politics posed additional problems. The military plenipotentiary in St. Petersburg and Prussian military attachés in other capitals had become backchannels to the General Staff, which competed with Bismarck and his Foreign Office for information and influence. The statements of Helmut von Moltke about German military preparedness during the War-in-Sight Crisis angered Bismarck and were evoked anytime military men waded too deep into political issues Bismarck thought best left to diplomats.\textsuperscript{360} General Alfred von Waldersee, chief of the General Staff, who had gained direct access to the Kaiser in 1883, schemed to undermine Bismarck’s authority and became one of his biggest rivals within the government.\textsuperscript{361} In the same year, Colmar von der Goltz was sent to Constantinople to reform the Ottoman army and became an advocate for Waldersee.\textsuperscript{362}

Mistrustful of the Prussian military in places like Constantinople,

\textsuperscript{358}Erich Eyck, \textit{Bismarck and the German Empire} (London: Allen and Unwin, 1950), 179-181.
\textsuperscript{359}GStA PK I.HA 77 A Lit Buro Nr. 117.
\textsuperscript{360}PA AA R 13428 Rantzau to Hatzfeldt 1 December 1883.
\textsuperscript{362}Scherer, \textit{Adler und Halbmond}, pp. 189-209.
journalists who lived abroad and wrote for German newspapers became part of 
Bismarck’s strategy to check the power of the military as well as public opinion. Not only 
did foreign correspondents report on international affairs, but they could also spy on the 
military attachés stationed at German embassies. When Kruse left the Kölnische Zeitung 
in 1884, the new Berlin correspondent, Franz Fischer, joined Bismarck’s inner circle.363 
Fischer gave Bismarck access to the Kölnische Zeitung’s international network of 
journalists, and both men met regularly to exchange information. Stationed in all the major 
capitals, correspondents for the paper often had years of experience observing high 
politics. These journalists thereby trailed military officers, either sending reports to the 
editors of the Kölnische Zeitung or maintaining direct contact with the diplomatic corps. 
Journalists were especially important in St. Petersburg and Constantinople, where they 
counterbalanced the Prussian military officers, who enjoyed special status as reformers or 
plenipotentiaries.364 

The chancellor also began using the Kölnische Zeitung as a way of disseminating 
his own views, and by the late 1880s, many observers speculated that the old liberal paper 
on the Rhine had replaced the Norddeutsche Allgemeine as Bismarck’s semi-official paper 
of choice. Yet the relationship between Fischer and Bismarck was different. In contrast to 
the Norddeutsche Allgemeine, where the editors slapped a “head and tail” (Kopf und 
Schwanz) on articles written by the government, the Kölnische Zeitung insisted on 

363 Requate, Journalismus als Beruf, 303; Georg Potschka “Köl nische Zeitung (1802-1945)” in Fischer, Deutsche Zeitungen, 145-158
364 These reports often went directly to the State Secretary Hatzfeldt and Herbert von Bismarck. PA AA R 29 Darmhauer to State Secretary (Hatzfeldt) 29 June 1884; Grosser to State Secretary (Hatzfeldt) 12 September 1884, and after. See also PA AA R 30-32. Various letters from Darmhauer and Grosser to Herbert von Bismarck (1885-87).
reproducing Bismarck’s words as it wished. By 1887 the paper had published so many of Bismarck’s statements this way that the owner (and part-time journalist) of the Kölnische Zeitung, August Neven-Dumont, asked ironically whether Bismarck was paying the normal rate for front-page advertising.\(^{365}\) Bismarck’s cachet as a source was important to the paper’s standing and its desire to publish important information first. Reading the latest from the chancellor and other high officials was reason enough for following the paper. It added to their reputation as a reliable source of important news.

While Bismarck and Fischer developed a close relationship, this did not turn the Kölnische Zeitung into a semi-official paper. In the 1880s, the chancellor began to re-engage journalists from a wider spectrum of liberal papers, and cooperation did not entail sycophantic support. While the newspaper was largely supportive of Bismarck’s foreign policy in the 1880s, it criticized his domestic policies, excoriating his trade policy and social insurance legislation, and remained lukewarm about German colonialism.\(^{366}\) The paper profited from the attention of having Bismarck as a source, but the Kölnische Zeitung had already built a reputation and solid financial foundation with its investigative reporting. By virtue of his position as an intelligence gatherer, Fischer gained unprecedented leverage over the Iron Chancellor and the diplomatic corps. In addition to exchanging information with diplomats in situ, journalists abroad sent information directly to the Berlin bureau of the Kölnische Zeitung, leaving Fischer to determine what information to disclose to Bismarck. At the same time, Bismarck and diplomats at the

\(^{365}\) Hink, *Bismarcks Pressepolitik*, p. 98.

embassies revealed affairs of state to correspondents, giving the *Kölnische Zeitung* an advantage in the provision of news. Correspondents, however, had the last say over how they would publicize information and tensions periodically arose. In 1887 during the Bulgarian crisis, when Bismarck’s manipulative energies in the press were running high, the paper was outright hostile to Bismarck’s campaign to discredit Alexander von Battenberg. Fischer maintained close relations with Bismarck but refused to compromise what he and the editors in Cologne thought was newsworthy.

**Media and the Masses: Managing the Public Sphere**

After Bismarck’s fall in 1890, relations between the press and the government intensified as foreign policy began to mobilize interest groups at home. While Bismarck had tried to limit the influence of domestic political forces on foreign policy, leaders in the Wilhelmine era embraced them. Contact between officials and reporters from a variety of newspapers flourished under the new Kaiser. William II lifted the ban on the German socialist party as well as its newspapers, and the new orientation in foreign policy began to have a deeper domestic impact, as policy makers courted public opinion and broader domestic constituencies for their initiatives. Thus the linkages between domestic and foreign politics became more important in the Wilhelmine era. In the immediate years after Bismarck, bureaucratic in-fighting was carried out in the press, and state officials began to engage the public sphere with a more coherent strategy of influence.

Leo von Caprivi’s “New Course” was emblematic of the growing importance of domestic politics in foreign affairs. By trying to simplify Germany’s contorted alliance

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367 PA AA R 13172 Radolin to Berlin 21 October 1884; PA AA R 13178 Radolin to Berlin 14 January 1885.

368 Hink, *Bismarcks Pressepolitik in der bulgarischen Krise*, pp. 94-128.
system and strengthen the country’s industrial base with a fresh round of trade agreements, the new chancellor quickly became embroiled in public battles with interest groups threatened by the shift in policy. Colonial enthusiasts attacked the Anglo-German Treaty of 1890 because it appeared to abandon German colonial claims to much of eastern Africa and unleashed a storm of nationalist protest.\textsuperscript{369} Conservative agrarians agitated against the trade treaties, which dismantled protective tariffs and threatened the interest of landed Junkers as well as smaller land-holders.\textsuperscript{370} Bismarck, who was bitter about his forced resignation and worried about German isolation, quickly began to attack the Caprivi government in the press. By strengthening economic ties within the Triple Alliance through trade treaties, professing support for Austria, and decoupling the link with Russia through the lapsing of the Re-Insurance Treaty, Bismarck saw his system of diplomacy unraveling. He waged a relentless public campaign against the young Kaiser’s government, even acquiescing to a grassroots movement for his election to the Reichstag as a National Liberal.\textsuperscript{371}

While Caprivi tried to break with Bismarck’s “personalized” press policy, cutting contact with most major newspapers during his first year in office, he went on the offensive in 1892, hiring Otto Hammann and August Keim—both former journalists—to manage the campaign for a new Army Bill after Russia and France were poised to form an

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{369} Hans Peter Ulman, \textit{Das Deutsche Kaiserreich} (Frankfurt, 1995), pp. 3-5.
\textsuperscript{370} Puhle, \textit{Der Bund der Landwirte}, passim.
\end{footnotesize}
alliance.\textsuperscript{372} Not only had Caprivi taken a page out of Bismarck’s playbook by calling for early elections and campaigning on national security, but he also began asserting more control in response to the rivalries and fissures within the diplomatic corps that had developed during Bismarck’s final years. In anticipation of an era without the Iron Chancellor, diplomats like Friedrich von Holstein and Alfred von Kiderlen-Waechter had established their own connections to the press and periodically leaked information.\textsuperscript{373} Caprivi sought to match the growth of leaks by cultivating his own contacts with the press. Hammann began coordinating press relations in both the Foreign Office and the Chancellor’s Office, and continued to do so for Chlodowig zu Hohenlohe, Caprivi’s successor in 1894.\textsuperscript{374} By the 1890s, most Prussian ministries, even the most conservative elements of the Ministry of Agriculture, had developed professional—if not always friendly—relationships with liberal and left-liberal papers.\textsuperscript{375}

The government not only tried to court public opinion by reaching out to liberal journalists but also took steps to plug leaks from within. Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein, then state secretary for political affairs in the Foreign Office, was charged with rooting out contact between individual officials and journalists.\textsuperscript{376} The \textit{Kladderadatsch} had lampooned the bureaucratic anarchy of the Caprivi government in a widely read series of caricatures that featured government figures playing skat and intriguing against one

\textsuperscript{372}August Keim, \textit{Erörbtes und Erstrebtes. Lebenserinnerungen von Generalleutnant Keim} (Hannover, 1925), pp. 49-77.


\textsuperscript{374}Hammann, \textit{Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkriegs. Erinnerungen aus den Jahren 1897-1900} (Berlin, 1918), pp. 45-46.


\textsuperscript{376}PA AA R 13436 Marschall to Caprivi 8 November 1893. Cf. Stöber, \textit{Pressepolitik als Notwendigkeit}, 34.
another. More embarrassments followed, and Marschall, a committed supporter of the New Course, became the public face of the Foreign Office’s difficulties in managing press leaks. He sought, for example, to quell a brewing scandal by suing journalists sympathetic to Bismarck for libel in the summer of 1896, after they had intentionally misquoted a speech by Tsar Nicholas II. The trial dragged out for months and was coming to a successful resolution for the government, when Bismarck revealed the existence of the Re-Insurance Treaty in October 1896 in pages of the Hamburger Nachrichten. Mortified and confused on how to respond, the Kaiser refused to allow the government to comment beyond a small statement in the Reichsanzeiger. After the public clamor did not die down, Marschall went before the Reichstag in November. Going on the offensive in what he termed the “Flucht nach Öffentlichkeit”, Marschall wanted to bring new charges of libel in January 1897. However, he lost the support of the Kaiser, who worried about another round of trials and had Marschall sent to Constantinople later that year as the new German ambassador.377

Marschall’s demotion was a personal defeat for Chancellor Hohenlohe as well as a turning point for Hammann and the development of press relations. The new secretary for political affairs in the Foreign Office, the younger Bernhard von Bülow, agreed with Hammann that managing the image of the government was crucial to successful politics. Together they agreed upon a press strategy that stipulated regular contact with well-respected newspapers and the divulgence of sensitive, inside information in return for sympathetic coverage. By the turn of the century, a number of journalists maintained

contact to Hammann: *Berliner Tageblatt*’s Arthur Levysohn; August Stein of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*; Franz Fischer and Arthur von Huhn of the *Kölnerische Zeitung*; Ernst Francke of the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*; Heinrich Engel of the *Reichsbote*; Theodor Schiemann, a foreign affairs columnist for the *Kreuzzeitung*; the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*’s Eugen Zimmerman; Emil Fitger of the *Weser-Zeitung*; and Heinrich Mantler, director of the WTB.\(^{378}\)

When Bülow became Chancellor in 1900, Hammann’s power and purview expanded. In 1901 Bülow ordered that all communications to the press representing the imperial government had to be approved by the Foreign Office.\(^{379}\) This directive was expanded several months later after Bülow required all offices and agencies of the Reich government to submit their communications to Hammann for approval before being released.\(^{380}\) Hammann also gained immediate access to sensitive cable traffic from the German embassies around the world, which not only gave him time to design responses but also a say in how diplomatic moves should be “sold” to the German public. The head of the press section became the chief manager of Bülow’s political ambitions, subordinate to neither the Prussian Literary Office nor other officials in the Foreign Office. He had easy access to the Chancellor and, in time, the Kaiser.\(^{381}\) Reflecting on his career, Hammann summarized his strategy in the following way:

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\(^{378}\) BAB-L NL Hammann N 2106, Nr. 19 and 41.

\(^{379}\) BAB-L R 43, January 1901, Nr. 1679

\(^{380}\) BAB-L, R 43, November 1901 Nr. 1565.

\(^{381}\) Holstein complained that he was practically reichsunmittelbar, i.e. answerable to the Kaiser alone; See Heilbron, “Otto Hammann” *Deutsches biographisches Jahrbuch* 10 (1931): 99-102.
In former times it would have been sufficient to establish an official press service through regular diplomatic means, i.e. few readers, potentates, ministers, and ambassadors. In order to gain influence upon the powers that make public opinion, the present time—with the growing dependence of governments on parliaments and popular sentiments—requires a much more careful processing and observation of everything that comprises public opinion and also, therefore, a larger, more uniformly constructed apparatus.\(^{382}\)

The “apparatus” within the Foreign Office expanded under Bülow and worked with the Imperial Chancellery to survey the press and oversee responses to both domestic and international political issues. Hammann’s sole clerk in the 1890s, Ernst Esternaux, was promoted to assistant and then full consul in 1902. Friedrich Heilbron, a Berlin journalist, was hired as a second assistant in 1901, followed by Kurt Riezler of the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung several years later. Hammann and his team was not only responsible for the daily surveillance of the German and international press, with relevant clippings going to both the chancellor and the Kaiser, but they gave interviews and question and answer sessions with journalists in his office at the Wilhelmstrasse. Valentine Williams, the Berlin correspondent for The Times, recalled that journalists waited patiently in an antechamber until they were summoned by Hammann or an assistant. All callers were given an identical statement about pressing government issues but were free to ask their

\(^{382}\) BAB-L N 2106 NL Hammann, March 1914, Nr. 25.
own questions—even if they did not always receive an answer. In being the first and last official point of interaction between the Reich government and the press, Hammann became the overseer of public opinion that the elder Bülow had envisioned.

It is important to note that the network of journalists Bismarck had maintained in the last years of his chancellorship did not follow him into retirement. From his residence in Friedrichsruh, Bismarck was forced to cultivate new contacts from obscure papers like the Hamburger Nachrichten or outsiders like the critic-cum-publicist Maximilian Harden. Political correspondents in the newspaper bureaus of Berlin remained committed to the Reich ministries they had always covered, and a professional ethos developed among the journalists who reported on the machinery of government.

**Letters and Betters: Reputation, Practice, and Power**

The primacy of information has been central to recent scholarship that focuses on the professionalization of journalism during the Kaiserreich. James Retallack has linked the emergence of journalism as a profession to the decrease in partisanship of the German press in the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the century, many newspapers were political projects in which advocacy and ideology were supreme. Only gradually did journalists begin to value information and investigative journalism in their own right, developing professional organizations that policed journalistic practice and rewarded

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achievement. Thomas Nipperdey saw the organization of journalists in professional associations at the beginning of the twentieth century in much the same way. Jörg Requate’s more expansive approach has embedded the professionalization of journalism in a comparative context of state formation and economic development in Western Europe and the United States. He locates the rise of a “non-partisan” (unparteiliche) ethos among journalists at the end of the nineteenth century in the transformation of newspapers from political to economic enterprises, finding the social esteem accorded journalists in Imperial Germany to be comparatively low. Requate’s approach has yielded a much more nuanced picture of political journalism that illuminates the negotiation of power between journalists and officials in the wider social world.

If providing good information was a crucial development in the professionalization of journalism in the nineteenth century and a critical function of a “fourth estate”, why did journalists continue to enjoy such low status in Imperial Germany? The answer lies in the ubiquity of journalistic practice. Journalism had been buoyed by the growth of mass literacy as well as the emergence of university-educated and underemployed young men. Anyone who was literate could write articles. More than other professions, journalists had no set standards or expert body of knowledge with which they could monopolize their influence. The lack of barriers to entry in journalism was important and a major reason

\[387\] Requate, Journalismus als Beruf, 393-408.
why journalists lacked social standing among the distinction-crazed educated classes of Imperial Germany.\textsuperscript{388}

Newspapers developed in lockstep with economic and demographic change, and the explosive growth of industry, science, and technological innovation were pulling people into the cities and propelling more information into the public sphere, just as class consciousness and confessional identity increased with literacy.\textsuperscript{389} The dynamism of German society in the late nineteenth century was also a source of pessimism among the educated bourgeoisie and aristocratic elites, who saw traditional mores and hierarchies under siege by social mobility. These social changes were leveling tastes, values, and distinctions, while media magnates like Ullstein, Mosse, and Scherl made their fortunes on sensational and speedy information upon which the mass media relied. The proliferation of scandals at the turn of the century was the most potent symbol of the press’s power, with sensational stories based on uncovering facts that titillated readers. Both investigative journalism and the “yellow press” were an outgrowth of the processes of professionalization that prized information, even if the stories journalists told could be distorted, slanted, and incomplete. Journalists were hated as rabble-rousers, lampooned as ne’er-do-wells, but also considered essential to political life.\textsuperscript{390}

\textsuperscript{390}Retallack, “From Pariah to Professional?”, p. 156.
Some scholars have suggested that liberal journalists experienced a form of “feudalization”, in which patronage by high officials compromised the critical function of a “fourth estate” in the German public sphere.\footnote{Wehler, \textit{Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte} vol. 3} However, the key issue lay not between autonomy or cooptation, but in the position of journalists within the matrix of information and power.\footnote{Bourdieu, \textit{Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste} (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1984). Cf. Eley, “Commentary: Politics, Culture, and the Public Sphere” \textit{Positions} 10.1 (2002): 219-236.} Because of the low economic and social status of journalists, the reputation of a newspaper and proximity to power were important factors that could raise journalists’ standing. Based on forms of social and cultural capital that followed from journalists’ occupation, their power was not simply discursive, nor material—it was a combination of the two. Journalists observed and chronicled political life, maintaining their own social networks and political connections. The relationship between Fischer and Bismarck, for example, was based on common interests and mutual respect, but divergent sources of information undergirded the logic of their association and the power that forged it.

Reputation and trust were crucial to the social status of journalists, and both hinged upon journalistic practice, as well as the newspapers that employed them. Journalists reporting from the Ottoman Empire worked for some of the most-read newspapers in Germany, while their travels, experiences, and contacts gave them social capital vis-à-vis German officials. Foreign correspondents moved around more easily and attracted less attention than diplomats, who were circumscribed by protocol, tradition, as well as outward signs of distinction like retinues. While ambassadors were often strong-willed individuals with a certain degree of autonomy, they were also, as a rule, able and
pragmatic bureaucrats. Some looked down upon journalists as social inferiors, but officials were forced by circumstance to work with them. Journalists became permanent fixtures around the embassies, often becoming peers with embassy staff and the ambassadors themselves. Joseph Maria von Radowitz, German ambassador to Constantinople in the 1880s, remarked that it was impossible to understand the Ottoman capital without the help of “subalterns” like journalists.\textsuperscript{393}

The contrasting careers of two correspondents in the Ottoman Empire illustrated the importance of trust, reputation, and the institutional power of a newspaper. One of the first correspondents for the \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} in the Ottoman lands was Arthur von Huhn. Born into a minor Baltic noble family in 1851, he participated in the Franco-Prussian War as a \textit{Fahnenjunker} and settled in Saxony before becoming a journalist for the \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} in 1877. Reporting from the Russian side of the fighting during the Russo-Turkish War, Huhn accompanied army units into Bulgaria and sent letters to the newspaper from the field of action. Fluent in Russian, Huhn quickly became conversant in Bulgarian and developed connections with the new army Bulgarian taking shape. Returning to Germany in the late spring of 1878, he worked in the editorial office of the paper in Cologne until 1882, when he became the paper’s chief correspondent in Paris. Here he established a reputation as a well-informed and “responsible” journalist (in other words, he avoided sensational stories), whose salary allowed him to run in high social circles. His military experience put him on good terms with both the German embassy staff and the military.

\textsuperscript{393}GStA PK, NL Radowitz, Undated entry, Journal Nr. 22.
attachés, and he maintained regular contact to Franz Fischer in Berlin. 394 Between 1885 and 1887 he returned frequently to Bulgaria to cover the Serbo-Bulgarian War and the Bulgarian Crisis. When Fischer grew ill in 1892, Huhn became the Kölnische Zeitung’s second political correspondent and thereafter shared duties with Fischer in the Berlin bureau. Even before Fischer died in 1904, Huhn was becoming one of the most well connected journalists of his time. Not associated with Bismarck, he maintained regular contact with Hammann, while establishing his own network within the Foreign Office among the younger generation of diplomats. 395

The career of another war correspondent, Heinrich von Tyszka, went along a different path. He served in an East Prussian ranger battalion during the Prusso-Austrian War in 1866, then left for military service in the Austrian army. He returned to Germany in 1870 as a commissioned officer and, after the Franco-Prussian War, worked for Julius von Verdy du Vernois at the Kriegsakademie in Berlin. In 1876 the Prussian General Staff sent him to the Serbian army to write intelligence reports, and a year later he was attached to the staff of Mehmed Ali Pasha, whose army led the suppression of the Bulgarian revolt. He reported from the Ottoman side for the Vossische Zeitung, creating headlines with his portrayals of Ottoman bloodlust against Christian peasants in the last months of the Russo-Turkish War and helping the German government counter turcophile news coverage by other German papers. Tyszka returned to Germany in 1879 to work at the Prussian Literary Office as an editor, but was fired in 1882 for his poor performance and lack of discretion. He began training as a police commissioner in Posen in 1885, but

394 PA AA R 30 Münster to Hohenlohe 19 August 1887.
395 Kölnische Zeitung [hereafter KZ] 25 November 1913, Nr. 1326; PA AA R 29
left thereafter and returned to the Ottoman Empire. Working as a journalist and translator in Salonica, he befriended Colmar von der Goltz but did not appear to have relations to the German embassy in Constantinople, nor did he become a permanent correspondent for a major paper. His relationship with the German Protestant community in Salonica was also tumultuous, and he became persona non grata after he attempted to bribe a pastor to confirm his son in 1898. In 1903 at the behest of Goltz, the Prussian General Staff hired him to report on the uprising in Macedonia, but fired him within weeks after his reports proved unsatisfactory. He continued to send reports from the Ottoman Balkans to the German embassies in Constantinople and Athens, hoping to receive payments for his services, which he did on occasion, although he was seen as unreliable and partial (unsachlich), with a tendency toward wild speculation. Tyszka made his way by writing articles for a variety of smaller papers like the Darmstädter Nachrichten but died impoverished in 1916.

The contrast between Huhn and Tyszka illustrated not only the financial security offered by a paper like the Kölnische Zeitung, but also that connections did not guarantee success as a journalist. Tyszka’s reputation was in shambles. His financial desperation reinforced his estrangement from German officials in the Ottoman lands, who repeatedly refused his offers to send private intelligence reports. Only after a letter from his old friend, Goltz, did the German ambassador in Constantinople, Adolf Marschall von

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396 GStA PK I.HA 77 A Lit Buro Nr. 117.
397 BAMA N 737 NL Goltz, Nr. 34; GStA PK NL Goltz, Nr. 218.
398 Evangelisches Zentralarchiv Berlin (hereafter EVAB), 200/1/6009.
399 PA AA R 12785-89.
400 PA AA Abteilung IB (Legationskasse) Journal Nr. 11292/16
Bieberstein, pay him a modest 600 marks for unsolicited reports in 1912 as an extraordinary expense. Yet Tyszka continued sending letters. When Hans von Wangenheim became the new ambassador in November 1912, Tyszka again tried to play up his intelligence mission for the General Staff in 1903. After paying him 500 marks, Wangenheim quickly learned that Tyszka was an opportunist. Afterwards he stressed that Tyszka was in no way connected to the Foreign Office, warning the General Staff in 1913 not to hire him again for intelligence purposes during the Balkan Wars and refusing him more money. Even if Tyszka did tout his contacts with officials, no major paper picked him up.

That official contact was of enormous consequence for a journalist was evident in Huhn’s close relationship to the Foreign Office, but it was hardly a guarantee that journalists would carry out the will of the Wilhelmstraße. The Kölnische Zeitung continued to stake out its own position, becoming, for example, a steadfast critic of agricultural tariffs and worried that Bülow would antagonize Great Britain. Such public criticisms did not hinder the paper’s Tokyo correspondent from sending his reports on the Russo-Japanese War in 1904 along the secured embassy telegraph line, so transmission to Germany would be faster. British newspapers had scores of correspondents in the field, and diplomats wanted to keep the German public abreast of the war, viewing news coverage of the war as a matter of prestige and national security. The Kölnische Zeitung took advantage of the opportunity, but diplomats trusted Huhn to publish the accounts as

401 PA AA R12787 16 April 1912 Marschall to Berlin.
402 Ibid. 15 April 1913 Wangenheim to Berlin and after.
he saw fit.\textsuperscript{404} When the Foreign Office offered to pay the \textit{Kölner Zeitung} for its services, Huhn refused, as he did three years later, when one of his correspondents accompanied an official expedition to Teheran. The government reimbursed the travel fare, but the paper declined further payment.\textsuperscript{405}

The \textit{Kölner Zeitung}'s permanent correspondent in Constantinople, Julius Grosser, became an important fixture at the German embassy as well.\textsuperscript{406} He not only had contacts to Ottoman officials, military officers, and other embassies, but he was also the representative of the \textit{Agence Havas} in the Ottoman lands. In addition to writing articles from the Ottoman capital to his own newspaper, he oversaw news material that went to Paris. While he had little influence over what was published in Paris, he could keep German diplomats abreast of what was going on in the Havas bureau. Grosser was a crucial consultant in the negotiations to change the monopoly structure in the late 1880s. His expertise and connections in the newspaper business were called upon by ambassador Radowitz and Bismarck at many points, and the negotiations stalled, in part, because neither the WTB nor the German government was willing to buy Grosser out of his Havas contract and install him at the head of a new wire service of the Triple Entente.\textsuperscript{407} Grosser enjoyed the singular position at two main “chokepoints” in the network of news from the Ottoman Empire as both a correspondent for the \textit{Kölner Zeitung} and an employee for Havas. German diplomats needed him as much as he needed them.

\textsuperscript{404} PA AA R 1210 4 March 1904 Tokyo to Berlin
\textsuperscript{405} PA AA R 1213 11 Sept 1907
\textsuperscript{406} PA AA NL von Eckardt, Manuscript.
\textsuperscript{407} PA AA R 13173 25 May 1889 Berlin to Radowitz.
Not all journalists and newspapers enjoyed connections. Journalists for the *Berliner Tageblatt* were often upstarts and provocateurs, and no paper irritated the Foreign Office more than Mosse’s premiere daily. Bernard Stern, an early correspondent in Constantinople, had no contact to the German embassy and did not appear to seek any. Stern wrote articles at regular intervals throughout the 1880s and 1890s from the Ottoman lands and from Greece. German officials complained about the paper’s coverage, which they found to be tendentious and sensational. On many occasions, they tried to convince Ottoman officials that the paper had no influence and was not very popular in Germany.\(^{408}\)

Eduard Mygind also wrote for the *Berliner Tageblatt* and traveled widely, popping up in Constantinople, Alexandria, Abyssinia, and Athens over the next twenty years. He tried to ingratiate himself with officials wherever he went but had limited success.\(^{409}\)

Association with a particular newspaper was neither a guarantee of success or failure. Theodor Wolff, the Parisian correspondent for the *Tageblatt* enjoyed good relations with German officials until the first Morocco Crisis of 1905, when he came out strongly against Germany’s show of strength. When Wolff became editor-in-chief of the newspaper in 1906, Bülow refused to speak with him. The journalist was Bethmann-Hollweg’s bête noire as well.\(^{410}\) On the other hand, another foreign correspondent for the *Berliner Tageblatt*, Hans Barth, enjoyed good relations with the German embassy in Rome, whereas his colleague, Gottfried Bungers from the *Kölnische Zeitung*, did not.

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\(^{408}\) PA AA R 13160-13178 passim.  
\(^{409}\) PA AA R 1210 Marschall to Bülow 2 March 1898.  
Barth had been a traveling correspondent based in Rome for over twenty years, and had written many articles on Italy, Greece, and the Ottoman lands. The German ambassador to Italy, Alexander von Monts de Mazin, defended Barth against complaints from the Italian authorities that he was writing unflattering stories about then prime minister Giuseppe Zanardelli. Monts claimed that Barth was one of the few independent German journalist in Italy, after Monts accused many others—including Bungers—of accepting bribes from Italian officials. Monts’ complaint eventually got back the Kölnische Zeitung, and Bungers wrote a series of protest letters demanding proof of his venality. Whether he left or was fired is uncertain, but a new Italian correspondent replaced him within the year. 411

The Kölnische Zeitung was sensitive to allegations of bribery, as the Bungers case demonstrated, but the paper also stood up for its journalists at other times when officials complained. In places such as Alexandria, Belgrade, Canton City, and Tangiers, German diplomats protested against the activities of the paper’s correspondents, but Huhn accused the Foreign Office of having incompetent officials rather than his having inferior journalists and refused to have them replaced. 412 Thus, journalists maintained an uneasy relationship with officialdom, alternating between cooperation and confrontation.

Narrow Mental Rails? Corruption, Control, and Censorship

However resolute a journalist-editor like Arthur von Huhn was in maintaining his sense of independence, not all journalists abided by this standard. Monts recalled in 1916 that the Frankfurter Zeitung was the government’s best source for friendly publicity.

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411 PA AA R 1206 Monts to Richthofen 10 September 1902; R 1210 Monts to Richthofen 4 June 1904, response from Bungers, 4 November.
412 PA AA R 1212, 1217, 1218. Various reports.
before the war and that its Berlin correspondent, August Stein, had received substantial payments from the Foreign Office for almost twenty years.\footnote{PA AA NL Kanner Box 1, Vol. 1. Many thanks to Margaret Lavinia Anderson for this citation.} The Frankfurter Zeitung’s correspondent in the Ottoman Empire, Paul Weitz, also began receiving payments after Marschall arrived in Constantinople in 1897. The chief diplomat enlisted Weitz, who spoke Turkish and Greek as well as French and English, because of his local contacts and knowledge of Ottoman affairs. An outsider and a Jew, Weitz was an unlikely candidate to become Marschall’s chief press consultant.\footnote{PA AA R 1205 23 April 1898 Marschall to Hohenlohe; Bernhard Guttman, Schattenriß einer Generation 1888-1919 (Stuttgart, 1950).} His role grew in the following years, and he accompanied Marschall to the Hague in 1907 ostensibly as a fellow journalist, interviewing his American and British colleagues about what they expected from Germany and came up with a strategy to improve Germany’s image. Discreet, albeit vain, Weitz outlived Marschall and remained a prominent force in the Constantinople embassy after the First World War.\footnote{PA AA R 1487 Schön to Marschall 31 December 1908. Cf. Geppert, Pressekriege, 58-59.}

In 1900 Karl Kraus blasted a group of journalists living in the Ottoman Empire in his paper, Die Fackel, accusing them of lining their pockets with money from the Sultan. But according to Kraus, the system ran both ways. Not only did correspondents engage in self-censorship, painting a rosy picture of life in the Ottoman domains, but they also attempted to blackmail the Sultan by threatening to publish uncomfortable information about the real state of his empire’s affairs. Kraus implicated Paul Weitz and intimated that
Bernard Stern of the *Berliner Tageblatt* and Baron Binder von Kriegelstein, who reported for both the *Kreuzzeitung* and Viennese *Fremdenblatt*, had been up to the same thing.\(^{416}\)

Although the Foreign Office investigated the article in *Die Fackel* and deemed it slanderous, Kraus was on the right track.\(^{417}\) With the negotiations of a large railroad concession between the Sultan and the Deutsche Bank underway in 1899, Marschall saw negative news coverage as a potential problem for German interests. Together with Hammann, he instituted a system of surveillance of German journalists reporting from Constantinople around 1901, requiring them to clear articles on sensitive subjects. Rather than pay journalists to write sympathetic articles, Marschall began subsidizing journalists of all stripes to keep them from writing articles at all. Eduard Mygind, for example, came to the attention of Marschall in 1902, after he was accused of blackmailing the Sultan with damning reports on the Ottoman army. Marschall attempted to silence him with a subsidy, but within a year Mygind was shopping around an idea for a new paper, which Marschall again regarded as blackmail. The prospective paper was designed as a review that dealt solely with Ottoman news, but the German ambassador characterized it as a *Scandalblatt*. Threatening to have him thrown out of the country, Marschall continued to pay him a subsidy and encouraged him to focus on music and culture rather than politics.\(^{418}\)

Marschall also paid journalists from the *Berliner Lokal Anzeiger*, *Berliner Börsen Zeitung* and the *Müchener Neueste Nachrichten* not to run articles he thought damning to the

\(^{416}\) *Die Fackel* Nr. 42, 28-29.  
\(^{417}\) PA AA R 1205 Richthofen to Marschall June 1901.  
\(^{418}\) PA AA R 1206 Marschall to Berlin, 10 Juli 1902.
Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{419} When journalists did so anyway, Hammann could put pressure on editors in Berlin, warning editor Arthur Levysohn, for example, about articles in the 

\textit{Berliner Tageblatt} that Marschall had not approved.\textsuperscript{420} Such forms of censorship often succeeded without the journalist in question even knowing what was happening. Hammann convinced the editors of the \textit{Berliner Lokal Anzeiger} not to run articles written by their correspondent in Constantinople, Bernd von Köller, only after Marschall promised not to tell Köller that they had done so. He was an ambitious writer “dedicated to the truth” according to the editors of the \textit{Berliner Lokal Anzeiger}, who were afraid that they would lose him to a rival.\textsuperscript{421}

Bribes and corruption were endemic to the field of journalism and rampant in the late Ottoman Empire, but Köller’s ambition and dedication to good journalism was a challenge to Kraus’ aspersions. The extent to which money determined the message is difficult to judge and fraught with interpretative challenges. The Foreign Office’s system of surveillance was imperfect, and Marschall continued to fret about German news coverage. It was impossible for him to stop every article about the state of the army, the Sultan’s health or the status of Christian minorities in the Ottoman lands.\textsuperscript{422} Weitz also continued to publish articles in the \textit{Frankfurter Zeitung} that annoyed both embassy and Ottoman officials, and Bernhard Stern never had a warm relationship with officials for the same reason. Journalists remained, by and large, responsible to their editors and the

\textsuperscript{419}PA AA R 1209 Marschall to Richthofen 3 October 1903.
\textsuperscript{420}see note 80.
\textsuperscript{421}PA AA R 1201 Marschall to Richthofen 9 October 1903; Richthofen to Pera (Marschall) 13 October 1903
\textsuperscript{422}PA AA R 1216, 1217.
interests of their newspapers. Papers that were dependent on good journalism for their reputation probably would not have tolerated articles dictated by the Sultan, just as editorial decisions were governed by how articles would be received in the domestic sphere. By the turn of the century, journalists had to play by new rules of the game, yet they tried to circumvent censorship as much as they could. The subsidies that Marschall doled out were not commensurate to a normal salary and were meant as a substitute for lost income for individual articles, so journalists had to continue to write to earn a living.

Marschall and Hammann also tried to undermine the network of wire agencies that continued to exert its influence on news coverage in the Ottoman Empire. By the turn of the century, the Agence de Constantinople, an arm of the Viennese Politischer Korrespondenz, had been making inroads in the Ottoman news market, after the cartel agreements were altered in 1890. The Agence was thereafter allowed to send wire-reports from Constantinople to Vienna and Berlin, although the Austrian agency focused most of its energies on news coming from the Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria. In the face of the Agence’s pronounced bias toward news favorable to Austria-Hungary, Marschall allowed a German dragoman to use the embassy telegraph system to send illegal news cables directly to the WTB, when he felt that the Viennese

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423 PA AA R 1201 Marschall to Richthofen 1 September 1903, 11 November 1904.
424 Ibid.
425 PA AA R 539
agency’s news coverage was compromising Germany’s interests and reporting false news.\textsuperscript{426}

The public relations system of Hammann performed well during the Bosnian annexation crisis of 1908, but scandals, like the Daily Telegraph Affair, and a general sense of failure plagued Bülow’s government by 1909. Hammann’s position under Bülow had done little to endear him to officials like Friedrich von Holstein and Alfred von Kiderlen-Waechter, who chaffed at the attention that the chancellor invested in responding to public opinion and coveted the influence of his press chief. After Bülow stepped down in 1909, Hammann lost immediate access to the new chancellor, Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, as well as to the Kaiser. When Kiderlen-Waechter became state secretary for political affairs a year later, Hammann was forced to relinquish further privileges and was no longer allowed to monitor sensitive embassy cable traffic.\textsuperscript{427}

Although Bethmann-Hollweg was less interested in managing public opinion the way Bülow and Hammann had been, elements of Hammann’s “system” did remain. Constant contact between officials and the press as well as the primacy of crafting a uniform “message” continued. Kurt Riezler became a trusted advisor to the new chancellor, and Marschall advanced as one of the most influential mission chiefs, especially after the Imperial government redoubled its efforts to ingratiate itself to a new generation of Ottoman rulers following the Young Turk Revolution in 1908. But as newspapers increased their scope for news coverage and as more foreign correspondents made their way to the Ottoman lands, controlling and shaping the activities of the press

\textsuperscript{426}PA AA R 13896. Padel to Berlin 10 January 1898 and after. See aslo PA AA R 13897 passim.\textsuperscript{427}Hammann, \textit{Bilder aus der letzten Kaiserzeit} (Berlin, 1922), pp.32.
was a persistent challenge. Writing to Berlin after a coup in Constantinople took place in mid-April 1909, Marschall described his challenges in dealing with the German press:

> With so many stories, opinions, and motives swirling around, it is difficult for even the most well-connected man to know what is true or only half-true. The newspapers publish everything, even if it turns out to be wrong or exaggerated the next day. They reflect the situation here but endanger our interests and undermine public support [in Germany] for our cause. Unfortunately, the public devours it and cannot get enough of what these reporters here write[...]."  

Although diplomats like Marschall tried to manage the public sphere and shape what information reached domestic audiences back home, officials were often forced to follow the path set out by journalists and their daily praxis of reporting the news.

**Turning Outward**

Hammann remained an important player in the press policy of the Foreign Office, but after his demotion under Bethmann-Hollweg, his activities went beyond the German public sphere and shaping how government was regarded domestically. Instead, he concentrated his efforts on breaking the telegraph monopolies that continued to hem in news reporting in places like the Ottoman territories, where the cartel agreements continued to damage Germany’s image abroad. After the Young Turk Revolution in 1908, the Foreign Office was helpless to counteract the power of Reuters, Havas, and the

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428 PA AA R 13184 Marschall to Berlin 28 April 1909.
429 BAB-L N6201 NL Hammann, Nr. 25.
Agence de Constantinople. Not only were these agencies able to steer selected news stories from the Ottoman Empire to their domestic publics, but they also sent news about Europe to the reading public in the Ottoman Empire. With the oppressive Hamidian regime gone, interest in the outside world exploded in Constantinople, as local Ottoman newspapers drew heavily from these international wire reports. Agencies sought to provide favorable news from their respective country as well as negative news from their rivals, especially about Germany, which had been the strongest supporter of the Hamidian government after the turn of the century.

The new Ottoman government tried to establish an *Agence Ottomane* in 1909 to provide its own coverage but ran afoul of the cartel signatories, all of whom saw an independent Ottoman agency as unwelcome competition. When the the cartel agreements came up for negotiation in 1910, Hammann and Marschall pushed for a WTB representative to be sent to Constantinople with the task of sending favorable news along the same cables that the Agence de Constantinople used, although they were limited to 20% of total volume. ⁴³⁰ While this helped ameliorate Germany’s difficult position in the network of telegraph agencies, the Foreign Office had to rely on the network of German newspapers and journalists to counter-balance the negative publicity that Germany had begun to confront in the Ottoman Empire after 1908. Thus the politics of information and the negotiation of power, which had guided the interactions between officials and journalists throughout the nineteenth century, continued into the twentieth.

Section II

Responses
Chapter 4

The Great Eastern Crisis and the Emergence of German Turcophilism

Agency is always without conscience; only the observer has a conscience.

--Vossische Zeitung, 12 January 1876

(quoting Goethe)

This chapter investigates the reception of the Great Eastern Crisis in Imperial Germany. Newspapers not only followed the crisis but sent correspondents into zones of conflict, putting pressure on Bismarck to intervene in the public sphere. Reporters not only relayed news from far away places but framed the meaning of violence, tapping into domestic political struggles over religion, fanaticism, and foreign policy.

An Open Blaze

The Great Eastern Crisis began in August 1875, when a local uprising of Christian peasants in Herzegovina spread to Bosnia and parts of Bulgaria. In the following months, diplomatic pressure from Russia failed to force the Ottomans to introduce reforms for their Christian subjects, and the Ottoman army found itself trying to suppress an insurgency that had spread throughout most of the Balkan territories. The Balkan uprisings soon became a proxy war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, leading to the Russo-Turkish War in April 1877. At the heart of the crisis was the perennial Eastern Question and the future of political order in the borderlands of the Ottoman Empire. Bismarck charted a cautious course consistent with Germany’s role as a “saturated” power. Wanting
to solidify Germany’s position by remaining neutral, Bismarck viewed the Eastern Question as a means to deflect attention away from Germany’s recent unification and to create conflict among other Great Powers, in order to make the new German state an indispensable partner. As early as September 1875 he saw an opportunity for Germany, when he recognized that the other Great Powers would be called upon to mediate: “in case it [the Balkan rebellion] comes to an open blaze...we [should] look on impassively and warm our hands on the fire as long as possible.”

Bismarck’s careful neutrality and indifference to the violence in the Balkans were not shared by all. European publics had taken a keen interest in the Crisis, and Germany was no exception. The violent deaths of the French and German consuls at the hands of a Muslim mob in Salonica in May 1876 created the first news that heightened public interest. Reports in German newspapers buoyed popular attention to local events in the Ottoman lands, and as the summer wore on, tales of atrocities committed by Ottoman forces against Bulgarian Christians created a second wave of scrutiny. Appearing first in British newspapers in late July, these reports quickly spread all over the European press and became known as the “Bulgarian Horrors”. When war finally broke out between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, stories of massacres and atrocities committed on both sides continued to attract public attention in Germany, even after the Congress of Berlin ended the Crisis in 1878.

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The European reception of this violence during the Eastern Crisis has been the subject of much debate, and its interpretation straddles the fault lines between historians of Western Europe and the Ottoman Empire. Most historians of the West have focused on the reception of the Great Eastern Crisis in Great Britain and the popular agitation against the Disraeli government’s support for the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman historians have highlighted the British agitation as well, claiming that European publics were rabidly anti-Muslim and oblivious to the violence of Christian rebels and Russian soldiers. Yet turcophobe agitators in Britain were countered by equally vocal turcophile apologists, and the vitality of the popular agitation stemmed as much from the unyielding position of Disraeli as it did from concern for Balkan Christians. The German theologian, Ignatz Döllinger, who was personally moved by the agitation in Britain, admitted that it would have been inconceivable on the Continent. By contrast, one English critic of the agitation pointed to Germany’s ambivalence as an admirable example.

However, the reception of the Crisis in Imperial Germany was more agitated than Döllinger allowed and more partisan than Bismarck would have liked. German newspapers reported avidly on the Crisis and expressed opinions that not only condemned the Ottoman suppression but were also sympathetic to the Ottoman order. Bismarck’s statement in the Reichstag on 5 December 1876 that the “whole Orient was not worth the

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bones of one healthy Pomeranian grenadier” was intended to end discussion of the Eastern Question. Yet his attempts to discourage public interest in the Eastern Crisis, particularly his efforts to counter German news coverage, reflected the degree to which public reactions to events in the Ottoman Empire had become a source of concern in Germany. The open blaze in the Balkans, which Bismarck had hoped would distract other powers abroad, attracted much more attention at home than historians have suggested.

**Muslims, Christians, Fanatics**

The murders in Salonica had an electrifying effect on the news arriving from the Ottoman territories. The story began in early May 1876 against the backdrop of Ottoman political instability in the Constantinople. Sultan Abdulaziz had been deposed, after a coup d’etat of high-ranking Ottoman officials and religious students or *softas* joined together at the main mosques and public squares, decrying the government’s weakness amid fears of a Russian invasion.  

Days later an imbroglio erupted in Salonica over a Bulgarian girl who had eloped with a Muslim and converted. Upon arriving at the train station to re-unite with her betrothed, she was kidnapped by her uncles, who were aided by the American consul. The ensuing conflict about whom she properly belonged to aroused a crowd of angry Muslims who gathered at the main mosque next to the *Konak* or governor’s office. When the French and German consuls arrived to mediate, they were beaten to death. News of the consuls’ death appeared in German papers simultaneously with the coup in Constantinople, signaling that this violence, which had thus far been

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437 For an Ottoman historian’s account see Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire Vol. 2*, 126-142.  
438 This was the official version sent from Werther to the Foreign Office (PA AA R 12765). An entire rubric was created for the documents dealing with the murders from May until December 1876. (PA AA R 12765-12771).
limited to the theaters of revolt, might encompass the cosmopolitan towns like Salonica and Constantinople, in which Germans and other Europeans lived and worked.

The German diplomatic corps in Constantinople reacted with alarm to the deaths in Salonica. The ambassador, Karl von Werther, left immediately to join the other ambassadors en route to Salonica, and Bismarck wanted both to ensure local Germans’ safety and keep the incident localized.439 After the other Powers sent ships to Salonica as a demonstration against the Ottoman administration, the Germans followed suit and sent a vessel the next day.440 Despite protests by Ottoman officials, the French and German ambassadors agreed to pressure the Ottomans into bringing Muslim suspects to trial quickly in the hopes that the issue would disappear.441 In the discussions surrounding the incident, “fanaticism” became a codeword for Muslim violence. Both the French and German representatives blamed fanaticism for the crime. Official newspapers like the *Politische Korrespondenz* and the *Reichsanzeiger* reproduced a terse description of the Salonica murders, in which Werther described unbridled Muslim rage as the cause of death. The semi-official *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* and conservative papers like the *Kreuzzzeitung* heeded the wishes of the Foreign Office and reproduced the official German report without commentary.442

Werther’s use of fanaticism to describe the murders in Salonica also gave meaning to the entire Crisis. The term had long been a shorthand used any time a European subject

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439 PA AA R 12765 Hohenlohe to Bülow (Berlin), 8 May 1876.
440 PA AA R 12765 Werther to Bülow (Berlin), 11 May 1876.
442 *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (hereafter NAZ) 10 May 1876 Nr. 109. See also PA AA R 12766. Herbert von Bismarck to State Secretary, undated.
was murdered, maimed, robbed or threatened in the Ottoman Empire. By talking about the murders as a consequence of fanaticism, Werther not only made clear that the Muslim mob was guilty, but also seemed to implicate all Muslims as accomplices in the process. The free-conservative Die Post drew the same conclusion from the affair and called for the expulsion of the Turks from Europe. Lothar von Schweinitz recalled that German public opinion rallied behind the Christians of the Ottoman Empire in the aftermath. By contrast, the British ambassador and press were very careful not use the term “fanaticism” at all, and in England the critique grew louder that the other powers were abusing these unfortunate “assassinations” for their own gain.

Instead of fading with the promise of a speedy trial, the Salonica murders continued to attract attention, as many liberal newspapers latched onto the story. The National Liberal Kölnische Zeitung sent its correspondent from Constantinople to the site of the murders within a week. The National-Zeitung compared in painstaking detail the reports from the Agence Havas and official Ottoman statements, devoting a separate section to the subject. Short biographies of the murdered German consul, Henry Abbott, were published and quoted in many papers. The city itself became the subject of German news coverage among the liberal papers with short histories appearing on the front page or as an independent rubric. Its sizable Jewish population, mix of Balkan

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444 See the article in The Times, 11 November 1876.
445 The KZ correspondent traveled back and forth between Salonica and Constantinople to file reports that were delivered via postal steam ship to Germany: PA AA R 12765, Werther to Bülow (Berlin) 21 May 1876.
446 National Zeitung (Hereafter, NZ) 14 May, 1876.
447 For a closer look at Abbott, see Mark Mazower, Salonica: City of Ghosts (New York: Knopf, 2004).
nationalities as well as merchants from all over the Mediterranean in a largely Greek-speaking region made it especially difficult to categorize. Was it a Jewish city? A Greek city? A European city? Simply cosmopolitan, or more Levantine?\textsuperscript{448} The conceptualization of Salonica and how the city fit into a larger pattern of Ottoman society drove much of the early coverage.

Commentary abounded in the liberal press about the Salonica affair, yet the discourse on fanaticism reformulated the question of guilt. That Muslim fanaticism was solely responsible for the violence was contested in the liberal press, which painted a more nuanced picture of communal tension in Salonica. The left-liberal \textit{Berliner Tageblatt} blamed not only “Turkish” but also “Greek fanaticism”, claiming that brigandage and murder in the Greek border areas was every bit as abominable as the actions of the Turkish mob in Salonica.\textsuperscript{449} The \textit{National-Zeitung} argued that the “lower orders” of Greece had much in common with the Muslim mob in Salonica and that educated Turks were aware that a confrontation with the Great Powers was the least desirable outcome.\textsuperscript{450} The \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} went beyond the local politics of Salonica and maintained that reform of the Ottoman Empire was impossible because of the “rotten character” of the Christian administrators (\textit{Beamtenthum}) at the Sublime Porte, who had no real allegiance

\textsuperscript{448} \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} published a long article on the history of Salonica by Arnold Schaefer, a professor of Hellenic studies in Marburg. \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} (hereafter KZ) Nr 126, Erstes Blatt 10 May, 1876. The \textit{Frankfurter Zeitung} (FZ) brought their own four days later.
\textsuperscript{449} BT 9 May 1876, Nr.108.
\textsuperscript{450} \textit{National Zeitung} (NZ) 13 May 1876, Beiblatt zu Nr. 222
to the Ottoman state. Muslims were, thus, not fanatical but frustrated with a political order that had taken away their privileges.\footnote{KZ 31 May 1876.}

The ease with which these liberal papers slipped into polemics about Greeks and Ottoman Christians no doubt stemmed from the culture wars that were then raging in Imperial Germany. Stereotypes of fanaticism that had been used to demonize Catholics in Germany were now deployed to criticize Christians in the Ottoman Empire. The official and liberal press had long used abusive tropes of fanaticism to caricature Catholic resistance to the \textit{Kulturkampf} and underscore the dangers Catholic allegiance to Papal authority. Liberals were keen to underscore that German Catholics could not be trusted because of their suspect loyalties, their obscurantism, and their backwardness.\footnote{Michael B. Gross, \textit{The War against Catholicism: Liberalism and the Anti-Catholic Imagination in Nineteenth Century Germany} (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 240-251.}

Responding to the Salonica murders, turcophile editorials simply said the same thing about Christians further away.

Other papers conflated Muslim and Catholic fanaticism. The \textit{Kladderadatsch}, the most popular satirical journal of the period, mocked the revolt of the Softas with imagery reminiscent of its anti-Jesuit caricatures. A lone \textit{Softa}, engrossed in a oversized copy of the Koran, awakes from his studies to topple the Sultan, promptly returning to his pious reading. Foregoing such standard markers as the fez, the mustache or the full beard, this Muslim \textit{Softa} was almost the mirror image of a Jesuit—down to his epicene, shaven face, militant boots, and the symbolic dogmatism encoded in his life-size Koran.\footnote{\textit{Kladderadatsch}, Nr. 36, 4 June 1876.} [See illustration 1] A few months later, the \textit{Kladderadatsch} published a caricature of the pope,
kissing the sultan in a passionate embrace as a swarm of fanatic followers from both sides ran toward each other like long-lost lovers. Another drawing depicted the Sultan and the Pope in bed together.\textsuperscript{454} [See illustration 2] Catholic papers, in turn, asked why German nationalists could take issue with Muslim Turks who suppressed Christians, when Catholics were being persecuted in Europe.\textsuperscript{455}

Catholics were an easy target for German nationalist liberals as allies of religious fanaticism. The Vatican was an open supporter of the Ottomans throughout the Crisis, attracting the disgust of German diplomats early on.\textsuperscript{456} At a time when the Holy See was under attack in Europe by the forces of secular nationalism, the Sublime Porte’s toleration of Catholic autonomy in the Ottoman lands helped solidify an alliance. Catholic papers were conspicuously quiet during the Salonica affair, reacting sporadically to the commentary of other papers.\textsuperscript{457} Only the Berlin-based \textit{Germania} covered Salonica at all, blaming Muslim fanaticism for the “wild hatred” of Christians and Bismarck for failing to do anything about it.\textsuperscript{458}

Bismarck could not resist the opportunity to blast Catholics and asked the Foreign Office to play up the Vatican’s pro-Ottoman policy in the press. Long suspicious of Lebanese Catholics as agents of French influence in the Ottoman lands, he gladly used the

\textsuperscript{454} \textit{Kladderadatsch} Nr. 41 3 September 1876; Nr. 44 24 September 1876.
\textsuperscript{455} KVlk Nr. 152, 2 June 1876; \textit{Germania} Nr. 166, 4 June 1876.
\textsuperscript{456} The Foreign Office watched Catholics in the Ottoman Empire closely starting in 1874, especially the Jesuits. A rubric for the dossiers was ostensibly \textit{Christen in der Türkei} but was really about Catholics, and Jesuits especially: PA AA R 13954-13997.
\textsuperscript{457} The most prominent Catholic paper, the \textit{Kölische Volkszeitung}, did not reprint wire reports, nor did Edmund Jörg’s \textit{Historisch-Politische Blätter}, one of the most esteemed journal for educated Catholics in the \textit{Kaiserreich}.
\textsuperscript{458} \textit{Germania} Nr. 108, 13 May 1876.
Crisis to stir up anti-Catholic sentiment in Germany.\textsuperscript{459} Bismarck instructed the Foreign Office to mention papal policy towards the Ottomans as often as possible to the press, calling attention to the pope and the sultan as “infallible heads of their respective confessions...in the fight against the development of the human spirit”\textsuperscript{460} By equating Catholics with Muslims, Bismarck was also appealing to familiar anti-Catholic clichés. Underscoring that the Turks were as fanatical as Germany’s internal enemies was not only plausible to German readers unfamiliar with the Ottoman Empire, but it also evoked an immediate, tangible referent in the minds of Protestant nationalists. Fanaticism in the Ottoman Empire thereby became tied to the domestic politics of Imperial Germany.

**The (Geo)politics of Sympathy**

Karl Braun Wiesbaden, a left-wing National Liberal politician, published the first of his three-volume *A Turkish Journey* in April 1876, eight months after the first rumblings of the Crisis in Herzegovina began. Wiesbaden complained that upon his return to Germany most people whom he met hoped to see the “disdainful Turk” thrown out of Europe. He wrote the book to present his readers with a warning. What, he asked, would take the place of the Turk in southeastern Europe? “What would come is worse, much worse, not just for the Balkans, but for Europe and occidental culture (*abendländliche Kultur*)”. He published his travel account to answer the calls from those who wanted European intervention, as well as to counter the claim that the end of the Ottoman Empire

\textsuperscript{460} (Herbert) Bismarck to Bülow, 6 October 1876, PA AA R 12141.
was near. “People shook their heads and called me a turcophile,” he maintained. In a private letter to Heinrich Kruse, editor of the Kölnische Zeitung, Wiesbaden asserted that the overwhelming ridicule in Germany of “Turkish rule” was due more to ignorance than genuine sympathy for or knowledge of the Balkan peoples. Stressing the need to counter “everyday opinion” (Tagesmeinung), he wished to educate as much as to advocate.

Wiesbaden’s concern over the Eastern Question had begun to exercise the minds of German editors and readers as well. What would happen to the territories of the Ottoman Empire? How would war and a revision of boundaries in the Balkans affect Imperial Germany, a nation that had itself recently been forged through war? The growing public debate was, therefore, about more than the relative fanaticism of Christians or Muslims. It was about the future of states, nations, and borders. The Eastern Question required observers to provide an answer. Who should rule over the Orient?

Public discussion quickly turned to questions of sympathy. With whom should the German public sympathize, Muslim rulers or Christian insurgents? The question of sympathy was not just an extension of well-worn clichés about Catholics, but also an identification with a particular vantage point as well as the suffering that accompanied it. Suffering was at the crux of sympathy and the processes by which Germans identified with Christians or Muslims in the Eastern Question. The politics of the Kulturkampf helped shape responses to Ottoman violence, as did the dangers that various constituencies in Germany perceived through the prism of the Eastern Question. Turcophiles like

461 Karl Braun Wiesbaden, Eine türkische Reise, Band 1: Die Donau, Serbien Rumänien (Stuttgart, 1876): VII.
462 Heinrich Heine Institut Düsseldorf, Nachlass Heinrich Kruse, Braun Folder, May 1876.
Wiesbaden thought that an end to Ottoman rule would bring suffering to the young German nation in the form of political instability, while advocates of Balkan Christian were concerned with easing the suffering of their religious brethren. Both forms of sympathy required truncating the space between distant suffering and German readers. Wiesbaden highlighted the deleterious consequences of Balkan nationalism for Germans living in the Reich, while advocates of the rebellion appealed to Christian solidarity. Alterity and the question of “otherness” was borne not only out of the dichotomies between Christians and Muslims, but also among Catholics and Protestants, Liberals, Socialists, and Conservatives.

Raising the fears of Muslim fanaticism in the spring of 1876, the National Liberal Kölnische Zeitung rejected sympathy for either Muslims or the revolting Christian peoples. Reflecting on whether Ottoman rule in Europe was over, it cautioned: “The Turks possess no sympathy and should not be shown any either, but political questions should not be answered by feelings. One should also ask whether the Slavs, Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians and whatever else these Christian peoples are called, have deserved great sympathy”. The paper agreed with the widespread view that the Turks were an “alien Asian people” in Europe, and that one should have sympathy for his Christian brethren. “But of what does this Christendom consist? Of nothing more than superficial customs that are reconciled with great superstitions and blasphemies of various sorts. These people make the sign of the cross...but murdering and brigandage does not give them pause in the
This was the starkest version of what other nationalist liberal papers were writing at the time. The *Kölnische Zeitung*, skeptical of Balkan nationalism and its consequences for Imperial Germany, challenged Christian solidarity as grounds for sympathy. If sympathy was based on vantage point, then the surest way to upend Christian solidarity was to shift the ground and bring German Catholics and Balkan peasants closer together. Rites and rituals of Balkan Christians from far away were juxtaposed with popular forms of Catholic piety and behavior at home that challenged the German nation. Like the linkage to fanaticism, in which Catholics and Greeks were synonymous, the newspaper’s dismissal of Balkan nationalism utilized the rhetoric of the Kulturkampf to impede sympathy between German readers and Balkan rebels. If German Catholics could not be trusted, why should other, stranger Christians in the Balkans be either?

Challenging sympathy for Balkan Christians also implied questioning the relationship between victim and perpetrator. In mid-August after the Bulgarian Horrors had been publicized, another editorial in the *Kölnische Zeitung* warned against viewing the revolts as a case of noble, oppressed people fighting for “freedom, law, and civilization” against “rawness” (*Rohheit*) and barbarism. The principal misfortune of European Turkey was the “colorful mix” of antagonistic peoples. Obscuring distinctions between victim and perpetrator, hero and villain, the editorial laid the blame for the atrocities not on the “real Turk”, who was the only one capable of ruling, but on Slavic Muslims, Bashi-Bozus, and other “rabble who spreads itself under the flag of the crescent.”

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463 KZ Nr. 110, 2. Blatt, 20 April 1876.  
464 AG, 23 April 1876; *Frankfurter Journal*, 21 April 1876.  
465 KZ 14 August 1876. Nr. 226.
the Serb or Bulgarian from his Muslim brethren (Stammverwandten), not the ruling Turks.\textsuperscript{466} The Allgemeine Zeitung commented in a similar vein, stating that both the extremist Bulgarian insurgents and the Bashi-Bozuks (Ottoman irregulars with a reputation for violence) were responsible for the atrocities, not the majority of peaceful Turks and Bulgarian peasants.\textsuperscript{467} The Vossische claimed that the Bulgarians had more in common with the Turks and the Magyars than they did with other Slavs.\textsuperscript{468} And the National-Zeitung began publishing exposés on the ethnographic make-up of the Bulgarian territories, along with maps that emphasized how mixed populations of Christians, Muslims, and Pomaks (Bulgarian-speaking Muslims) living cheek-by-jowl.\textsuperscript{469}

These stories complicated the idea popular in much of the conservative German press that the Crisis was simply a battle between Islam and Christendom over southeastern Europe. The Kreuzzeitung supported Russia’s purported concern for the Christian peoples of the Ottoman Balkans, championing a new crusade against the horrible Turk. Die Post kept up its initial enthusiasm for a Russian war to rid Europe of Ottoman influence until the war began in April of 1877.

Leading liberal papers in Germany also warned of the human costs of recreating the Ottoman Balkans along nationalist lines. They criticized Gladstone’s foray into the Eastern Question and his call to grant autonomy to the Balkan peoples.\textsuperscript{470} At the height of the agitation in Great Britain, the Kölnische Zeitung claimed that according to the most

\textsuperscript{466} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{467} Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung [hereafter AZ] 17 August 1876.
\textsuperscript{468} Voss Z 28 November 1876.
\textsuperscript{469} NZ July 11 1876.
\textsuperscript{470} Harris, Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation (1936), 109.
conservative statistics, there were 3,600,000 Muslims living in Southeastern Europe, in addition to the 4,600,000 Christians under the Sultan’s rule. While most of the German press tended to conflate Turks and Muslims, seeing them as a shadowy, foreign oppressor, floating above Balkan society, liberal papers like the Kölnische, the Vossische, and the Allgemeine Zeitung drew attention to the social and ethnic complexity of Ottoman rule. Many conservative papers rallied behind Christendom and wanted to “throw the Turk out of Europe”, while liberal papers thought that the deracination of Ottoman Muslims was near impossible. Karl Wiesbaden celebrated the emergence of turcophile opinions in the German press in the second volume of his travels. He thought Balkan nationalism would only “replace the devil with beelzebub” and lead to guerilla war (Heckenkrieg), whose extent was unfathomable and dangerous for Germany.

News coverage by these liberal papers exacerbated the rift within the National Liberal party, which was most evident in Heinrich von Treitschke’s attack on the turcophile [Treitschke’s term] German press in July of 1876. He saw a “cultural necessity” in expelling the “Asian hordes” from Europe. Unjust Ottoman rule stood against the forces of modernity, symbolized by the nation-state, the standing army, and centralized authority. The Kölnische Zeitung dismissed Treitschke’s ideas, appealing to...

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472 Ibid., 108.

473 Treitschke, “Deutschland und die Orientalische Frage”, Preußische Jahrbücher, 6. Heft. 1876. See also, Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung (NAZ hereafter) 8 July, 9 July, 14 July 1876.
the dictates of international law and pointing to the absurdity of identifying with Balkan Christians simply by virtue of their Christianity. As it did throughout the war, the paper insisted that the Ottomans had a right to put down revolts within their territories however they saw fit. The Ottoman Empire had been an equal treaty member under the 1856 Treaty of Paris, and intervention by Russia or any other group of states would be an attack on the Empire’s sovereignty, a foundational principle of international law. In this vision of the international order, the Ottoman Empire was a Kulturstaat that enjoyed rights like other civilized states.⁴⁷⁴ Treitschke’s shrill reply was that Great Britain was the shameless representative of the “barbarism of international law”.

The conflict between Treitschke and liberal turcophiles revealed a larger division within the National Liberals over culture and the location of sovereignty. Right-wing National Liberals like Treitschke increasingly turned toward the Prussian state and an alliance with the nobility to combat Socialists and economic depression. Under his leadership the Preussische Jahrbücher had agitated for closer ties with Russia in anticipation of another war against France, and Treitschke had grown increasingly bitter over Britain’s diplomacy. Left-wing National Liberals, who advocated free trade and expanding parliamentary rights, were growing marginalized, and advocacy of the Ottoman order was part of a general philosophical orientation for keeping economies open. Whereas right-wingers like Treitschke privileged the state’s military primacy, the left-wing highlighted international stability, peaceful cooperation, and the development of

⁴⁷⁴KZ, Nr. 189, 9 July 1876.
trade. More was at stake than the relationship between Christians and Muslims in the Ottoman Empire; at issue was the future course of European politics.

Concerns on the left-wing of the National Liberals for the international order also focused on Russia and the fears that Russian expansion could threaten central Europe. The Kölnische Zeitung, National-Zeitung and the Allgemeine Zeitung became vigilant critics of Russian motives, as news of the Bulgarian horrors unfolded. They often juxtaposed the Russian and Ottoman Empires, asking which was the greater protector of liberal rights and values. They recounted stories of forced conversions to Russian Orthodoxy, trials in which priests were prosecuted by the state for failing to convert Muslim Tartars, and tales of Cossacks pillaging mountain villages. The Ottoman Empire, while admittedly corrupt, venal and replete with indifferent ”non-Turks” in the bureaucracy, was the better alternative. One paper asked how Russia could invoke freedom and the protection of religious minorities, when the Ottomans were better practitioners of religious tolerance than any state in Europe.475

Fear of Russia cut across class as well as confession in Germany, making for strange bedfellows. If German sympathy for the distant suffering of Balkan Christians was challenged by liberals, who worried about Balkan nationalism, then fear of Russian domination of the Balkans united an even greater number of Germans. Anti-Slavic revulsion underpinned German turcophilism as much as sympathy for the Ottoman order. Socialist turcophiles like Wilhelm Liebknecht used his paper, Vorwärts, to agitate against Balkan nationalism and made dire predictions about the advance of Russia. Marx himself

475 KZ, Nr. 237, 13 June 1876. Vettes, op cit.
had written articles decrying the Russians during the Crimean War, and many German Marxists saw Balkan independence as a pretext for Russian control. According to Liebknecht, the “Bulgarian Horrors” were nothing but Russian propaganda.\footnote{\textit{(Leipziger) Vorwärts}, 23 July 1876.} He portrayed the Eastern Question as a battle between the forces of world capitalism and political reaction, in which a victory for Balkan nationalism would slow a socialist revolution in Europe.\footnote{William George Vettes, “The German Social Democrats and the Eastern Question 1848-1900”, \textit{American Slavic and East European Review}, 17/1 (Feb., 1958): 86-100; Friedrich Hertneck, \textit{Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie und die orientalische Frage im Zeitalter Bismarcks} (Berlin, 1927).}

Catholic papers in Germany used the specter of Orthodoxy and czarism to accomplish much the same thing. Although the \textit{Germania} spoke out against the repression of Balkan Christians as a means of criticizing Bismarck for his inaction, every other Catholic paper fell in line behind the papal policy of neutrality. The \textit{Kölnische Volkszeitung} made no mention of the Bulgarian horrors in the summer of 1876 (except to say that reports were exaggerated). When it did mention local events in the Ottoman Empire, it took issue with the Russian ambassador’s grim portrayal of Constantinople’s embattled Christian minorities.\footnote{KVlk Nr. 148, 30 May 1876.} The paper repeatedly pointed to the religious tolerance of the Ottomans and their non-intervention in church affairs, publishing long articles about the religious freedoms of Lebanese Catholics, an allusion to how poorly Catholics had been fairing in Germany.\footnote{\textit{Germania}, Nr 147, 21 July 1876.}

\textbf{Bismarck’s Bona Officia}
The public debate in the summer of 1876 forced Bismarck out of his well-guarded neutrality, after German papers took sides and began to pose answers to the Eastern Question. His attempts to remain neutral while keeping war localized and Russian goodwill towards German intact necessitated keeping pressure on the Ottomans, thus beginning his campaign to dampen German sympathy for Muslim rule.\footnote{Mention intl lit from Seton, etc.} Bismarck constantly feared that public opinion would be used as an index of political intentions. Therefore, controlling German sympathies was part of Bismarck’s strategy to placate Russia. When news from Salonica and other parts of the Ottoman lands failed to die down—and competing interpretations of violence in the Ottoman lands grew—Bismarck and his diplomats intervened. As the Crisis intensified, German officials countered turcophile interpretations in the press by manipulating German news coverage of the Russian war effort against the Ottomans.

Official interventions flowed with the news. The Foreign Office did not inspire Treitschke’s critique of the Ottoman Empire in late-July but did arrange for it to be picked up by the Norddeutsche Allgemeine, which broadcasted the piece to a wider audience, prompting a week-long conflict with the Kölnische Zeitung. Meanwhile, as the Salonica affair dragged on into late summer, Bismarck reiterated his wish to see a speedy conclusion, noting that the longer the trials lasted the more “inventive” (ausgetobt) German press reporting would become.\footnote{(Herbert) Bismarck to Bülow, 13 July 1876, PA AA R 12768.} When in late September the trials led to
convictions, a few executions, and the sacking of the local Vali, the news was celebrated in the conservative and official German press.\footnote{482}{Werther to Bülow, 11 September 1876, PA AA R 12770; Tribüne 12 September 1876, Die Post 12 September 1876.}

Yet a month later, diplomats were reporting that some of the Muslim convicts had been released and Muslim agitation was on the rise as more and more wounded Ottoman soldiers were being treated in the city, leading to another round of newspaper reports and commentaries by the liberal press. Criticism of the murdered consuls grew, as correspondents learned more about Abbott’s role as a politically powerful merchant in the region, as well as the clumsy intervention of the American consul. This scrutiny and the lack of any further violent outbursts by Muslims seemed to suggest to liberal reporters that Muslim fanaticism did not deserve the entire blame for the murders in Salonica.\footnote{483}{Mazower, Salonica (2004), 218-244. Abbott’s house was set on fire, which caused reporters to delve more deeply into the Abbott family’s legacy in the area: KZ Nr. 245, 2 October 1876; NZ 1 October 1876. VossZ 1 October 1876.}

Not only the Kölnische Zeitung, but the Berliner Tageblatt, the Neue Wiener Presse, the Pester Lloyd and other European newspapers had local correspondents reporting directly from Salonica and Constantinople. Reports from these papers questioned the official narrative of unbridled Muslim fanaticism that Bismarck had been trying to create in the official press.

Bismarck was furious, finally ordering the Foreign Office to provide information from the embassies to the Norddeutsche Allgemeine and the Reichsanzeiger, which began to publish their own reports about Salonica.\footnote{484}{PA AA R 12769 Bismarck to Berlin, 5 August 1876.} In reaction to sympathetic portrayals of the Ottomans in the German press, the Foreign Office arranged for another article about the
executions, which highlighted the story of fanatical Muslims eagerly dying a martyrs’
death in early October.485

Bismarck’s efforts to stifle news coverage about Salonica reached its culmination
in the Reichstag on 5 December 1876. After voices had grown louder in the press and in
parliament agitating for Germany to either press the Ottomans more forcefully to
cooperate or pull its ships out of Salonica altogether, the Chancellor decided to make an
appearance in parliament. Here he not only waved off German responsibility to intervene
in the conflict with his famous refusal to waste the bones of even a German grenadier, but
he also rejected the idea that the German public (or lawmakers) should take an interest in
the Eastern Question. Instead, he maintained that the Franco-German demonstration was
upholding international law.

Bismarck’s appearance at the Reichstag session was also remarkable, for he used it
to cut off further discussion in the parliament. With Germany stationing warships in the
port of Salonica, Bismarck’s official reason for going before the Reichstag was to get the
approval of supplemental funds for the Imperial Navy. Yet behind closed doors, he
admitted that his real motive was to defuse “confusion” about what was transpiring in
Salonica, by using his appearance to present classified documents to the Reichstag.486 Not
only was he able to give the Reichstag the Foreign Office’s account of the events
surrounding Salonica, which underscored Muslim fanaticism and Ottoman procrastination
in punishing those found guilty, but he also held a speech without having to answer
questions. Because the documents were classified, interpellations by members of the

485PA AA R 12770 Reichsanzeiger 6 October 1876.
486PA AA, R 12771 Bülow to Wilhelm I, 29 November 1876; 5 December 1876
Reichstag were not allowed. Considering the heated battles over the Septennat just two years prior, in which Bismarck had limited parliamentary control over military budgeting, this public step was extraordinary.\textsuperscript{487} Here was Bismarck asking the parliament for its explicit support to fund the military, after all his previous energies had been invested in trying to stop such oversight. The December session in the Reichstag was the first and only time before 1914 that the Foreign Office published sensitive diplomatic documents in order to garner parliamentary approval for the military. More importantly, it allowed Bismarck to disseminate his message in public without fear of dissent or criticism.

\textbf{Theaters of War}

Bismarck’s desire to encourage popular sentiment in Germany against the Ottomans continued once war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire broke out in April 1877. Many Europeans thought that the war would be a rout, and the Russians planned a lightning campaign to defeat the Ottomans within a few months. But the battles for Plevna in July through November of 1877 were hard-fought, and the Ottoman army proved more formidable than expected, dragging out the war for over nine months. Only through gradual encirclement and then siege of the city of Plevna did the Russians finally force Osman Pasha’s Vidin army to surrender in early December, leading to a march on Constantinople in January and almost a total victory. By the time the Russians prevailed, however, the nature of the fighting had become as important as who won.

\textsuperscript{487}PA AA R 12771 \textit{Aktenstücke betreffend der Ermordung der Konsuln von Deutschland und Frankreich in Saloniki und die Entsendung des deutschen Panzergeschwaders 1876}; Bismarck (Herbert) to Bülow, 12 December 1876.
The Crisis had generated intense public interest, and once war had been declared, newspapers from all over Europe sent correspondents to the theater. German papers like the Kölnische Zeitung, the Berliner Tageblatt, and the Vossische Zeitung followed suit, as did soldiers seeking adventure. Officers were attached to both the Russian and Ottoman armies and kept in contact with German consuls, ambassadors, as well as journalists in the field. The proliferation of outside observers and adventurers not only amplified the drama of the Eastern Question in the German press but influenced operations. Viennese papers, for example, revealed the positions of Russian troop movements south of the Danube after reporters spoke with an Austrian officer. Newspaper reports also helped the Russians learn that Osman Pasha’s army was advancing on Plevna on 5 July, when war correspondents tailed Ottoman forces.488

Stories of war atrocities committed by Ottoman and Russian forces were as important as the revelation of troop movements. They re-energized interpretations of the conflict that had been gestating since the Crisis began. As in their coverage of Salonica and the “Bulgarian Horrors”, German newspapers not only channeled information but framed, interpreted, and influenced events. Thus, reporting on war atrocities became another symbolic moment in the battle for German public sympathy, and controlling news coverage became a high priority for German officials.

When stories of Russian atrocities against Muslims first appeared on 12 July 1877, during the first siege on Plevna, the German ambassador in Constantinople, Prince Reuss, dismissed them as the work of gullible British diplomats, who were eager to support the

Ottomans. After nine years in St. Petersburg, he had been sent to Constantinople to assure the Russians of German neutrality, and he acted exactly as Bismarck had expected for the duration of the war. He was an East-Elbian noble bristling with animosity for the Ottoman Empire and sympathetic to the Russian war effort.\(^489\) He thought atrocity stories would only feed Muslim fanaticism and were being disseminated by Ottoman officials.\(^490\) Only after the Ottoman ambassador to Berlin presented an array of newspaper reports from German, British, French, Austrian, and Hungarian sources did Reuss and the Foreign Office begin their own investigation.\(^491\)

Bismarck was alarmed that the British had published details of atrocities committed on both sides, after the German ambassador in London explained that British public opinion was turning against the Russians. The chancellor was quick to reject an Ottoman request that he lodge a formal complaint against the Russia and, instead, looked for ways to support the Russian war effort. Reuss began soliciting testimonies from German officers, who were attached to Russian forces. By the end of July, Reuss had received reports that Ottoman irregulars, Bashi Bozugs, had plundered and murdered Bulgarian Christians, as well as letters from German officers depicting how Ottoman soldiers had killed wounded Russian soldiers after battle.\(^492\) With stories of Ottoman atrocities in hand, Bismarck informed the Kaiser of the Sultan’s formal request for protest.

\(^{489}\) The Imperial German government was also responsible for Russian property and consular services during the war. No sooner was the war over than Reuss was sent to Vienna, as he was persona non grata with the Porte. See Schweinitz, *Denkwürdigkeiten*; Emil Raschdau, *Ein sinkendes Reich: Erlebnisse eines deutschen Diplomaten im Orient 1877-1879* (Berlin: Mittler u. Sohn, 1934), pp. 79-83.

\(^{490}\) Reuss to Bülow 12 July 1877; 18 July 1877(no. 220), PA AA R 12817.

\(^{491}\) Reuss to Bülow 24 July 1877; Letter from Wellesley 28 July 1877, PA AA R 12817.

\(^{492}\) Reuss to Bülow, 18 July 1877(no. 222); Bismarck to Reuss, 28 July 1877, PA AA R 12817.
against Czar Alexander, presenting Russian and Ottoman atrocities together. The chancellor got what he wanted. The Kaiser was shocked and despondent, musing that both sides were probably guilty of atrocities. But he agreed that Germany should not upset Russia.\footnote{Bülow to Reuss, 31 July 1877; Bismarck to Wilhelm I., 2 August 1877, PA AA R 12817.}

Military intelligence from German officers in the Russian army flowed into Berlin via Reuss and the German consul at Rustchuk (Bulgaria), providing the basis for a new press campaign. After more than a month of fighting, on 8 August, Bismarck ordered that the military reports by these German officers be published anonymously, and the first in a series of articles in the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung appeared the following day.\footnote{Wedel to Bujukdere (Reuss) 30 July 1877; Bismarck to Bülow 8 August 1877, PA AA 12817.}

The Norddeutsche Allgemeine not only presented Russian stories of Ottomans killing wounded soldiers on the battlefield, but also questioned evidence of Russian atrocities against Muslims and the wholesale eviction of Bulgarian Muslims from their villages. Muslim flight—if it existed at all—was depicted as a response to Ottoman irregulars, the Bashi-Bozuk, not as the result of Russian soldiers or Bulgarian Christians.\footnote{NAZ, No.185 9 August 1877; No. 187 11 August 1877; No. 191 15 August 1877; No. 195 21 August 1877.}

The Porte quickly reacted to the Norddeutsche Allgemeine articles, asking why the German government was foregoing its neutrality. Reuss denied that the Norddeutsche Allgemeine was an official government paper, which the Ottoman representative, Server Bey, refused to believe.\footnote{Reuss to Bülow, 7 August 1877; Bülow to Bismarck 12 August 1877, PA AA R 12817. In addition, the Norddeutsche began publishing excerpts from the St. Petersburger Zeitung, which was little more than an official Russian paper. See clippings in PA AA R 12789.}
Not content to let the semi-official press spread news of Ottoman atrocities in the German public sphere, Bismarck engineered a circular against the Porte in early August, in which he cited the unlawful Ottoman treatment of Russian soldiers under the Geneva Convention of 1864. Article Six of the convention required that wounded and captured soldiers be treated humanely by the enemy army. The drafting of the circular was a telling indication of how far Bismarck had moved away from his self-professed neutrality.

Written by state secretary, Bernhard von Bülow, the first version of the note included a long, dispassionate account of war atrocities by both Ottoman and Russian armies, calling for common solutions to the common problems of war. Bismarck scratched out all mention of Russian atrocities, instructing Bülow to focus on Ottoman atrocities. After the Kaiser protested that Russian atrocities should at least be mentioned, Bismarck threatened to cancel the note altogether. The Foreign Office proceeded with the circular as Bismarck had wished.

When news of Bismarck’s circular was published in the official Reichsanzeiger, it was celebrated in the German press. Turcophile liberal papers like the Kölnische Zeitung, the Berliner Tageblatt, and the Catholic press expressed reservations about the use of the 1864 Convention. Criticizing the silence about Russian atrocities, the Kölnische Zeitung wondered why the Russians were not being expected to abide by the Brussels Convention of 1874, which extended the duties of an occupying army to defending local

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498 Draft letter, 17 August 1877; new draft 18 August 1877, PA AA R 12817.
499 Reuss to Bülow, 20 August 1877, PA AA 12818.
500 BT No 196, 24 August 1877/ No.198 26 August 1877; NZ No. 396, 25 August 1877; Tribüne, No. 198, 26 August 1877;
populations from pillage and plunder.\textsuperscript{501} Both the \emph{Kölische Zeitung}’s war correspondent, Arthur von Huhn, and consular reports to the Foreign Office confirmed that Bulgarian Christian gangs and paramilitary units were systematically plundering and killing Bulgarian Muslims.\textsuperscript{502} The \emph{Germania} criticized the method the Foreign Office had developed to measure Ottoman compliance of Article six, which hinged on whether the Ottomans were holding Russian captives or not.\textsuperscript{503} The British and the Austrians considered compliance impossible to verify and refused to sign on to Bismarck’s plan.\textsuperscript{504}

Even after the Porte took steps to insure that Ottoman soldiers would abide by the Convention, Reuss ignored Ottoman compliance and protested against putative infractions.\textsuperscript{505} Throughout the remainder of the war, Bismarck arranged for damaging consular reports of Ottoman atrocities to find their way into the German public sphere. Reports of Bashi-Bozuk atrocities, the resettlement of Bulgarian Christians, or exemplary executions of Christian rebels were forwarded to \emph{Die Post} and the \emph{Norddeutsche Allgemeine}, while evidence of Russian and Bulgarian atrocities, complaints from the Red Cross that the Russians were targeting Ottoman lazarettos or the Muslim refugee problem were deleted.\textsuperscript{506}

Bismarck’s interventions had increased as the battle for public sympathy raged on into the war. Yet it is difficult to establish the success of Bismarck’s campaign to counter

\textsuperscript{501} KZ No. 240, 29 August 1877. PA AA R 12817-12819 passim.
\textsuperscript{502} KZ, 6 August 1877; 16 August 1877.
\textsuperscript{503} \emph{Germania} No. 190, 24 August 1877.
\textsuperscript{504} Brincken to Bülow, 20 August 1877; PA AA R 12818; cf. \emph{The Times}, 30 August 1877.
\textsuperscript{505} Reuss to Bülow, 27 July, 4 September, 12 September 1877; von Oetzen to Reuss 10 September 1877, PA AA R 12819.
\textsuperscript{506} Bismarck literally scratched out certain portions of the reports with pencil and had them forwarded on for copying. (Unnamed report) 22 September 1877; Reuss to Bülow 27 September 1877; transcript of Oetzen to Reuss (undated), PA AA R 12819.
turcophile interpretations in the German press. Only the *Vossische Zeitung* changed course, but not because of Bismarck’s interventions. The editors of the *Tante Voss* abandoned their turcophile sympathies after their own war correspondent, Heinrich von Tyszka, began writing articles critical of the Ottoman war effort, even quoting one officer, who had threatened to slaughter all Christians “like tulips” if the Ottoman army were to lose the war.\(^{507}\) Tyszka was either bribed by the Prussian Literary Office or published his attacks with the hope of being rewarded, for he gained employment there immediately after the war. Other liberal turcophile papers like the *Kölnische Zeitung* and the *Berliner Tageblatt* continued to report on brutalities from all sides, while the Catholic and Socialist press highlighted atrocities committed by Russians and Bulgarian Christians.

The news coverage by turcophile papers during the Russo-Ottoman War did affect public opinion. The *Kladderadatsch* turned its attention more generally to mocking Russian claims to “humanity” after the reports of war atrocities in the summer of 1877 became public. Poems lauded the Bulgarians for becoming “free” from the Turks, only to find themselves under autocratic Russian rule. Other verses painted Russians and Bulgarians as murderous “pioneers” of Christianity and humanity. Not a single edition of the *Kladderadatsch* went by without a segment that mocked the Russian claim to be protecting “humanity” or dismissing Christian solidarity in light of Russian and Bulgarian atrocities. When the Ottomans were holding out at Plevna, one illustration compared a Russian Cossack shouting “Constantinople” with a French soldier shouting “Berlin”,

\(^{507}\) *VossZ* 17 November 1877.
asking whether it was a new trend for aggressors to get trounced.\textsuperscript{508} Even relatively apolitical magazines like the \textit{Gartenlaube} changed the tenor of their coverage during the war. Before the outbreak of war, Ottomans were depicted largely as Bashi Bozüks—shadowy, dark, faceless irregulars, rampaging the Balkan countryside; but the battles of Plevna transformed the image of Ottomans into regular soldiers bravely fighting the Russians, and after the war Osman Pasha was celebrated in a triumphant illustration on horseback.\textsuperscript{509}

\textbf{Debating Defeat}

The only substantive debate in the German Reichstag on the Eastern Question came on 19 February 1878, when the Crisis was ebbing toward a conclusion. Russia had finally defeated the Ottoman army and was marching toward Constantinople. Worried about the consequences of a Russian victory, a group of liberal and conservative deputies asked the chancellor to address the parliament about the situation and the position of the imperial government. Bismarck explained his cautious course of appeasing Russia and maintained that Germany had no direct interest in the Eastern Question. He described Germany’s role as the “honest broker” in any peace negotiation. His speech triggered a passionate debate about the consequences of Balkan nationalism for Austria-Hungary as well as for Germany.\textsuperscript{510}

Turcophile critics like Wilhelm Liebknecht focused on the dangers of Russian expansionism. “The principle of nationality, which Russia has been able to exploit with

\textsuperscript{508} October 1877, Nr. 46. See all editions from August through November 1877.
\textsuperscript{509} \textit{Die Gartenlaube} No.5, 1878.
such luck, will be exploited in exactly the same way against Austria[...].” The Socialist leader went on to claim that it was probably already too late for Austria, that it was helpless against a Slavic “flood” (Überschwemmung). After Austria, he continued, Germany would be the next power to feel Russia’s “claws” [Krallen]. The Catholic Center’s Ludwig Windhorst harped on the consequences of Russian expansion as well. Accordingly, the Eastern Question was “the great and most important question of the future. Would the German element or the Slavic element rule the world?” The Balkan states would be nothing more than “Russian provinces with only a patina of hereditary sovereignty” if Russia continued on its course. It was in the “Germanic interest” that Germany not give into Russian expansion in the Balkans and the Straits. Both Liebknecht and Windhorst thereby supported the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire as a bulwark against threats to Austria’s integrity, while downplaying sympathy for Ottoman rule.

Although there was a strong correlation between German turcophilism and fears for Austria’s geopolitical integrity, support for Austria welled up across the political spectrum. At issue was not Austria, claimed the turcophobes in parliament, but the nature and sustainability of Ottoman rule. Conservatives like Count Eduard von Bethusy-Huc argued that Germany “had no interest in the maintenance of a Turkish state in Europe.” He claimed that the Turks were “barbarous and incapable (unkulturfähig)” and that their centuries-long dominance of the Balkans had turned the region into a backwater.

Although the Christian nationalities in the Balkans were at this time just as backward as

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511 Ibid. pp. 111-114.
512 Ibid., p. 102
513 Ibid., p. 102.
514 Ibid., p. 107.
the Ottomans, this was due to centuries of repression and had nothing to do with their inherent Unkulturfähigkeit. These Christian peoples were indeed “capable of development” and “it will be up to us (Germans), to give them the proper elements for development that they currently lack”\textsuperscript{515}

While the leader of the National Liberals, Rudolf von Bennigsen, stressed Germany’s general interest in free trade in the Black Sea, others like Wilhelm Löwe, who had become one of Bismarck’s staunchest liberal supporters, went after Windhorst and Liebknecht. He chastised the idea that Germany should have hindered the Russo-Ottoman War in the name of “Germanic interests”. Why should Germany “support a status quo, which was hopeless in the Turkish provinces of Europe? Whose condition had constantly brought the danger of a European war?” According to Löwe, Austrian and German interests were identical in the Balkans and those interests did not require the maintenance of Ottoman rule. He hoped that a European congress could find a solution that would “offer a new formation for the populations there”\textsuperscript{516} Echoing these sentiments, conservative Otto von Helldorf greeted the idea of a new order in the Balkans: “We wish that the terrible conditions[…] be abolished for all times. Especially in the interests of our Christian fellow-believers”.\textsuperscript{517} The majority of the deputies confirmed Bismarck’s answer to the Eastern Question, which was to appease Russia and establish a new system of order in the Balkans.

\textbf{The Shadow of 1878}

\textsuperscript{515} Ibid., p. 108.
\textsuperscript{516} Ibid., pp. 115-116.
\textsuperscript{517} Ibid. p.115
However much delegates in the Reichstag highlighted Ottoman backwardness and hoped for a regeneration of the Balkan peoples, the “Bulgarian Horrors” took on new meanings in Germany. Troubles in the Balkans became less about the differences between Christians and Muslims, and more about the threats posed by Christian Slavs. On the heels of the Berlin Congress, Arthur von Huhn published a damning series of articles in the *Kölnische Zeitung* in which he castigated both Russian officers and Bulgarian brigands for their “rapacious” treatment of Bulgarian Muslims, repeating his claims about Russian and Bulgarian brutality during the war. Many German diplomats began to cynically use the epithet *die sogenannten ‘Bulgarian horrors’* whenever religious violence flared up in the Ottoman domains, questioning the moral outrage that accusations of atrocity were designed to evoke. Gladstone was not only mocked in the German press as a hypocrite for supporting Bulgarian independence while rejecting it in places like Ireland and Afghanistan, but his Midlothian campaign for election in 1880, in which he reignited moral outrage by attacking Disraeli’s turcophile foreign policy, made the liberal German press apoplectic, and many papers attacked the premise that atrocities against Bulgarian Christians had taken place at all before the war started.

Although the Reichstag debate demonstrated little German sympathy for the Ottoman Empire in February 1878, the plenum also expressed no interest in Ottoman territory and left open the future development of Ottoman rule. Liberals and conservatives

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519 KZ “Gladstone und die sogenannten ‘Bulgarian Horrors’” Nr, 541 26 July 1880; BT “Greuelaten” 13 August 1880.
wanted to improve conditions in the Balkan territories, but neither group wanted to expand German power. However, the conclusion of the peace treaty at San Stefano forced Bismarck to rethink his diplomatic strategy as the “honest broker” in the Eastern Question. He worked feverishly to save the Three Emperors’ League and balance Russian and Austrian interests in the Balkans at the Congress of Berlin in the summer of 1878. Here he pruned back the newly created Bulgarian state and expanded Austrian control into Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Sanjak of Novibazar. Czar Alexander II remained bitter toward Bismarck for the Berlin Treaty, but he also came to resent the decidedly mixed sympathies of German news coverage during the Crisis. In light of the growing German alienation with Russia, the Dual Alliance between Germany and Austria in 1879 solidified a shift toward shoring up Austria’s south-eastern border as a guarantee of peace. Such an arrangement never precluded an Ottoman presence in the Balkans, and the potential for cooperation with the Sultan increased as a rapprochement began after 1880.

While the Reichstag debate had little positive to say about Ottoman rule, many Germans (including officials) were surprised by Ottoman military strength in their latest war against Russia. German officials also surmised that a consolidation of Ottoman power in the remaining Balkan territories and Asia Minor could strengthen the Ottomans’ fighting ability. Negotiations over the possibility of sending military advisors to the

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520 Stenographische Berichte (1878), 109-115.  
522 Ibid. 42-44. Canis, Bismarcks Aussenpolitik, 76.  
524 PA AA R 13281-13282 passim.
Sultan had begun in 1881, and in 1882 Otto von Kaehler led a mission to reform the
Ottoman military. A year later Colmar von der Goltz followed, and the Ottoman Empire
was celebrated in the German liberal press as an exciting and exotic new partner for the
Dual Alliance, although journalists with experience in the Ottoman lands were more
skeptical.\textsuperscript{525} German officials and soldiers amplified the reputation for fierce fighting and
soldierly discipline that Ottoman soldiers had gained during the Russo-Turkish War.
Colmar von der Goltz was one of the staunchest critics of Abdülhamid II and his regime in
private, but he lauded the Ottoman soldier for his intelligence and disciplined Islamic
education, which was the “raw material” for any future reform.\textsuperscript{526} When Count Radolinski
was an embassy counselor in Constantinople in the early 1880s, he also thought it possible
to mobilize the “uncoordinated power and the able material” of the Ottoman army for a
common war effort.\textsuperscript{527} Radolinski’s elevation to Prince Radolin came after his service to
crown prince William as Hofmarschall, and Radolin was a key figure that influenced the
young heir’s opinion of the Ottoman Empire. William developed a high opinion of
Ottoman soldiers, and on his first tour of Constantinople in 1889, he was quoted saying,
“And what material these men are! They are born soldiers!”.\textsuperscript{528} The promise of the
Ottoman state as a military partner began to emerge in the shadow of 1878.

\textsuperscript{525} Wallach, \textit{Anatomie einer Militärhilfe}, 42-54; See article in the Berliner Tageblatt, BT 17 November 1883
(\textit{PA AA R} 13235); cf. Schierer \textit{Adler und Halbmond}, 513.
\textsuperscript{526} \textit{PA AA R} 13281 Goltz to Waldersee 16 April 1885.
\textsuperscript{527} \textit{PA AA R} 13163 Radolinski to Bismarck 12 January 1880.
\textsuperscript{528} From “La Turquie” 13 November 1889, Quoted from, Scherer, \textit{Adler und Halbmond}, 515.
Chapter 5

Massacre, Modernization, and War: Moral Hazard and the High-Tide of German Turcophilism 1885-1900

[T]here is an deep contrast between conduct that follows the maxim of an ethic of ultimate ends—that is, in religious terms, 'The Christian does rightly and leaves the results with the Lord'—and conduct that follows the maxim of an ethic of responsibility, in which case, one has to give an account of the foreseeable results of one's action.

Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation”

We hope that order will reign in the Orient, because the opposite would have consequences for the Occident[...]

Bernard von Bülow, Address before the Reichstag, 12 December 1898

The massacres of Ottoman Armenians in the 1890s have garnered much attention from scholars of Imperial Germany, yet this analysis ignores the linkages between the massacres and other concerns for order in the Ottoman lands. This chapter situates the Armenian massacres in a broader historical context by analyzing German diplomacy and newspaper coverage across a longer span of time. Because the massacres happened at such a distance, news reporting by foreign correspondents framed the reception of violence and

the sympathies of German readers. This chapter embeds the tragic story of the Armenian massacres within a larger German narrative, in which stability and the promise of modernizing the Ottoman state triumphed over concerns for an embattled minority.

**Sympathy and Interpretation**

Tens of thousands of Ottoman Armenians were murdered in a series of massacres between 1894 and 1896. Like the Bulgarian Horrors, these events have invited conflicting interpretations by scholars. Many historians of the Ottoman Empire see the Armenian massacres as the consequence of social unrest, which provoked responses by angered Muslims that then spread throughout the Empire. 530 Other scholars point to the coordinated nature of the massacres, the authoritarianism of Abdül Hamid II, and see the massacres as a willful attempt to decimate a troublesome minority. 531

These divergent views do not represent ideological differences as much as the diverse sympathies of scholars. Those who specialize in the history of the Empire have often framed the massacres as an unfortunate chapter in a longer history of Great Power intervention, rebellious minorities, and the Ottoman state’s struggle for survival. Expelled, expropriated, and reeling from economic dislocation after the Great Eastern Crisis, Muslims did not want a repeat of the Russo-Ottoman War and came down hard against a rebellious Armenian minority, which they thought was trying to undermine the Ottoman

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order and incite an international crisis. Scholars of the Armenian Genocide take a different view. They also point to Great Power interventionism, which had buffeted the Empire, as an underlying cause of recurrent violence, but they see the massacres as a premeditated act, a prelude to 1915. Such interpretations place the agency for the massacres either on the doorstep of the Hamidian regime or Armenian revolutionaries, who wanted to lure the Great Powers into a confrontation with their oppressor. The diplomatic historian, William L. Langer, suggested that the massacres were a combination of both provocation and plan—a case of preparation finding the right opportunity. Armenian revolutionary groups wanted to drag the Great Powers into armed intervention in the 1890s, while Abdül Hamid II took advantage of social unrest to destroy potential Armenian resistance, calculating that the Great Powers would remain inactive.532

The Sultan proved to be right. In contrast to the Great Eastern Crisis, the Armenian massacres did not cause a major conflagration. As the gravity of Great Power balancing shifted toward East Asia, the Triple Alliance and the Franco-Russian alliance held the Eastern Question in check. Russia had little appetite for intervention and feared that a revolutionary movement could spread to its own Armenian population. France neither wanted to upset its alliance with the Russians nor imperil its financial interests in the region, and remained opposed to intervention as well. Great Britain stood alone in wanting to use force. Lord Salisbury suggested a partition of the Ottoman Empire after violence resumed in the summer of 1895, but soon backed away after Germany and Austria

rejected intervention. They wanted to maintain the status quo and feared that a partition would invite confrontation with Russia.  

Sympathy for either Ottoman Armenians or the Ottoman state also shaped the public reception of the massacres, just as news coverage provided the context for debate. Contemporary reactions in Great Britain were overwhelmingly anti-Ottoman, and public outrage was so widespread that even staid Tories like Salisbury could no longer defend maintaining Ottoman rule.  

In France Abdül Hamid II became known as the “Red Sultan”, and concern for Armenians mobilized both the left and the Catholic right. The term “Turk” took on a multiplicity of negative meanings in the United States at the turn of the century, as American evangelicals and progressives joined Gladstonian liberals in Great Britain in condemning the Ottomans and “serving civilization”.  

Swiss and German activists—mostly conservative Protestant missionaries—collected millions for Armenian orphans and petitioned the German government.

**State Violence and Moral Hazard**

In the shadow of the German-Ottoman military alliance during the First World War and the Armenian Genocide, scholars have studied the Armenian question in Germany with a singular fascination. They have shown how expressions of sympathy for

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533 Ibid., p. 201
535 H. Gaultier de Saint-Amand, *Au Service du Sultan rouge: Épisodes des massacres d’Arménie (1894-1896)* (Paris, 1909);
Armenians competed against powerful turcophile interpretations of the massacres.

According to this story, the Philarmenian movement in Germany attracted a variety of Christian milieus across the confessional divide, as well as a younger generation of Social Democrats, but it faced an uphill struggle against popular opinion, which was led by a manipulative government and semi-official press. Yet the narrow focus on the massacres and its critics has presented a distorted picture of German news coverage, the public reception, and the motivations behind German diplomacy. Turcophilism was not just a reaction to the Armenian question, but part of broader concern for stability and security. Turcophile interpretations of the massacres tapped into a familiar repertoire of clichés from the German culture wars that had been used during the Great Eastern Crisis, as well as ways of viewing social order that privileged state violence.

The primacy of state violence in the minds of German liberals and the turcophile apologists for Ottoman rule was more practical than ideological. Political scientists have recently begun to theorize the “moral hazard” of humanitarian interventionism and the dilemmas surrounding armed conflict designed to save minorities from genocidal violence. This research suggests that threats of force from outside powers can increase the likelihood of genocidal violence by providing incentives for dominant groups to destroy a minority before intervention can occur. Conversely, the threat of outside force can also encourage minority groups to instigate violence in the hope that an intervention will take

In the context of the Armenian massacres, turcophile papers in Germany underscored this problem of moral hazard, as did German officials, who did not want violence to escalate into a conflagration among the other European states.

The geography of German news reporting played an important role in the development of Turcophile interpretations of the massacres, as the heartland of Ottoman power remained the southern Balkans and Constantinople. Most German news coverage about the Ottoman Empire came from the borderlands with Greece and Bulgaria and provided the intellectual backdrop for German visions of Ottoman order. War on the Greco-Ottoman frontier followed closely after the Armenian massacres. Faced with growing irredentist calls for war from within, Greece rode anti-Muslim public sentiment in Europe that had been stoked by the massacres and attacked the Ottoman Empire in the spring of 1897. The Ottoman victory over the Greeks was a vindication for German turcophiles; it created prestige for the German military mission in the Ottoman Empire and increased momentum for German support of the Sultan. German celebrations of the Ottoman victory over the Greeks drowned out concern for Armenian victims, as a narrative of Ottoman modernization took hold in Imperial Germany.

**Frayed Articles**

The Treaty of Berlin in 1878 not only rolled back Russian gains during the war, but it also stipulated equal rights for minorities in the Ottoman Empire and the new states of Bulgaria and Romania. Article 5 of the Treaty guaranteed the rights of Muslims in

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Bulgaria and East Rumelia, Article 44 of Jews in Romania, and Article 61 called for administrative reforms for Armenians in Eastern Anatolia. While there was no political arrangement in place to enforce these stipulations, pressure to hold governments accountable stemmed from domestic forces within Western Europe, such as Jewish organizations in the case of Romanian Jews, and liberals such as Prime Minister William Gladstone in Great Britain, who lobbied for Armenian reforms in the Ottoman provinces in the 1880s and early 1890s.  

By the 1890s, it was clear that none of the governments intended to fulfill the promises of equal protection envisioned in the Berlin Treaty. Romania continued its discrimination against Jews and tolerated violence against them, causing many to emigrate to Western Europe, the United States, and Palestine. The new Bulgarian government began an underground campaign to expel its remaining Muslims and supported forces within Eastern Rumelia that sought to accomplish the same goal. In the Ottoman provinces of Eastern Anatolia, the creation of Kurdish “Hamidiye” regiments to shore up the Empire’s eastern flank brought depredations against Armenian communities, whom the Ottoman state tolerated as the price of increased security.

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542 PA AA R 4547-4549 Grausamkeiten der Bulgaren gegen die Mohammedaner und die Repatriirung der Flüchtlinge sowie die Verhältnisse der Mohammedaner in Bulgarien 1879-1885.

The influx of Muslim refugees from the Balkans and the Caucasus after the Russo-Turkish War, as well as the dwindling proportion of Christians in the Empire, provided the logic for the “Politicization of Islam” under Abdül Hamid II. The reassertion of Muslim hegemony became an animating force of the Hamidian centralization attempts, especially along the Eastern frontier, where the Ottomans had lost Ardahan, Kars, and Batum to Russia in 1878. The British-led Armenian reform project was a barrier to these schemes, as it called for a radical decentralization of power at the provincial level and envisioned judicial reform that would have given local communities more control. The Armenian reform program went against a core principle of Ottoman state-building since the Tanzimat—centralization and stripping local administrators of control. The major innovation of the Hamidian regime was to use Islam as a tool of legitimacy and rally the forces of religious conservatism around the Sultan. Whereas the bureaucracy of the Sublime Porte had previously shunned Sunni clerics, who resisted centralization and wanted to maintain their own check on state power, Abdül Hamid II now attempted to co-opt them with promises of an Islamic constitutional order. Like the other treaty-bound states, the Ottoman Empire resisted reforms as much as they could and sought to counteract the substance of Article 61.

Bismarck had remained as detached from the plight of Armenians as he had from Balkan Christians, seeing the Berlin Treaty as an instrument of stability, not emancipation.

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He had viewed Catholic Armenians as agents of the French during the opening years of the Kulturkampf and saw Armenian communities as tools of the inter-imperialist rivalry among the other Great Powers. Religious differences among Armenians were important, with client relationships developing between France and Catholic Armenians, while Russia strove to protect Orthodox Armenians in the Ottoman lands. Straddling the Russo-Ottoman border, the mostly Apostolic Armenians of Eastern Anatolia fell to the British almost by default. Gladstone and activists in the agitation for Bulgarian independence had also reacted with opprobrium to news of Ottoman violence against Armenians during the Russo-Turkish War, and Bismarck supported efforts to establish an Armenian reform commission in 1879 as a way of keeping Britain involved in Ottoman affairs. Article 61 was, however, “ornamental” in Bismarck’s mind, an attempt to appease British public opinion. Thus, the Armenian question could be maintained or sacrificed for Germany’s larger strategic interest, and the reforms remained an option to support or ignore, but they were not a central concern to German foreign policy.

Some scholars have suggested that Germany became an opponent of the Armenian reforms in the Wilhelmine era because of Germany’s expansionist aspirations. Yet the tradition of Bismarckian indifference did not put Germany’s strategic interest at odds with

549 PA AA R
the Armenian reform project, so much as it limited Germany’s ability to shape outcomes. German diplomats were not against the goals of the reform project or remedying Armenian grievances against the Hamidian regime, but they had very little power to influence the Ottoman state. While Ottoman state-building became an important strategic interest at the turn of the century, German influence was just beginning to unfold in the early 1890s in the form of armaments and railroad concessions. While German officials sympathized with the plight of the Armenians, they saw no alternative to a status quo that kept the Armenian minority under Ottoman control, so they yielded to Ottoman power. The German desire for stability was born out of Germany’s weak geopolitical position and desire for stability, not its expansionist ambitions.

German visions of stasis were most important on the western border of the Ottoman Empire, where state-building had been part of the Eastern Question since the Berlin Treaty of 1878. The Bulgarian army was almost completely under Russian control after the Russo-Ottoman War, while Austria had reached out to Serbia as a way of counter-balancing Bulgaria. Prince Alexander von Battenberg, who ascended to the throne in 1879, tried to limit Russian influence. Battenberg was a popular figure in Germany, and many saw him as a paragon of stability against Russian intrigues and Slavic irredentism, although Bismarck was weary of his liberalism and closeness to the British royal family.551 German diplomats in the field were also worried that war could break out with the Ottoman Empire after efforts to repatriate Muslims into Eastern Rumelia failed, and the remaining Bulgarian Muslims were periodically attacked in the 1880s and forced to

leave. Battenberg tried to reign in terrorism but eventually relented to nationalist forces, which were trying to purge Eastern Rumelia of Muslims. Yet Bulgarians had also grown tired of Russian influence by 1881, and Germans hoped that they would shake off Russian control as Bulgarian officers began to take charge of the army.

Not only had officials worried about the maintaining the Berlin settlement, but so too did journalists who reported from the field. When Arthur von Huhn went to Sofia in September 1885 to report on Bulgarian unification for the *Kölnische Zeitung*, he was surprised at what he found. A fierce critic of the Russian war effort and Bulgarian statehood in 1878, he praised the progress that Bulgaria had made in creating a disciplined standing army and developing state institutions in the capital. Corruption, banditry, and instability were declining, as was Russian influence; and Stefan Stambolov’s Liberal Party was charting an independent course that had won the support of Battenberg. The young monarch went along with the peaceful unification of Bulgaria after a coup in Eastern Rumelia had deposed the Ottoman governor and created a groundswell of popular support in both territories. After a decisive Bulgarian victory over Serbia in November 1886, Huhn wrote a series of articles championing Bulgaria as a model Balkan nation that would bring peace to the region and help end the Eastern Question. In addition, the Ottomans had been remarkably pragmatic about Bulgarian unification and shown moderation by refusing to attack, which Huhn believed would lead to peaceful co-existence. In his vision, both powers could fortify their common border, as Bulgaria could build up the “Slavic

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552 PA AA R 4547 Manuscript 6 April 1880.  
553 PA AA R 4526 Kollier to Berlin 16 May 1885.  
554 PA AA R 13225 passim.
element”, while the Ottomans provided a refuge for the “Muslim element” leaving the Bulgarian territories.\(^{555}\) Bernhard Stern of the Berliner Tageblatt also celebrated the Bulgarian victory and saw Bulgaria bridging Occident and Orient. The new state mixed modern European warfare with an Oriental ability to keep the peace with former oppressors. Bulgarians retained cultural affinities with the Ottomans and remained a suzerain state, while their orientation westward would disengage them from Russia.\(^{556}\)

When a Russian-led coup toppled Battenberg in August 1886, both Huhn and Stern not only saw the reassertion of Russian influence as a step backwards, but also worried that “Asiatic” Pan-Slavic expansionism would lead to more wars and destabilization. A counter-coup by Stambolov led to Battenberg’s return just days after his exile, but international pressure from Russia and Bismarck forced him to relinquish the throne in September. Huhn’s reporting put the Kölnische Zeitung on a confrontational course with Bismarck, and many other German papers joined in condemning Bismarck’s decision to oust Battenberg in favor of a new Bulgarian monarch—a cousin from the Saxe-Coburg line, Ferdinand I. A public outcry in support of Battenberg was only quelled after Bismarck called new elections, campaigning on the French war threat and putting together the Kartell coalition in 1887.\(^{557}\) But German newspapers like the Kölnische Zeitung, the Berliner Tageblatt, and the Frankfurter Zeitung continued to argue that Bismarck had missed an opportunity to transform the Balkans.\(^{558}\)

\(^{555}\) KZ “Der Orient”, 6 December 1885 Nr. 338, 2. Blatt.
\(^{556}\) BT “Über den Balkan” 19 November 1885 Nr. 512.
\(^{557}\) Hink, Bismarcks Pressepolitik, p. 112.
Greece was another border region with the Ottoman Empire that drew the attention of German correspondents, yet most regarded this state as a failure and a land of brigandage and lawlessness. The long-serving correspondent in Rome for the *Berliner Tageblatt*, Hans Barth, spent his summer months traveling Greece and the Ottoman Empire throughout the 1880s and early 1890s, writing scathing vignettes in the *feuilleton* about Greek backwardness and corruption. He poked fun at German Philhellenists, claiming that contemporary Greeks had nothing in common with their ancient ancestors and that German scholars were oblivious of contemporary Greece. He popularized the work of Jakob Philip Fallmerayer, a Bavarian orientalist scholar who had been a fierce critic of Greek independence in the 1830s, stating that the Greek population was racially closer to Slavs and Turks than the ancients. In another article he complained about corruption in Athens, the low quality of the Greek universities, and the louche morals of students. He enjoyed the costumes, the food, and the ruins but otherwise thought Greece had little to offer European *Kultur*. His colleague at the Tageblatt, Paul Mygind, also began to travel between Athens and Constantinople in the early 1890s and was equally critical of Greek corruption, especially the mushrooming public debt that had led the country to declare bankruptcy in 1891. The *Kölnische Zeitung* published a series of articles (most likely by Julius Grosser) between 1889 and 1891 about the Greco-Ottoman border between Thessaly and Macedonia. These placed much of the blame for the breakdown of order on the increase of Greek banditry and irredentism. He complained that Greek border patrols demanded bribes and tipped off bandits about Westerners traveling

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559 “*Der Zeitgetist* Donnerstag zum Berliner Tageblatt,” “*Athener Bilderbogen*” 12 October 1885 Nr. 41.
in the area. Greece was a favorite whipping boy of the German press. Of the 53 articles surveyed over the period 1883-1893, 3 portrayed Greece positively, 24 negatively, while 19 articles about the Ottoman Empire could be interpreted as positive and 10 as negative. Bulgaria was held in high esteem for its state-building capacity, a model nation that had begun to westernize, while maintaining ties to its Oriental brethren. But Greece was representative of everything that was wrong with the Christian states once under Muslim rule.

Below the Surface

While keeping order, the Hamidian regime had also caused dissatisfaction among many constituencies in the Ottoman Empire. Underground societies had blossomed by the late 1880s. Traditional reformers were dismayed by the sultan’s politicization of Islam, as well as his rejection of Westernization. Christians were upset by his privileging of Islam and his rejection of formal equality for all imperial subjects. A younger generation of soldiers was frustrated by the army’s weaknesses and the Sultan’s refusal to put the military establishment on a sure footing. Prussian reformers like Goltz were frustrated as well. Many of these underground societies operated abroad, in Western Europe and along the Balkan periphery of the Empire, where disaffected soldiers as well as Muslim and Christian intellectuals worked together to undermine the Abdül Hamid’s rule.

With little movement by the Ottoman government to implement Article 61 of the Berlin Treaty, Russian-Armenian university students in Geneva formed the Hinchak revolutionary committee in 1887, which sought to use violence in eastern Anatolia in

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560 Articles from the time-period 1885-1894.
561 BAMA N737 v. 34 Goltz to Strempel 2 April 1909.
much the same way as other insurgents had in the Balkans. Like many of the other underground societies, the Hinchaks enjoyed sympathy but little real support from everyday Armenians, who were scattered geographically and stratified by class. The socialist ideology of the Hinchaks not only called for the creation of a national resistance movement, but for class conflict among Armenians to dislodge the nation from traitors and opportunists who were complicit with the Ottoman state. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation—Hai Heghapokhakan Dashnaksutiun (Dashnaks) was less dogmatic than the Hinchaks and formulated a manifesto in 1890 that also called for liberation.562

The emergence of Armenian revolutionary movements added a new dimension to British lobbying efforts on behalf of Ottoman Armenians. German diplomats came to see Armenian reform efforts as dangerous and quixotic—not because reform imperiled German interests but rather the Armenians themselves. Goltz found the entire British strategy misguided, as it was impossible to reform an Ottoman government that had no interest in being reformed.563 Newspaper correspondents soon labeled Armenia the “Poland of the Orient”, because it lacked the potential to emerge sovereign like other nationalities. “The Turks will not allow a repeat of Bulgaria” wrote the Kölnische Zeitung in 1893, after a failed attempt by an Armenian group to assassinate an Ottoman diplomat.

563 PA AA R 14413-14414, R 14431.
Neither German correspondents or diplomats thought these Armenian socialists represented a majority of Armenians but did believe they were intent on using “propaganda of the deed” to foment violence. The paper took aim at Britain, not only because Armenian revolutionaries were planning terrorist acts from London, but because British pressure had created unrealistic expectations among a few deranged socialists. The paper wondered how Britain could march its ships across the mountains of Asia Minor and saw the Armenian reform project as empty rhetoric designed to please British liberals at home rather than help Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. 564

The Geography of Violence: Facts and Frameworks

News of violence began to trickle out of the Sassun region in the autumn of 1894, after the British vice consul Hallward alerted British journalists about the Ottoman suppression. Reacting to protests by a few Armenian Hunchak revolutionaries, Hamidiye units swept over dozens of villages and killed thousands of Armenians in a massive military crackdown. British papers carried the story along with commentaries critical of the official Ottoman account. Great Power diplomacy shifted into high-gear in an attempt to quell further bloodshed, and the “Triplice” of Britain, France, and Russia instituted commissions to settle local disputes. On 30 September 1895, an Armenian protest march in Constantinople triggered a second round of bloodshed, after police and Islamic students tried to hinder protesters as they made their way toward Topkapı palace to present a petition to the sultan. A firefight broke out and violence against Armenians spread over the entire city for a number of days. In the aftermath, communal violence against

564KZ “Das Attentat” 12 September 1893 Nr. 324.
Armenians and other Christian minorities flared up in villages throughout Anatolia and continued intermittently into December, totaling perhaps 20,000 dead by the beginning of 1896. The final wave of violence began on 26 August 1896, after a group of Hinchaks stormed the Ottoman Imperial Bank in Constantinople, demanding mediation by the Great Powers. Throughout the city Armenians were immediately attacked by armed bands of Muslims, aided by police and other state officials. For the next several days, Armenians were sought out and murdered in the streets of Constantinople before the violence ceased with remarkable swiftness.  

These shifting sites of violence were as important as the acts themselves. Location not only influenced the public reception in Germany, but also brought social actors beyond journalists into the transmission and dissemination of information. In Eastern Anatolia Protestant missionaries from the United States, Switzerland, and the German lands had been active since the 1840s, creating long-lasting networks among Ottoman Christians, Alevi (a Muslim sect), and Sunni Muslims in the eastern borderlands of the Empire. Active in establishing hospitals and schools, these groups competed with the Ottoman state for influence and had an uneasy relationship with local officials. While news of massacres reached Western Europe and the United States via journalists and diplomats in Constantinople, missionaries provided another channel for information. These groups marshaled their own facts, experiences, and frameworks for understanding.

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565 Langer, Diplomacy, pp. 145-166, 195-212; Saupp, Das deutsche Reich pp. 82-111; PA AA R 13165
the massacres that came to differ significantly from those of journalists in Constantinople.\textsuperscript{566}

As Axel Meißner has pointed out, there was little controversy in Germany when news from the Ottoman lands first arrived in late August 1894. With the massacres far away in the interior of Asia Minor, German correspondents in Constantinople followed the reports of British journalists and largely agreed that the Ottoman response represented reprisals and not simply an attempt to maintain order. The Havas wire agency, as well as the newly established Viennese agency, the \textit{Internationale Korrespondenz}, was also tethered to these news sources, publishing truncated versions of both the British press and the official Ottoman explanations of the Hamidiye raids. Disagreement emerged when violence came to the Ottoman capital in late September 1895, and German correspondents began relying on their own experience to write the news.\textsuperscript{567}

The tone shifted after journalists began to cast the violence and its causes in a new light. The demonstrations in Constantinople called the story of Armenian victimhood into question, for protesters were armed and fought with the police after they were hindered from continuing to march. The \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} labeled the incident “The Armenian Putsch”, castigating both the police reaction as well as Armenians for bringing guns and knives to a supposedly “peaceful” demonstration. The \textit{Berliner Tageblatt} began to question British accounts of Sassun in the days after the incident in Constantinople, stating


\textsuperscript{567}Meißner, Martin Rades \textit{“Christliche Welt\textquoteleft}, p. 68.
that the sight of armed Armenians in the city brought confusion to the entire Armenian question as these groups of protestors lent credibility to the Ottoman position that the state was reacting to legitimate social unrest. Over the next several weeks, correspondents presented eye-witness accounts from both sides—Armenians blaming the police, Muslims blaming Armenian provocateurs—while documenting the bloody suppression in the streets of Constantinople that left thousands of Armenians dead.\textsuperscript{568} The \textit{Frankfurter Zeitung} tended to give more support to the British investigations in Anatolia but followed an identical path in its coverage of Constantinople.\textsuperscript{569} The \textit{Vossische Zeitung} did not send its own correspondent, summarizing the reports from other papers.

In recasting violence as a more muddled battle between minorities fighting for better treatment and the state, these liberal papers led a debate about the causes and consequences of violence. According to the \textit{Kölnische Zeitung}, Muslim “fanaticism” did not explain why violence carried over from the police to the general Muslim population. Rather, years of humiliation at the hands of the Great Powers and jealousy of Armenian economic success made it easy for the “old-Turkish party” (i.e. Muslim conservatives) to rally the poor, who were motivated by petty greed rather than religious conviction. By the same logic, the vast majority of Armenians were innocent, but a small group of Armenian revolutionaries sought to incite an aggressive reaction from the Ottoman government, which would lead to Great Power intervention. Newspapers recounted atrocity narratives from past crises as a warning about the contradictions of interventionism. The Polish uprising in 1863 was crushed by the very same repressive Russia that used the Bulgarian

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\textsuperscript{568} KZ “Der armenische Putsch” 3 October 1895 Nr. 851; 11 October 1895 Nr. 875.
\textsuperscript{569} FZ 29 September 1895-12 December 1895.
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Horrors as a pretext for war in 1877. The editors of the Kölnische Zeitung reserved special criticism for British media in fomenting crisis: “Then as now the British press raised its voice to protest against the Turkish authorities for the atrocities, placing all the blame on them, while the Armenian committee releases pamphlets of numerous and unnamed atrocities committed against ostensibly innocent Armenians.”\textsuperscript{570} The Berliner Tageblatt claimed that the Armenian protestors did not arm themselves for protection, but wanted to provoke a massacre that would eventually cause the Great Powers to intervene. The Frankfurter Zeitung agreed.\textsuperscript{571}

The debate in Germany polarized in late 1895 between liberal papers that criticized the Armenian demonstration and warned about the moral hazard of intervention and others that were critical of the German government’s inaction and wanted to demonstrate Christian solidarity. The theologian-cum-publicist Martin Rade became an important source for the German Philarmenian movement, and his journal, Christliche Welt, published accounts by the Armenian theologian Vardepet Ter-Mkrttschjan, as well as from the British press about the massacres. When the German government remained unmoved in February 1896, after the publication of a second British blue book documenting atrocities across Eastern Anatolia, Rade spearheaded efforts to coordinate the activities of German and British Protestants to petition their governments on behalf of Ottoman Armenians.\textsuperscript{572}

\textsuperscript{570} KöZ 11 October 1895 Nr. 875.  
\textsuperscript{571} BT “Der armenische Aufruhr” 3 October 1895 Nr. 502; FZ “Armenischer Aufstand” 5 October 1895.  
\textsuperscript{572} Meissner, Martin Rades ‘Christliche Welt’
Johannes Lepsius, a Protestant theologian and missionary inspired by Philarmenians like Rade, garnered much attention during the massacres for his attacks on German inaction, as well as his critique of the German press. As the son of the Karl Richard Lepsius, an oriental scholar and prominent member of the Prussian Academy of Sciences, the younger Lepsius was raised in an intellectual and religiously pious household. After his finishing his doctorate in philosophy in 1880, he set off for Jerusalem and Syria, where he was involved in missionary work and encountered the progeny of Christians orphaned during an outbreak of violence in Lebanon in 1860. His wife Margarethe was from a prominent missionary family, which together with his family contacts, gave Lepsius an unrivaled network of missionaries and orientalist scholars far beyond Germany’s borders. 573 He toured Eastern Anatolia in April 1896, aided by local missionaries, and wrote a series of articles that summer, which formed the basis of a book published in August. 574

Philarmenians like Lepsius and Rade did not answer the criticisms of turcophile German papers as much as they tried to amplify the horror of violence against Armenians. No distinctions were made between the Anatolian countryside and Constantinople, nor were the underlying causes of violence or the implications of a violent confrontation between the Ottomans and the other Great Powers explored. Rade began to pick and choose stories from the British press—which had begun to criticize Armenian revolutionaries in Constantinople in September 1895 as well—focusing on depredations in Anatolian countryside. The extended book version of Lepsius’ article, Armenien und

573 Andreas Baumann, Johannes Lepsius’ Missiologie (PhD Diss., University of South Africa), pp. 26-39.
574 Meißner, Rades ’Christliche Welt’, p. 69; Der Reichsbote “Wahrheit über Armenien” 17 August 1896.
Europa: Eine Anklageschrift, continued this strategy of playing up rural violence and minimizing news from the city. He conceded that protests in Constantinople might have included armed revolutionaries, but the majority of Armenians in the countryside wanted nothing to do with “a few disquieted heads in London, Paris, Athens, or Constantinople”. His most breathtaking criticism involved the German press, which he claimed was “manufacturing lies” about what was transpiring in the Ottoman lands and distorting the news to serve German political ambitions.

Yet for all his assertions that German papers were lying to the public and manufacturing information for the Ottoman government, little information in his Anklageschrift had not already made its way into German broadsheets reporting from Constantinople and other major cities abroad. Contrary to his claims, German newspapers had given the British parliamentary blue book of February 1896 attention on the front pages, but they had also cautioned that these reports were subject to the same problems of veracity that any news item would have been, when two sides (in this case, Ottoman and British officials) presented stories so diametrically opposed. The immediate experiences of German correspondents had lent more credibility to the British blue books, not less. Since the Armenian demonstration in September 1895, liberal papers had documented depredations against Armenians in the city, presenting Muslim violence not as a spontaneous reaction to revolutionary activity but as a coordinated action tolerated and encouraged by the police. It became clear to correspondents that the Ottoman authorities were exaggerating the extent of Armenian support for revolutionary activity in

576 Ibid. p. 42 and p. 53.
Constantinople, just as it was clear that Armenian militants were willing to provoke a violent crackdown in the hope that the Great Powers would intervene. Correspondents from British and Austrian papers wrote much the same thing.\textsuperscript{577}

Lepsius was not attempting to inflect the public debate with a hitherto unknown story of Armenian suffering. Instead, he was trying to mobilize groups in Germany by bringing suffering closer to home. His target audience was pious Christians in Germany’s own heartland, and he sought to cast the news coverage in Germany as a story of big-city liberals, who naively praised religious toleration and peaceful coexistence, while thousands of honest Christians perished in the fields. There was no better way to spark a movement than by claiming that the liberal German media were propagating distortions, or worse, falsehoods under the approving eye of the state. By linking liberal papers to a larger German establishment bent on lying for the sake of Great Power politics, he was playing into rural resentments that had been building since the government began tearing down agricultural tariffs under Caprivi’s chancellorship. Interest groups like \textit{Bund der Landwirte} had mobilized small landholders against liberalizing trade and wanted protections from both grain imports as well as unbridled domestic competition.\textsuperscript{578} In a rhetorical trope bound to please domestic agrarians, Lepsius painted a picture of dutiful Armenians in the countryside, who provided the backbone of the economy and toiled in silent perdition, while bureaucrats orchestrated a mass murder of the peasantry. Most of

\textsuperscript{577}Even turcophile papers like the Kölnische Zeitung quoted constantly from foreign press: KZ 1 October 1896 in PA AA R 14435.
the letters of protest that the Foreign Office received came from small, rural Protestant communities of less than 2,000 people.579

Lepsius was not only courting agrarian circles with this type of advocacy; he was also courting anti-semites. Dissatisfaction among small farmers and political anti-semitism often went hand in hand in the depression years of the early 1890s. He chose Der Reichsbote to begin his campaign for the Armenians in the summer of 1896 and continued to use it to launch attacks on the government. This paper had long been an organ of Prussian conservatives, who had called for the revocation of Jewish emancipation in the 1860s and been supporters of the Bund der Landwirte and political anti-semitism throughout the 1890s.580 Lepsius also chose to criticize the liberal press, which had been a tried and true tactic for the demagogues of the antisemitic parties, who held the unfair news coverage of the “Jewish press” responsible for their own electoral failures. Adolf Stoecker, a protestant pastor and perhaps the most prominent antisemite in Imperial Germany used his newspapers, Das Volk and Deutsche Evangelische Zeitung, to push the Philarmenian story, for it fit Stoecker’s own narrative of a Jewish stranglehold on the press.

Lepsius’ association with philosemites like Wilhelm Faber was another factor that placed the Philarmenian movement close to the antisemitic right. A student of Franz

579 These letters continued to come in for the next several years. See PA AA R 14435, R 14438.
Delitzsch and a graduate of his *Institutum Judaicum* in Leipzig, which trained Protestant theologians for missionary work among Jews, Faber published Lepsius’ *Anklageschrift* along with a host of other books on the conversion of Jews and Muslims to Christianity.\(^{581}\) German Jews had long harbored reservations about the Protestant study of Judaism as a reverse form of antisemitism, and Faber’s proselytizing brand of philosemitism was deeply unpopular among Jews in Central Europe, where these missionaries were most active. The *Kölnische Zeitung* zeroed in on this subtext of the campaign and mused that some of those who wanted “a crusade in the name of Armenia” would have no problem converting or expelling Jews from Europe or taking Christendom back to the Middle Ages.\(^{582}\)

No paper attacked the Philarmenians like the *Berliner Tageblatt*. Since Lepsius appeared on the scene, Mosse’s daily grew more vehement in linking Armenians with revolutionary activity, publishing every shred of evidence that Bernhard Stern could find in Constantinople and portraying the Ottoman state in a battle against social unrest and “Christian fanaticism”. The correspondent not only described the organized murder of Armenians in the streets of Constantinople, but also underscored the anarchism of these revolutionaries, who were committed to provoking an international crisis. As a left liberal newspaper deeply rooted in cosmopolitan Berlin and its Jewish community, the *Berliner Tageblatt* had little patience for the Philarmenian campaign, especially when antisemites

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\(^{581}\) Wilhelm Faber was also author of *Der Kampf des Lichtes mit der Finsternis unter den Juden Osteuropas: Beobachtungen und Erlebnisse* (Leipzig: Faber, 1891). Other titles from W. Faber and Co. during the time Lepsius’ tract was published included: *Der Geisteskampf des Christentums gegen den Islam bis zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge und Zwei Bücher gegen den Muhammedanismus*.

\(^{582}\) KZ “Der armenische Kreuzzüge” 25 September 1896 Nr. 853.
like Paul Förster shared the stage with Lepsius at rallies.\textsuperscript{583} Mosse’s paper, which had tacked hard against political antisemitism in the 1890s, sought to undermine Lepsius and his cohort of missionary men at every turn.\textsuperscript{584} It is hard to imagine Lepsius was unaware of the company he was keeping or the audience he would be reaching through his efforts.\textsuperscript{585}

His appeals to Christian solidarity were also designed to reach across the confessional divide by framing the Armenian massacres as a great struggle between the “honor” of Christianity and Islam. “Are the Great Powers going to accept Islam as a new Christian confession?”, he asked rhetorically toward the end of his tract. Lepsius was not only directing his appeal for Armenians ecumenically, in terms of “Christian Germany” and the “Christian Powers” of Europe; he was also dividing the peoples of the Ottoman Empire into discrete categories of Christian and Muslim, victim and perpetrator, good and evil.\textsuperscript{586} Christians should come together regardless of confessional differences and focus their attention on the evil that befell its members.

This strategy of mobilizing Christians across confession worked. A groundswell of support for collections in church synods emerged in rural areas across Germany. This was true for predominantly Catholic regions like the Rhineland and Westphalia as well as

\textsuperscript{583} For an alternate interpretation see Anderson, “Down in Turkey, Far Away”, p. 96.
\textsuperscript{584} Alan T. Levenson suggests that the philosemitism of missionaries was mostly rhetorical. Between Philosemitism and Anisemitism: Defenses of Jews and Judaism in Germany, 1871-1932 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2004), pp. 169-171.
\textsuperscript{585} After the First World War he fully embraced anti-semitism: “...the Jewish people survived the Middle Ages and modern times as a parasite on the backs of the Germanic people” Document Nr. 1555, and was an ardent supporter of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, “Chamberlain is great! Great!”, Nr. 1484, in Deutschland, Armenien, und die Türkei—Dokumente und Zeitschriften aus dem Dr. Johannes Lepius Archiv an der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Teil 2, Hermann Goltz (ed.).
\textsuperscript{586} Armenien und Europa, p. 112.
majority Protestant areas like Saxony. Peasant associations reigned supreme in the countryside and were deeply antisemitic, which was one of the reasons why the Synod of Brandenburg became concerned after its own Pastor Association pleaded with the High Consistory [Oberkirchenrat] to institute a province-wide collection for the Armenians. Wilhelm Hubert, a synodal representative and state secretary in the Prussian Ministry of Interior, feared that allowing an official collection for Armenians would open the floodgates for antisemitic agitation, especially after Stoecker’s attempts to stir up trouble in the general synodal meeting. Hubert sympathized with Armenian victims and hoped that private collections would help orphaned children, but he also thought that official sanction of collections for non-Protestant Christians would create tension with German Catholics. In the end, Brandenburg synod chose not to institute a general collection, but many local churches did so anyway.

At this time, the Catholic church retained its tradition of neutrality toward the Ottoman Empire, but church leaders felt the pressure from below. A mass rally in Cologne drew a number of prominent clerics and Center politicians, who came to collect for Armenian victims. But the Catholic press remained circumspect about the Philarmenian movement, devoting little space to Lepsius or his agitation movement. Neither Germania nor the Kölnische Volkszeitung had correspondents in Constantinople, and like many papers, they relied on their Berlin bureaus to sort and amalgamate news from other sources. The Catholic press had followed the news reports of their liberal competitors, which had presented enough bad news about what was happening to

587 PA AA R 14435 Hubert to Mumm 28 October 1896
588 Ibid. Hubert to Mumm 23 October 1896.
Armenians for German Catholics to recognize Armenian suffering. They did not need Lepsius for that. Yet the Philarmenian movement did succeed in drumming up support from Catholics in the countryside.

**Liberals and the State**

As a new round of violence rocked the Ottoman capital in late August 1896, correspondents wrote a flurry of reports while editors tried to make sense of what was transpiring. After a group of Armenians had stormed the Ottoman Imperial Bank, killing several people and threatening to blow up the building, a city-wide pogrom ensued. The correspondents of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and the *Kölnerische Zeitung* documented the systematic murder of Armenians in the streets of Constantinople. Amid such a display of violence, editorials explored the international forces that had brought the Armenian question to the fore, and how a minority, which had been such an integral part of the Empire, could almost be eradicated in a few years.

Blaming Great Britain for supporting the Armenian reform project had been a popular motive throughout the crisis, but with the final wave of violence so overwhelming, liberal papers turned to the internal dynamics of Ottoman state-building. The present violence was not like suppressions of the past, in which unruly Christian populations on the periphery were put down. Instead, claimed the *Kölnerische Zeitung*, a form of “oriental warfare” was underway for the purpose of destruction, much as the Janissaries were destroyed in the 1820s, so a new state could develop in its place. The logic of state violence became crucial to this idea of modernization, and the border

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regions of the Ottoman Empire were central sites. Greece and Bulgaria had broken away, while Armenia remained captive to an imperial order in which Muslims were the majority and vied to dominate their territory. That other Christian minorities in the Empire, such as Greeks and Slavs, were spared during the massacres was further evidence that an orchestrated plan was unfolding. Thus, according to this interpretation, the massacres had little to do with religion, but were rather part of the modernization of the Empire that targeted Armenians explicitly.590

This narrative of modernization challenged Lepsius and the Philarmenian movement on a core argument—that Armenians were being systematically murdered because they were Christians. At the same time, the news coverage from liberal papers like the Kölnische Zeitung, as well as other liberal papers like the Berliner Tageblatt and the Frankfurter Zeitung demonstrated that there had been no cover-up. As rallies and collections on behalf of Armenian victims increased in the autumn of 1896, so did attacks on the Philarmenian campaign. Turcophile papers chastised the movement for its own religious fanaticism and defended themselves against accusations that they were distorting the news or sympathetic to the Hamidian regime. Since the bank occupation in late August, the debate turned on whether Armenian terrorists had been a ruse by the Ottoman government to enact reprisals. Lepsius, along with a group of Protestant pastors, took an Armenian cleric on a road show in Germany in late September to rally support for intervention. They were adamant that the latest affair had been fabricated by the Sultan, while Turcophile papers maintained that such an interpretation was difficult to prove.

590BT “Dynamit und Diplomaten” 16 September 1896 Nr. 472
These papers did not deny that the Ottomans were ready to use the opportunity but insisted that an abundance of evidence showed that Armenian revolutionaries were engaging in violence to provoke a response from outside powers. Even the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, which had published a sympathetic synopsis of Lepsius’ tract a day before the bank incident, maintained that revolutionary groups both inside and outside the Empire were making the situation worse. Days later, the paper suggested that members of the Armenian revolutionary committee were bent on provoking a massacre of Christians in Constantinople.\(^5^9^1\)

The Philarmenian movement ended up undermining its own story by claiming that Armenian revolutionaries did not exist and suggesting that the German press was part of a conspiracy to cover up the massacres. Turcophile papers eventually turned this argument upside down. How could one explain the presence of Armenian activists and their supporters in places like Germany, if there was not some form of organized resistance among Armenians? The *Kölnische Zeitung* accused Lepsius of deceit, after he claimed to be merely collecting for Armenian victims. As both the *Kölnische Zeitung* and the *Berliner Tageblatt* pointed out, he was leading an agitation movement and had invited foreigners to join his protest against the German government.\(^5^9^2\) Editorials painted the movement as a group of religious zealots, which sensationalized scenes of violence and preyed on the sympathies of pious Christians. But they did not deny what was happening to Armenians.

\(^{591}\) FZ “Konstantinopel” 23, 25, and 29 August 1896, Nr. 325, 327, and 332.

\(^{592}\) KZ “Die Armenien und ihre Freunde” October 1896 Nr.868;
Since the Philarmenian movement represented a massive critique of the German government and its policy toward the Ottoman Empire, scholars have speculated that liberal turcophile papers were working on behalf of the Foreign Office to counter calls for intervention. Yet papers like the Kölnische Zeitung and the Berliner Tageblatt had their own reasons to attack Lepsius and his propaganda campaign. Not only had he impugned their reputations, but both papers had also supported the German policy of maintaining the Ottoman Empire long before the massacres began. The possibility that the massacres were a state-led effort made it an even stronger imperative to limit the further escalation of this “oriental warfare”, so the entire region not devolve into violence and chaos. What would happen to the other Christian communities and the thousands or Europeans living in the Ottoman lands, if a war broke out? Could a local war be contained? These were not self-serving arguments to protect the German government but principled points of concern.

The German government intervened little in the public sphere during the massacres, and the stories told by officials were almost identical to what German correspondents had been reporting back to their liberal papers. With no concern for public opinion, internal reports from the German ambassador to Constantinople, Johann Saurma von der Jeltsch, confirmed much of what was being written by German journalists from liberal papers. The Kaiser had taken an active interest in the massacres, closely followed the embassy reports, and reacted in disgust and frustration to the scenes of violence in Constantinople and Eastern Anatolia. By November he agreed with his cousin Czar Nicholas II—who had sent his own agents to investigate the massacres—that the Sultan

\[593\text{PA AA R 14432-14440 passim. Saupp} \]
had been behind the entire ordeal, just as William was sure that the British had unwittingly stoked the crisis by supporting the “Armenian committee”.\footnote{PA AA R 14516 William to Hohenlohe, 12 November 1896.} Otto Hammann used the semi-official press like the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung and Die Post to criticize the Philarmenians’ lack of realism and political naïveté, but most papers followed the reports from correspondents in Constantinople, wrung their hands at the bloodshed, and implored the government to work with the other Great Powers to end the violence.\footnote{As for the “semi-official” Kölnische Zeitung, Hammann arranged for them to re-run an article it had already published. PA AA R 14435 (undated).}

The Foreign Office only took steps after Wilhelm Hubert of the Brandenburg Synod began to worry about agitation in the countryside. While police officials observed meetings and investigated the occasional Armenian “revolutionary” living in Germany, there was no coordinated repression and collections took place unimpeded in places like Berlin.\footnote{The Berlin police let the collections run their course, although some argued they should have been shut down. Landesarchiv Berlin (hereafter LA Berlin) A Pr Br Rep 030 Tit 94, Nr. 9456-9459.} In the German countryside, the police did disrupt collections, but these appeared to be isolated events.\footnote{Stoecker’s Das Volk eagerly reported on incidents when they did occur. See PA AA R 14355.} The German crackdown became a running joke in the Kladderadatsch, which published an illustration of the German ambassador telling the Sultan the “fairy tale” of the German repression of public meetings. It also featured a strange role-reversal, in which German policemen were transported to a scene of carnage in Constantinople, while Ottoman officials were placed in a beerhall shooing away respectable men and women. Was this the German establishment ingratiating itself with
Scholars have also speculated that the Ottoman government bribed journalists into whitewashing the massacres. If they did, there is little evidence that it had any effect. Many claims that Abdül Hamid provided subventions to the German press stemmed from Russian sources during the First World War and can be dismissed out of hand. Ottoman diplomats had tried since the 1860s to manipulate the press in their favor, yet German officials, who had been concerned about the Hamidian system of spies since the Sultan had come to power in 1877, were not concerned with Ottoman manipulation of the German press. Diplomats knew that the Sultan paid for puff pieces celebrating his rule. Every European monarch did. But these interventions did not shape German news reporting. The Kaiser came to choose German newspapermen over his own diplomats. Not only had William lost patience with the Sultan’s equivocating about the violence, but he grew increasingly frustrated with the German ambassador, Saurma, who had only been on the Bosporous since the spring of 1895 and preferred games of skat to investigating what was taking place beyond his residence. After the bank incident in August 1896, the Kaiser asked for articles from German and British papers to supplement the embassy reports that reached him while hunting outside of Vilna. Would German officials let the

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598. "1001 Nacht am goldenen Horn” Kladderadatsch 1 November 1896 Nr. 44.
599. PA AA R 13165 passim.
600. The Porte lavished praise on the German press for its supposed sympathetic coverage of the massacres, but Ottoman diplomats had periodically tried to flatter German diplomats with such talk since the days of the Great Eastern Crisis. Otto Hamman was surprised, writing a question mark next to a telegram from Constantinople. PA AA R.
601. See William’s marginalia in PA AA R 14328-14339.
tail wag the dog? Neither the Foreign Office nor William were disposed to trust the Sultan—or the German press, if it thought that the Sultan could manipulate it—especially during the massacres, when the need for good information was critical.

Culture and Class

The culture wars that had informed German turcophile interpretations of the Great Eastern Crisis were reprised during the massacre years. The most vehement Turcophile attack on the Philarmenian movement came from the Tageblatt’s Rome correspondent Hans Barth, who had a strident exchange with Lepsius in the pages of Maximilian Harden’s journal, *Die Zukunft*. Barth went on to pen the book *Türke, Wehre Dich!* [“Turk, Defend Yourself!”], a capacious polemic against Lepsius, which castigated the Philarmenians as reactionaries, whose religious fanaticism had blinded them to the criminality of Christian revolutionaries in the Ottoman Empire. The book was designed to appeal to Protestants. It ranged over the history of the crusades, Catholic persecutions of heresy in Europe, and a host of other examples of intolerance, as it recycled material from articles Barth had written in the Berliner Tageblatt over the last ten years. It also invoked the same dichotomy of peoples into a defense of the Ottomans that Lepsius had used to rally Christians around the Armenians. Barth defended the Turks as a Kulturvolk, while he portrayed Armenian and Greek revolutionaries as clever propagandists who duped their European enablers into launching a crusade, which would bring the most backward elements of Ottoman society to power, simply because they were Christians.  

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These attempts to use Christian fanaticism tapped into deep-seated clichés about Catholics. However, it was also possible that the Ottomans had paid Barth to publish this book. But had they supported him all along? And had the Tageblatt’s editor, Arthur Levysohn—hardly an insider or pliable journalist—been allowing Barth to publish his attacks on Greeks over the last 15 years for the purpose of pleasing the Sultan? Barth’s intervention probably had more to do with the domestic politics of Germany and the antisemitic subtext of the Philarmenian movement. He had challenged the antisemitic press in Germany in 1891, investigating the coverage that conservative papers like the Kreuzzeitung and Stoecker’s Deutsche Evangelische Kirchenzeitung had given to Jewish ritual murder trials in Greece. Exposing the reports to be erroneous after interviewing Greek locals involved, he remained a respected part of the establishment at the Berliner Tageblatt well into the twentieth century.  

By the end of 1896, the German public sphere had been inundated with news of the massacres, and there was a flood of harrowing details about Armenian suffering. Only Wilhelm Liebknecht’s Vorwärts refused to publish news about the Armenian massacres, claiming that such stories were simply propaganda. He chose instead to focus on Russian “atrocities” in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which included his usual litany of horrors against Tartars, Catholics, and Poles. A younger generation of Socialists, like Rosa Luxemburg and Eduard Bernstein, were mortified by Liebknecht’s heavy-handed dismissal of Armenian suffering and found other avenues to voice their concern. But in

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these skirmishes, the younger generation was challenging the older for political as well as moral supremacy.⁶⁰⁶

Socialists like Luxemburg and Bernstein were not only eager to support Ottoman Armenians out of heartfelt sympathy or to challenge the old guard of their party, but also because German papers from across the political spectrum had increasingly drawn attention to the socialist ideology of Armenian revolutionaries as grounds for rejecting sympathy. After the terrorist attack by Armenians against the Ottoman Imperial Bank in Constantinople in August of 1896, conservative German papers like the Kreuzzeitung and Die Post, which had given Lepsius some sympathetic coverage, came out against the “Armenian committee” as dangerous disturbers of the European peace.⁶⁰⁷

Instead of making the case for the Armenians based on Christian solidarity, Luxemburg pointed instead to class conflict. According to her, the Ottoman state was not only disintegrating because of the centrifugal forces of empire, but also because of the contradictions of finance capitalism. Since the Crimean War, the Ottomans had been supported by European bourgeois bankers as well as corrupt Muslim officials and landowners. Therefore, class struggle was implicit in the Armenian “insurgency” and German socialists should support the Armenians in the name of freedom and the socialist revolution.⁶⁰⁸ Following a similar logic, most mainstream German papers repudiated the Armenian cause for the exact same reasons. What was happening to the Armenians was

⁶⁰⁷ PA AA R 14335.
⁶⁰⁸ Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung 8-10 October 1896.
terrible, but the clear result of agitation by a few socialist interested in “propaganda of the deed”. Why would any conservative, Catholic or liberal paper want to get behind that?

Comparing Compassion, Using Horror

The massacres did not stimulate a broad movement to protest the government’s inaction among liberals or the political left in Germany, as they had in France, nor did the massacres provoke such outrage as in Great Britain. Scholars have, therefore, sought answers in Sonderweg narratives of authoritarianism and Kadavergehorsam. Yet these analyses ignore how the crisis unfolded before the public, as well as the domestic political forces that framed the uses of horror.

The German and British reactions to the massacres had much in common. The saturation of the public sphere with news of violence diffused outrage rather than spurred it forward. Media theorists and psychologists today have labeled this kind of apathy “compassion fatigue”, and recent studies suggest that observers become more impassive as more violent images and stories circulate in the media. The British press had a comparable intensity of news coverage to the Germans, and the British public also began to lose interest in the Armenian cause as the massacres progressed. In both Germany and Britain, churchmen agitated on behalf of Armenians and sought to rattle the public with stories of atrocity and murder, while appealing to a Christian sensibility for the downtrodden.

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609 Anderson “Down in Turkey, Far Away”; Kaiser, Imperialism, Racism, and Development Theories, pp. 14-17; Saupp, Deutschland und die armenische Frage.
610 Susan D. Moeller, Compassion Fatigue: How The Media Sells Disease, Famine, War and Death (London: Routledge, 1999); See also the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma: http://dartcenter.org/content/self-study-unit-3-photography-trauma-3
The crucial difference between Germany and Great Britain was the government’s reaction, not the general public’s. In 1890 Ambassador Radowitz quoted William Summers, a Liberal MP, who was touring Constantinople, that “Gladstone and I are involved in the Armenian Question for the sole purpose of causing difficulties to the Salisbury Cabinet”.611 Earl Rosebury, himself a protégé of Gladstone, fomented outrage when news of the massacres reached Britain in the autumn of 1894, as his government was crumbling. When Lord Salisbury returned to the Prime Ministry nine months later, he took the unprecedented step of suggesting a general liquidation of the Ottoman Empire to the other Powers, while he publicly continued the Liberals’ strategy of harnessing public outrage, criticizing the Sultan’s regime and calling for change. He walked away from his liquidation scheme but kept up his turcophobic public rhetoric, having learned from Disraeli’s mistake of backing the Ottomans during the Great Eastern Crisis. He did, however, initiate a fundamental re-orientation of British policy as he concluded that the Ottomans were not worth a major confrontation with Russia. Salisbury genuinely wanted to see the Ottoman Empire disappear, but his decision not to intervene cost him little political support at home. He was happy to indulge British outrage and risk alienation from the Sultan’s regime, going so far as to sound out a naval demonstration against Constantinople.612 Anger also subsided as British news reports from Constantinople began to paint the same complicated picture of violence and moral hazard that the German press had.613 As in Germany, the British public was horrified by what it read and had no

613 See British press clippings in PA AA R 12298 as well as PA AA R 14335.
illusions that Armenians were being purposefully slaughtered, but the massacres did not mobilize much lasting support beyond missionaries and evangelicals.

In France, the lack of news coverage itself was central to the indignation that mobilized politicians, as the French government suppressed news of the massacres. The Quay d’Orsay censored the Agence Havas and controlled the wire reports on which the French press relied. For the first two years after the massacres began, the French press remained completely in the dark about the extent of the violence, and no French newspaper had a correspondent in the Ottoman lands.614 French papers printed short, anodyne telegrams approved by the censors, while the French foreign minister, Gabriel Hanotaux, published an obsequious defense of the Sultan that minimized the carnage after the first wave of violence in Constantinople in 1895. The French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Paul Cambon, grew disillusioned after he discovered that French newspaper editors had reached an agreement with officials not to publicize details of the massacres and began informing parliamentarians of what was transpiring.615 The discovery of this “conspiracy of silence” unleashed a firestorm of protest in November 1896 across the political spectrum. Parliamentarians from Albert de Mun of the Catholic Right to the Socialist leader Jean Jaurès demanded explanations and an investigation into what had really been happening in the Ottoman Empire.616

The political left in France also got behind the belated Philarmenian movement in France, not least because the government cover-up showed the ugly side of capitalism.

615 Ibid., See also Dadrian, The History of the Armenian Genocide, pp. 76-79.
Here was an excellent opportunity to highlight the greed of the French establishment, for part of the government’s rationale for downplaying the massacres was to protect French investors, who had a 70% stake in the Ottoman debt and could lose big if an armed intervention broke up the Empire.\footnote{Herbert Feis, \textit{Europe, the World’s Banker 1870-1914} (New Haven, 1930), p. 51 & 320. Cambon, \textit{Correspondence}, pp. 324.} The journal \textit{Pro-Arménia} was founded in 1901 to document the atrocities that the French press had missed during the years of actual massacre.\footnote{See first edition.} The French Philarmenian movement was also stimulated by the Dreyfus Affair and continued frustrations over the government’s cover-up, as well as over the creeping authoritarian character of the French military. Armenian suffering at the hands of the Ottoman state and its cover-up in France resonated far deeper on the political left, which had already seen itself as defenders of a common humanity in a pitched battle against antisemitism and the political right. Advocacy fit an established pattern of political struggle that made sympathy on the left more fertile in France than elsewhere.

\textbf{The (Geo)politics of Sympathy Revisited: War and Insurgency}

If compassion fatigue in Germany stemmed from the number of reports, German sympathies also shifted as correspondents moved to new sites of violence. Armenian violence was part of a general crisis that encompassed social unrest in Crete as well as the Balkans. The Greco-Ottoman border had been the site of tension throughout the 1880s, but once news of violence against Armenians began to spread, increased insurgent activity in Macedonia and cross-border raids by Greek bandits heightened the danger of war and gave new meaning to the crisis. German newspapers shifted their attention toward
uprisings and insurgencies further west. Correspondents from liberal papers traveled to new scenes of conflict and generated another interpretation of violence, in which Christian guerillas perpetrated massacre and the Ottoman soldier was a force of stability and order. These stories presented the public sphere in Germany with a competing image of victims and perpetrators that created sympathy for the Ottoman order and strengthened German turcophile interpretations of the crisis.

After the summer of 1895, unrest on the island of Crete and the growth of a raucous annexation movement in Greece became a major diplomatic concern, attracting international press attention. Nominally under Ottoman control, Crete had been prone to insurrections throughout the century with a toxic mix of wealthy Muslim notables, a peasantry that was majority-Christian but also included a significant number of Muslims, and corrupt local governors. In March 1895, a Greek Christian replaced the Muslim governor, after the Sultan relented to pressure from the Great Powers to calm the situation. But Cretan separatists continued to receive men and material support from Greece, and the Ottomans began in December to send troops to stabilize the situation. Long-simmering tensions erupted on 14 February 1896, when Christian insurgents began murdering Muslims in the city of Canea, and again in May, when Muslims turned against their Christian neighbors in other villages. England, France, Russia, and Italy sent warships to restore order and remained docked along the coastline to assist the Ottoman government regain control.\footnote{PA AA R 14335-14336.}
Front-line reporting spread a story of indiscriminate, insurgent violence by Cretan militants. The Kölnische Zeitung immediately dispatched a correspondent to the scene in February, who wrote a series of letters describing the island’s complex history as well as the recent events that precipitated the intervention. Ottoman misrule was partly responsible, the correspondent wrote, but most of the blame fell upon Greek nationalists based in Athens, the Ethniké Hetairia, who were sowing discord and provoking violence to promote the island’s annexation. Over the next several months, the correspondent relayed stories of Christian violence against unarmed Muslims, as well as the Ottoman state’s futile attempts to reign in the cycle of violence. According to German journalists, Ottoman soldiers dutifully cooperated with the admirals of the four Great Powers, and letters throughout the summer told tales of a counter-insurgency, in which Ottomans sought to protect the population, while Christian insurgents engaged in wanton violence. By January 1897 the Armenian massacres had subsided, but tension in Crete had flared up again, when insurgents forced Muslims to flee their homes for the coastline to seek protection in the European ships docked at Chania. After the violence subsided, newspapers like the Berliner Lokal Anzeiger and the Münchener Neueste Nachrichten sent their own journalists to cover the story in Chania, joining the Kölnische Zeitung and the Berliner Tageblatt, which were the first to publish local dispatches. These reporters looked for victims and perpetrators, highlighting the sufferings of Muslims and Christian

620 KZ “Kanea” 12 June 1896 Nr. 341. This series continued over the summer.
621 KZ “Die Unruhen auf Kreta” 16 February 1897 Nr. 144. The series was soon called “Neue Briefe aus Kreata” totaling nine reports by the beginning of April 1897 (1 April 1897, Nr. 308).
peasants at the hands of insurgents, and celebrated the stabilizing role of both Great Power intervention and the Ottoman soldiery.622

As the spring wore on, journalists changed venues. Now the focus was on depredations in the Macedonian countryside and the mobilization of Ottoman troops in the border region of Thessaly. They again depicted a drama of insurgency and counter-insurgency, in which victims were fellow Christians, and Muslim soldiers the only source of relief. A litany of “Christian massacres” and “Christian Atrocities” appeared on the front page of German papers, along with eyewitness accounts from Muslims who had been expelled and seen their homes burned. Once war between Greece and the Ottoman Empire was formally declared on 17 April, German reporters followed the Ottoman army into battle and documented their decisive victory. Reporters for the Berliner Tageblatt highlighted the burning of mosques and synagogues in areas that had fallen to Greek insurgents.623 Paul Weitz of the Frankfurter Zeitung traveled to the Thessalian plain after the war and told of rabble-rousers vanquished and a world restored. But these correspondents also documented the depredations of Ottoman troops and the growing fear that Muslim “chauvinism” could lead to a general massacre of Christians in the Ottoman Empire.624 Thus liberal papers did not adhere to a rigid turcophile narrative, as Lepsius maintained.

622 BT “Von der Insel des Labyrinths” 14 March 1897 Nr. 133 and after.
623 BT “Der Vormarsch auf Pharsala” 7 May 1897 Nr. 229; “Das Märchen von türkischen Greuel” 9 Mai 1897 Nr. 234.
624 BT “Türkische Armee in kritischer Beleuchtung” 22 April Nr. 202; KZ “Türkische Repressalien” 24 April 1897 Nr. 238.
Opinion-making went hand and hand with eyewitness testimony. Not only did editors run these stories on the front page, but journalists became advocates through the very process of reporting. Right before the war the Kölnische Zeitung’s correspondent in Crete inserted a plea at the beginning of his latest dispatch:

The world has a right to experience the truth. Many have talked and written about the suffering, noble Christians in the Turkish Empire, and it is right that many things are missing that would better their situation...they are prisoners that either cry out or want out...but how they free themselves has been less talked about, less researched, less well-known. Enlightened Europe swears that the ends do not justify the means. Yet the characteristics of these imprisoned peoples for whom Europe shows so much concern has come forward in such a repulsive way that it is hard to believe that progress awaits after the revolt is over.625

The statement not only played on the dichotomy of peoples but also asked about the future, returning to the old geopolitical question of who should rule. What would be the practical outcome of political change? If Christians could be perpetrators as well as victims, what guaranteed that the cycle of violence would end or that a stable political settlement would develop to replace the Ottoman order?

The question of order had animated Barth’s Türke, Wehre Dich, and the violence of the Greek annexation movement was his prime evidence that readers should reconsider

625 KZ “Christliche Greuel in Ostkreta I” 4 April Nr. 308, and after.
their sympathy for the Armenians. Barth’s polemic against Christian intolerance through the ages was bluster, but demonstrating the hypocrisy of Philarmenian advocates, who only wanted to see suffering Christians and had no vision for the consequences of Great Power intervention, was not. Barth had written much on the region over the last ten years and witnessed the violent mobs in Athens as the Berliner Tageblatt’s correspondent during the crisis. It was obvious from the broader German news coverage that most correspondents thought the Greeks were unfit to rule, and the Ottomans came away as the surest bet for stability and order. As one reporter for the Berliner Tageblatt wrote from the battlefield of Thessaly: ”The foreign correspondent is hated here, especially the Germans...but the moral turpitude of Greeks will not experience a regeneration soon. Religious fanaticism and nationalist arrogance go hand in hand with political pushiness and financial frivolity to make the Greeks the least sympathetic creatures in the civilized world”.

News coverage by these correspondents was congenial to the Foreign Office, but newspapers had taken the initiative. They had not followed officials’ lead. By the end of 1896, there was no consensus among officials about where German policy should be headed. Germany had remained aloof from the Crete mission in May 1896. Yet as the Cretan problem worsened throughout the second half of 1896, Germany came down hard against Greece for stirring up trouble and tried to cajole the other powers into a blockade in January 1897. While most officials anticipated that Crete would eventually fall to

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626 „Von Kreta nach Theassalien: Briefe eines Schlachtenbumdlers”, BT 10 June 1897, Nr. 288.
627 Langer, Diplomacy, pp. 365-372.
Greece, the thrust of German diplomacy during the latter stage of the crisis in 1896-1897 was to reign in Greek nationalists so unrest did not spread to Macedonia.\textsuperscript{628}

Inside the Foreign Office, the growing influence of the Kaiser and his entourage created confusion and uncertainty, as major diplomatic principals, like state secretary Friedrich von Holstein and the ambassador in London, Paul von Hatzfeldt, had to manage the Kaiser’s personal interventions and a major international crisis at the same time.\textsuperscript{629}

However, William II and his camarilla did not cause the diplomats to break with past practice. Instead, there was a collective perception that the old strategy of balancing was not working. Salisbury’s liquidation plan and a general mistrust of British intentions had set in motion a fundamental rethinking of Germany’s strategic relationship with the Ottoman Empire, which only became clearer once the crisis was over.\textsuperscript{630}

At the end of 1896, German diplomats were still committed to balancing the interests of all the powers, but British pressure on the Ottomans to cede Crete to Greece and the government’s refusal to act in concert alienated Germany and led to its anti-Greek course. German officials were not only worried that Greek annexationist stirrings might lead to a general destabilization of the Balkans and precipitate a larger war, but they were also concerned that an Ottoman war against Greece would lead to further massacres of Christians throughout Ottoman territory. German officials were more aware of Ottoman military strength than any other Power, especially in Macedonia, which had been the center of Goltz’ reorganization efforts. Germany considered British policy, which was

\textsuperscript{628} PA AA R 14433-14440 passim.
\textsuperscript{630} Schöllgen, Imperialismus und Gleichgewicht, pp. 63-68;
being hemmed in by turcophobes in the cabinet, who wanted to punish the Sultan, unrealistic for the same reasons that the reform project had been: there was no way to threaten or enforce Ottoman cooperation short of war. If the Ottomans were allowed to wage war against Greece, whose army was falling apart, a victory would make the Ottomans less pliable and more likely to unleash further violence against Christians.⁶³¹ Many in the Foreign Office were surprised not that the Ottomans had won against Greece but that their victory had quelled further violence.⁶³²

What journalists in the field reported to their newspapers corresponded, on the whole, to what officials sent back to the Foreign Office. Editors could pick and choose the stories they wanted to run, but did they do so to please officials or, conversely, the Sultan? An indecisive diplomatic corps could hardly give marching orders, when they themselves were uncertain of what to do beyond their traditional posture of neutrality. That these papers circulated turcophile interpretations did not require official sanction. Correspondents not only revealed facts on the ground that were largely confirmed by a variety of official reports, but also supported the long-standing views of their papers.⁶³³

**After Victory**

The decisive Ottoman victory in the war with Greece and the quick peace resolution ushered in a new era in German-Ottoman relations. Not only did many German newspapers celebrate the war as a triumph for the Prussian military mission, but the

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⁶³¹PA AA R 14435 Saurma to William 4 April 1897, and after.
⁶³²PA AA R 14437 William to Bülow 12 June 1897. Goltz was as well: GSta PKVI HA NL v.d. Goltz Famile Nr.220, Letters to Prof. Düring, 6 March 1897; 29 April 1897.
⁶³³*Turkey Nos. 7-11* (1897); *Turkey Nos. 1-3* (1898); *Documents Diplomatique: Affaires d’Orient. Affaire de Crète-Conflit Gréco-Turc, fevrier-mai, 1897.*
settlement to which the Sultan assented and the prompt return to order demonstrated to many German observers that the Ottomans were not rapacious fanatics. The liberal turcophile press now dubbed the Philarmenians Türkenfresser “Turk devourers”, who continued to drum up support for the Armenians by recalling the past and exaggerating reports of Muslim fanaticism. Meanwhile the German press moved on to think about a future in which the Ottoman Empire remained a military power and force of stability.

The writings of Colmar von der Goltz played no small role in building sympathy and understanding for the Ottoman state. At the height of the Armenian massacres, Goltz published his Anatolische Ausflüge, which documented his peregrinations through the Anatolian countryside in the late 1880s. Billed as a disinterested depiction of the Ottoman interior before the railroad had begun to transform the land and the recent unrest had drawn Europe’s attention to the region, the book attempted to show the social, economic, and technological transformations of the countryside. Pride of place was given to Muslim peasants, especially the muhajir or refugees from the Balkan territories that had been lost during the Great Eastern Crisis. Goltz depicted them as hard-working farmers who were busy modernizing agrarian production by tilling fallow land, rotating crops, and building canals and roadways to bring their goods to the towns and cities. It was Goltz’s answer to the accounts of Lepsius and Luxemburg, in which Muslims were represented as an indolent rentier class, exploiting Armenians and jealous of their economic success. Goltz also issued a warning to would-be German colonizers that the Muslim population was growing so rapidly that there would be very little space for European settlers. He documented the prominent role of German Kulturarbeit in managing railroads and
engineering public works, but he maintained that African-style colonialism was out of the
question.

After the Greco-Ottoman war, Goltz also wrote a series of articles in Das
Militärische Wochenblatt in the summer of 1897, describing the basic organization of the
Ottoman army and praising its rapid victory over the Greeks. He expanded these writings
into a book a year later, which offered an in-depth look at the Prussian reform efforts. It
was the first time Goltz publicly discussed his strategic thinking in restructuring the army
and developing the Ottoman Empire as a military ally. Not only did the Greeks and Slavs
of Macedonia come away as the major obstacle to Ottoman military security, but the
juxtaposition of Turks and Greeks also conformed to a familiar pattern of order versus
disorder. The Turks were characterized by Ordnung und Gehorsam, whereas the Greeks
“regardless of class were theatrical[...] one realizes the born dignity of a ruling people,
instead of an impotent will[...] it is almost the difference between the upstart and the
patrimonial wisdom of the propertied that separates these two hostile peoples”.\(^{634}\) Rather
than problematize distinctions between victims and perpetrators, as the press had done,
Goltz made a more forceful argument that resonated among German conservatives and
inverted Rosa Luxemburg’s rationale for solidarity with Ottoman Armenians. Not only did
religion create antagonisms but the more familiar story of social stratification also
explained unrest. Turks were protecting ancient traditions of property and order against a
chaotic onslaught from below.

\(^{634}\) Der Thessalische Krieg und die Türkei: Eine kriegsgeschichtliche Studie (Berlin, 1898), p. 21.
Both books by Goltz were enormously popular, experiencing multiple print runs by the turn of the century. But he did not celebrate Abdül Hamid’s rule. While the army performed well and the “human material” was disciplined, hard-working, and brave, he found too much autocracy in the Ottoman government and not enough freedom for officers to improve the quality of the army. Privately, Goltz fumed at the Sultan for orchestrating the massacre of Armenians, but he refrained from public criticism, defending the Ottoman army against accusations that regular soldiers had aided the Hamidiye units during the massacres of 1895.\textsuperscript{635} He thought that open criticism would damage his relationship to the Ottoman officer corps, especially the younger generation with whom he maintained warm relations, and would undermine their attempts to change the system. Goltz placed the blame for the Armenian revolts squarely on the shoulders of the Sultan. While he had been critical of German diplomacy in 1896 after the massacres in Constantinople and blamed all of the Great Powers for their feebleness in not deposing the Sultan, in 1897 he called the war with Greece a great “moral victory” for the Ottoman army and the future of the Empire.\textsuperscript{636}

Anglophobia had gripped the German press ever since the Jameson Raid at the end of 1895. British policy in the Ottoman Empire now contributed to an overall sense that British aggression needed to be challenged. Analogies between Germany and the Ottoman Empire flourished in the summer of 1897. Editorials in the semi-official press like the \textit{Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung} pointed to Ottoman naval weakness after the Greek

\textsuperscript{635} Interview with Goltz in the \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} 24 February 1895 Nr. 166. He also doubted that a mass revolt of Armenians had taken place, insisting that it was the work of a few isolated revolutionaries.

\textsuperscript{636} GSta PKVI HA NL v.d. Goltz Famile Nr.220 Letters to Prof. Düring, cf. 10 October 1896 with 29 April 1897.
fleet had bombarded the Thessalien shoreline and threatened the Ottoman mobilization. Germany, according to this logic, was exposed to the same strategic predicament as the Ottomans, insofar as its army could be cut off from the outside and “strangled from the sea”. With international trade and world markets becoming ever more important for prosperity, the recent crisis had shown the vulnerability of land powers like Germany. Unable to muster a single vessel to help Crete or hinder Greece, Germany needed a stronger presence on the high seas. Thus, the putative “lessons” of Ottoman insecurity and weakness fed directly into official advocacy of the first German Naval Bill.637

The international crisis surrounding the Armenian massacres and the Greco-Ottoman War thus helped shape the formulation of Weltpolitik. The Kaiser and his entourage had been gaining more influence over foreign policy since Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein became Foreign Secretary in 1890. His relocation to Constantinople as ambassador was a demotion, but he remained an ambitious and influential figure. His replacement as Foreign Secretary, Bernhard von Bülow, was also a protégé of the William’s inner-circle and as the ambassador to Italy had experienced first-hand German isolation over the Eastern Question and the problems of pacifying Crete in 1897. Both men aided the Kaiser in crafting a more muscular strategy to overcome German weakness.638

The turn toward Weltpolitik assumed that maintaining the Ottoman Empire was a “guarantee” against British expansionism, as long as it did not estrange Russia. Bülow and

637 The Kölnische summarized the semi-official press’s use of Goltz’ work to agitate for naval armaments: KZ “Goltz und die deutsche Flotte” 12 May 1898 Nr 218.
the Foreign Office also began to worry more that the Cretan issue would have a domino effect. Germany refused the Greek King’s brother, Prince George, and his candidacy to rule the island, and Bülow warned in the Reichstag that the German tradition of ambivalence in the Eastern Question was becoming untenable. He had concerns that “the Cretan wave (should) not land on the German coast”, although the old strategy of non-intervention remained his preferred method of maintaining the status quo in the Eastern Question. After the Triplice began applying pressure in Macedonia as well, he argued in private that Germany help the Sultan block further pressure for reform. Bülow’s opinion was seconded by Marschall, who formulated a new policy, in which Germany would seek to undermine reforms in Macedonia and in Armenia:

Whoever greets ‘reforms’ does not want to reform the Empire, but ruin it. Civil servants do not lack the will to improve the government, but rather the general population does[...] There is much talk about the Armenian massacres and their causes. Since I have been here and seen things up close, my conviction has strengthened that the guilty are those that have pushed for so-called reform[...] These are not just formalistic games that threaten the peace of Europe but the lives of thousands of Christians here.  

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640 PA AA R 14452 Marschall to Hohenlohe 26 February 1898
The Foreign Office began to conceive a comprehensive policy toward Ottoman Christians. Armenian as well as Greek and Slavic Christians were to be given no formal support by German officials in the Ottoman lands, and any action taken by another power in support of a Christian minority should be met with reservations. Thus, the German government became the premier champion of the Hamidian regime, privately scorning reform and publicly supporting the Sultan.

**The Occidental Tourist**

As Germany began to pivot more toward active engagement in the Ottoman Empire, the clearest public demonstration of change was the Kaiser’s offer to visit the Holy Land and Constantinople in the autumn of 1898. With the extension of the Anatolian railroad concession under discussion at the Sublime Porte, Marschall argued that the “time of standing by and waiting” was over, and he thought that a show of solidarity with the Sultan would help German investors gain the railroad concession, as well as set the tone for German *Weltpolitik*. The official occasion for the visit was to dedicate the *Erlöserkirche*, a German Protestant Church in Jerusalem, which had been under construction since 1869 and financed by collections from all over Protestant Germany by the Order of St. John. The Kaiser’s itinerary began in Haifa, then took in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, Jaffa on the Lebanese coast, Damascus, and ended in Constantinople. The Kaiser and his government used the tour as an opportunity to stage their vision of a modernizing Ottoman Empire under German tutelage.

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The public perception of the tour was of foremost concern to the Kaiser, and he wanted to articulate a new model of religious understanding based on Protestant and Muslim hegemony. The presence of the Protestant establishment in the entourage would not only demonstrate Protestant unity, but also rally Protestant sensibilities around a Muslim power. From the beginning, the Kaiser envisioned all of the German Protestant Bundesfürsten accompanying him, but poor planning and the suddenness of the trip irritated many of these princes. Announced in late June 1898, the trip was supposed to commence in October of the same year. Only a handful of royalty accompanied the Kaiser, and many remained mystified at the abrupt decision to undertake such an important symbolic act. Regional synods of the German Protestant church were also taken aback by the short time-frame, but many were nevertheless eager to send representatives to the Holy Land and show support for German Protestant community in Jerusalem.643

The dedication of the new church was the focal point of the Kaiser’s stop in the holy city. He used it to present himself as a crusader in full military regalia, flanked by the Knights of Order of St. John as he proceeded to the church entrance. The service followed a long and hierarchical ritual of court protocol, in which William was presented with a key to the neo-Romanesque church.644 After a fiery homily by Ernst Dryander, a prominent court pastor, who claimed that God sought the holy service of the militia Christi and “fighters for a long war” to retake Jerusalem, William gave an unexpected speech of his own. He celebrated the Hohenzollern throne not only as a protector and extender of

Protestantism, but also as a benefactor to other Christian confessions in this holiest of places. German industriousness was spreading brotherly love and peace beyond the borders of the German nation to all Christians. The return to Jerusalem was a spiritual fulfillment of righteousness, not power.\textsuperscript{645}

Although positioning himself as a patron of Protestants in Jerusalem, Catholic support was also cultivated. Since February 1898, Bülow and Marschall worked hard with the Ottoman government to enable the German Catholic Association in Jerusalem to purchase land on Mount Zion, where many believed the Virgin Mary had died. Catholics had long yearned to build a Dormition abbey on the site, but the local landowner had resisted and only relented once the Sultan intervened.\textsuperscript{646} The Kaiser presided over a dedication ceremony and gave a generous donation to German Catholics to begin construction. German support usurped the traditional position of France as benefactor of local Catholics, but the Foreign Office’s attempts to cooperate with Holy See ended in a draw. While initially hopeful that German influence could secure land for the Dormition Abbey, Pope Leo XIII backed away from supporting the project, and the College of Cardinals reaffirmed France’s traditional role. Many Catholic Center politicians in Germany were nonetheless impressed by the government’s attempts and complained about French chauvinism.\textsuperscript{647} William entertained other local Christians, such as an evangelical German colony, the Templars, who greeted him upon his arrival in Haifa. He visited the churches of the Orthodox communities in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, where he pleaded for

\textsuperscript{645} Heinrich Niemöller, \textit{Hinauf gen Jerusalem. Gedenkbuch der offiziellen Festfahrt zur Einweihung der Erlöskirche. Im Namen der beauftragten Kommission herausgegeben} (Berlin, 1899).
\textsuperscript{646} PA AA R 14011 Bülow to Marschall 10 January 1898 and after. Cf. PA AA R 13965 passim.
more cooperation. He was disappointed by spats among Greek Orthodox, Maronite, and local Catholic communities over the maintenance of holy sites and shrines.

William’s encounters with Islam provided a striking counterpoint to his disappointment with local “Oriental” Christian communities. Privately he was repulsed by the “fetishistic adoration” of the Eastern Rite Christians, and found the asceticism and discipline of Islam appealing after visiting the Al-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock. Writing to his cousin, Czar Nicholos II, the Kaiser mused that he would have become Muslim had he entered Jerusalem with no religion.\textsuperscript{648} His enthusiasm for Islam continued in Damascus, where the Ottomans had staged a massive reception for his entourage. His toast that evening was so laudatory of Muslims that Bülow refused the Ottoman ambassador’s entreaties to release a text version of his speech.\textsuperscript{649} The Kaiser presented flowers at Saladin’s grave, vowed to have his tomb restored, and called the city’s inhabitants his “children”. He stretched his self-proclaimed role as benefactor beyond Christendom, claiming to be the friend of Abdül Hamid as both Sultan of the Ottomans and Caliph to the world’s three hundred million Muslims.\textsuperscript{650}

The journey also underscored the changing face of the Ottoman lands and the potential for economic transformation. William briefly received Theodore Herzl, who lobbied the Kaiser on behalf of his Zionist movement and underscored his efforts to create


\textsuperscript{649}Bernhard von Bülow, \textit{Denkwürdigkeiten Bd.1} (Berlin, 1931), p. 258.

\textsuperscript{650}Ibid.
a homeland for Jews that could modernize the region with German help.651 The Kaiser toured the outer walls of the ancient cities, along newly paved roads, and spoke about the opportunities for German engineers in the countryside. By sea he reached the Lebanese town of Jaffa and boarded a new railway for Damascus which had been built with German expertise and oversight. On his way back to Beirut, William and his entourage were so impressed with the ruins at Baalbek in northern Lebanon, that a group of German archaeologists was commissioned by the Kaiser Wilhelm Stiftung a month later to begin excavation. In Constantinople, the Kaiser mentioned the possibilities of expanding the Ottoman railway under German leadership, and an agreement was reached to build a commercial telegraph cable between the Germany and the Ottoman Empire.

**A Man for All Reasons**

Since the Kaiser announced his trip in June 1898, the entire European press had buzzed about the tour’s possible meanings as well as the motives of William. The Russian press criticized the tour as an affront to Russia’s traditional position as a guarantor of Christians in the Ottoman Empire. The French press was enraged by the Kaiser’s attempts to co-opt Catholics in the Holy Land. Almost all of the foreign press agreed with British assertions that the Kaiser was traveling to the Orient to help German economic interests, especially the promises of the Baghdad railroad.652

Before departing for the Holy Land, William denied other motivations beyond Christian piety and his mission to inaugurate the Erlöserkirche. But his explicit Protestant

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651 Theodor Herzl, *Briefe und Tagebücher*, vol. 2 (Berlin and Frankfurt am Main, 1984), p. 27. William also stressed the modernizing impulse of the Zionist movement and thought it could help the Ottoman Empire become more economically solvent. See Brenner, *Strahlen der Krone*, p. 219.

religiosity had made Catholic papers in Germany suspicious of the Kaiser’s motives, and the coverage of papers like the *Germania* and the *Kölnerische Volkszeitung* provided dry details of his visit as well as critical commentaries of his speech in the *Erlöserkirche*. Despite these reservations, both papers praised the Kaiser’s intervention on behalf of German Catholics for the Dormition Abbey.\(^{653}\) The *Berliner Tageblatt* and the *Kölnerische Zeitung* both criticized and praised the *Erlöserkirche* speech, seeing little virtue in the addition of German Protestantism to the morass of conflicting religions, but they were nonetheless hopeful that German influence could be a force of peace and stability. The conservative *Kreuzzeitung* highlighted opportunities for German economic expansion, while the *Vowärts* saw the trip as nothing more than a ploy for German colonialism.\(^{654}\)

With journalistic energies focused on the Kaiser, officials were quick to use lèse majesté to hinder unfavorable publicity. In the foreign press, caricatures of the Kaiser’s trip exploded, while in Germany a young satirical magazine from Munich, *Simplicissimus*, was banned, after the October 1898 edition depicted the ghost of Barbarossa laughing at the purposelessness of the Kaiser’s trip.\(^{655}\) Both Bülow and Marschall managed the press during the journey from the field. Marschall had established contact with Paul Weitz of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* the year before, and the journalist followed the tour at every step, as Weitz dispatched detailed reports about the Kaiser’s day. Bülow also used the official German diplomatic cable service at the consulate in Jaffa to send telegrams directly to the

\(^{653}\) KvlkZ, 22 October 1898; Germania, 25 October 1898.


\(^{655}\) Ibid.
WTB for distribution in Germany. The Frankfurter Zeitung’s coverage was detailed and sympathetic, and many other liberal papers reprinted parts of it in their news coverage. On the whole, liberals praised the Kaiser for his assertive stance in maintaining Ottoman rule as well as his desire for Germany to be a “power for peace” (Friedensmacht) in the region.

Friedrich Naumann, who was completing his transformation from Christian social conservatism to a new brand of social liberalism, trailed the Protestant delegation and wrote articles for his newspaper Die Hilfe. Although he had given Lepsius and the Philarmenian movement sympathetic coverage during the massacres, the Greek rebellion and the war had caused him to change his mind. He popularized the intellectual association between Islam and Protestantism in a collection of his travel writings, Asia, agreeing with the sentiment widespread among the Kaiser’s entourage that Christianity in the Orient was obscurantist, backwards, and in need of a reformation. Like the Kaiser, he believed that the ascetic qualities of Islam had more in common with Luther’s church, and he envisioned Muslim hegemony as the core principle of the Ottoman state in the foreseeable future. The book proved to be extremely popular, entering its twelfth edition by 1911.

By the time the Kaiser returned to Germany at the end of November 1898, the public reaction to the journey was overwhelmingly positive. William entered Berlin with

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656 Ibid. This was technically illegal as an assistant in the Foreign Office pointed out repeatedly. PA AA R 4456 Heinrich to ?? 11 November 1898 and after.
657 FZ “Demaskus” 11 November 1898 Nr. 343; also Richter, Die Orientreise Kaiser Wilhelms II, p. 134.
658 Naumann, Asia: Athen, Konstantinopel, Baalbek, Damaskus, Nazaret, Jerusalem, Kairo, Neapel (Berlin, 1899).
a triumphant parade that drew thousands onto the streets and opened the first session of
the newly elected Reichstag in early December with a Protestant service designed to
foreground his piety. In the Reichstag debate following the journey, the Center Party’s
Aloys Fritzen praised the Kaiser’s support for the Dormition abbey and German Catholics
in the Holy Land, drawing a loud “Bravo” from the Catholic middle. The Left Liberal,
Eugen Richter, complained about the Kaiser’s pompous return to Berlin and found the
Kaiser’s mixing of politics with Protestantism offensive, coming so soon as it did after the
Armenian massacres. However, he supported the Kaiser’s intention to maintain the
Ottoman Empire and prevent a major war. Conservatives, whose press organs had been
critical of the Ottomans before the Armenian demonstrations in Constantinople in August
1895, did not even broach the subject of the massacres and chose to praise the Kaiser’s
commitment to throne and altar. Socialists like August Bebel and Georg von Vollmar
were alone in chastising the Kaiser and his trip as a colossal waste of time and money,
questioning whether Germany would see any economic benefit from William’s
proclamations. Bülow promised that the Eastern Question would no doubt provide his
grandchildren’s generation with “hard nuts to crack”, but for the foreseeable future there
would be peace.

659 Benner, Strahlen der Krone, pp. 338-341.
660 Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Deutschen Reichtags, Third Session, 12
December 1898 (Berlin, 1898), pp. 25-38.
Chapter 6

Revolution, Regeneration and Defeat: The Waning of German Turcophilism 1902-1914

For the Christian circles of Europe, the Rajah remains the noble champion of Christian civilization against the dark fanaticism of the Muslim, and for liberal politicians, who have their say in the press, is everyone who craves “reform” a pioneer of progress, humanity, and human dignity. All of this is, brutally put, nonsense. Christianity in the Turkish empire is, in truth, nothing more than the servant of politics.

--Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein, 7 October 1902

You confuse a large portion of public opinion with the government: the former stands behind Italy and her war effort. The government, to which you belong, stands behind Turkey!

--Letter to Colmar von der Goltz from an angry reader, 1 August 1912.

The main task of our officers in the future will be, more than ever before, of a political nature and consist in maintaining and deepening sympathy for Germany within the Ottoman Army through camaraderie and tact.

--Hans von Wangenheim, 28 August 1912.

If the Ottoman victory against Greece in 1897 and the Kaiser’s tour of the Orient helped solidify German sympathy for the Ottomans, the outcome of the Balkan Wars turned large portions of German published opinion against the old empire. After the Macedonian Uprising in 1902, liberal German newspapers began to question Ottoman rule.

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661 PA AA R 14500 Marschall to State Secretary (Richthofen)
662 BAMA N 737, No. 24.
663 PA AA R 29083 Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg.
in the Balkans, while the Young Turk revolution in 1908 called German political and economic aspirations into question. With Germany’s standing diminished after Abdülhamid II’s fall from power and public scrutiny of the new Ottoman rulers growing, German officials intensified their efforts to cultivate the Ottomans as a possible ally. The ignominious defeat of the Ottomans in the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 sent shockwaves through Germany, creating a public-relations problem for the German military establishment. After years of official attempts to cultivate sympathy for the Ottomans in the public sphere and after thirty years of German military reform efforts, the Ottoman defeat had implications for German military preparedness. German newspapers encouraged this debate through their news coverage, even as officials tried to influence German reporting in the Ottomans’ favor.

**Macedonian Bombs**

In September 1902 a wave of anonymous bombings shook Ottoman towns throughout the southeastern Vilayet of Monastir, as groups associated with an underground liberation organization, the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO), used terrorism to incite a general uprising of Christian peasants in the Ottoman Balkans. Although all the neighboring states claimed the territory conventionally known as Macedonia as their own, elements within the Bulgarian government supported the uprising by supplying arms and materials. Insurgents kidnapped and ransomed hostages, leading to an Ottoman counter-insurgency of reprisals against the local population and attempts to maintain order through an increase of troops. In March 1903, another wave of violent outbursts was followed by a second round of troop increases. The Ottomans
finally suppressed the insurgency in late August of the same year, after a third outburst of revolutionary activity, leaving behind burnt villages, over five thousand dead and many more thousands of refugees. It was the biggest outbreak of violence in the Empire since the Armenian massacres and led to renewed interest by the German and European press.\footnote{Duncan Perry, \textit{The Politics of Terror: The Macedonian Liberation Movements 1893-1903} (Durham: Duke University Press, 1988).}

As in past crises, journalists followed the unfolding violence in 1902, sending back stories of insurgency and counter-insurgency. Mainstays like the \textit{Kölnische Zeitung}, \textit{Berliner Tageblatt, Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger, Münchener Neueste Nachrichten}, and \textit{Frankfurter Zeitung} sent correspondents to the Macedonian countryside, while other newspapers relied on the Agence Havas. New players in the German public sphere, like Ullstein’s \textit{Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung} and Scherl’s \textit{Die Woche}, published photos of executed bandits in Macedonian towns and the counter-insurgency efforts of the Ottoman soldiery.\footnote{KZ “Mazedonische Greuel und die Photographie” 21 March 1903, Nr. 222.} Exemplary violence of this sort—beheadings, lynchings, ambushed caravans—from “European Turkey” became a mainstay in the pages of illustrated newspapers in the years thereafter. Media empires like Scherl, Mosse, and Ullstein had titles that ran the gamut from highbrow international newspapers to mass market tabloids, and stories of Ottoman violence reached a broader audience than ever before.\footnote{666}

The Macedonian uprising was also an important milestone in the history of German turcophilism, for the protracted violence in the Balkans remained in the German headlines until the outbreak of the First World War. As Germans saw themselves increasingly isolated in the years after the Bülow chancellorship, the Eastern Question
loomed large over German politics and public life. Whether the Ottoman Empire could survive had been asked by generations of Germans, but whether the Ottomans could be a reliable partner was a question of a more recent vintage. Marschall had been lobbying Abdulhamid II since the Kaiser’s grand tour of the Orient in 1898, and Germany won new Ottoman railroad concessions in 1899 to extend the line from Konya to Baghdad. When the uprising in Macedonia flared up in 1902, German officials began to push turcophile interpretations of violence in the public sphere, which had grown weary of the Ottoman order; after the Young Turk Revolution in 1908 and the Bosnian Annexation Crisis, the German government doubled its efforts to influence public opinion. Officials advocated partnership by enlisting partisan journalists to write on behalf of the Ottomans, while professional journalists for major newspapers remained skeptical of the promises of a political-military alliance. This chapter charts the divergences between official advocacy and public scrutiny that characterized the period before the outbreak of war in 1914.

**Shifts and Revaluations**

Beyond the increased volume of reporting and its wider currency, a shift in interpretation accompanied German news coverage of the Ottoman counter-insurgency. The *Berliner Tageblatt* came out against the Ottoman suppression and lamented the fact that the Great Powers could not force reform upon the sultan.667 The *Kölnische Zeitung* grew ambivalent about justifications of Ottoman power, suggesting in a series of articles on Macedonian village life that the Ottoman system was moribund.668 Instead of praising

667 BT 3 October 1902, Nr. 503; 24 October 1902, Nr. 542.
668 KZ 13 September 1902, Nr. 718; Also see the eight-part series “Mazedonische Städte” in the KZ, August-Dezember 1902.
the Ottoman state for providing the necessary security for economic development, liberal journalists criticized the Sultan as paranoid, more interested in his vast system of spies than administering the population. Newspapers underscored the bloody suppression as an act of desperation that could forestall—but not hinder—the end of Ottoman rule. The Kölnische Zeitung still saw moral hazard in intervention by the Great Powers, blaming Bulgarian machinations for the unrest, but highlighted the primacy of Muslims within the state as the source of Ottoman misrule. Like the Armenian massacres, the Macedonian uprising underscored fundamental political tensions between Christians and Muslims within the state, as the Ottoman soldiery was almost exclusively Muslim. As long as Muslims dominated the army and the upper echelons of the administration, so the argument went, there was little incentive to improve the lives of the Christian population, and revolts would continue. The Frankfurter Zeitung was more circumspect about the future, but its editors came to similar conclusions a few years later. With Wilhelm Liebknecht’s death in 1900, even turcophile stalwarts like the Socialist Vorwärts were striking a new tone, echoing the sentiments of the liberal press.

This about-face by hitherto turcophile papers reflected changes in both the Ottoman Empire and Germany. Abdülhamid II’s paranoia and repressive regime had only increased in the years since the Armenian massacres. Ottoman exiles and opposition groups were growing in number too. These “Young Turks” published their own unflattering images of life under the sultan and his system of repression from European

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669 KZ 5 October 1902 “Mazedonische Städte V”, Nr. 762.
670 FZ 11 September 1906, Nr. 345.
capitals, and they often accused foreign journalists of being in the pocket of the sultan. German papers were, therefore, eager to display their independence by critiquing the sultan: some even bragged about their correspondents’ confrontations with the regime. Left-liberals and Socialists had been pressing for electoral reform in Prussia—all the more appropriate that editorials highlight the plight of Balkan Christians battling an oppressive Muslim state in 1902 and 1903. With political anti-semitism in Germany ebbing by the turn of the century, left-liberals were also quick to invoke the memory of the Armenian massacres when reporting on the Macedonian uprising, as was a younger generation of Socialists, who were not encumbered by Liebknecht. Associations dedicated to assisting Armenians seized on the opportunity to draw attention to another group of suffering Christians within the Empire, and Philarmenians like Rade and Lepsius wrote articles for the occasion.

Another reason for the shift in opinion was the growing promise of Austria-Hungary as a counter-example of effective governance. At the same time that news of horror from Macedonia filled German broadsheets and editorials asked how long the Ottomans would last, journalists surveying Bosnia-Herzegovina told stories of peace and economic development as Austria began transforming the former Ottoman territory in 1878. Ethnic, religious, and social tensions persisted, but they were mediated by

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673 The *Berliner Tageblatt* was especially keen to highlight its correspondents’ independence. No doubt in response to Karl Karus’ recriminations against it.
674 *Christliche Welt* 13 (1903).
enterprising state bureaucrats and a complex corporatist system of quotas and commissions. Not only did Catholic papers tout the virtues of the Habsburg system and the primacy of religious tolerance, but papers with strong anti-clerical traditions like the Kölnische Zeitung and the Frankfurter Zeitung sang the praises of Austrian rule as well.  

The overall message was that the Balkans were not simply a zone of conflict and backwardness, but had the potential to become an integrated part of an economic Mitteleuropa.

**Official Reactions and Redactions**

While a wide variety of newspapers began to call turcophile interpretations of violence into question, the German government intensified its commitment to the regime of Abdülhamid II. Marschall became an important interlocutor to the Sultan as German ambassador, helping to win concessions for the Baghdad railroad and contracts for other German business interests. When the Macedonian uprising broke out, Germany’s top official in Constantinople excoriated the press and liberals for pushing the reform process and painted Christian insurgents as a danger to German interests and the international system. The Kaiser and Bülow agreed with Marschall, reiterating their view that the reform project would only hasten the end of the Ottoman Empire and be disastrous for Germany. When the Great Powers finally reached an agreement at a hunting castle in the obscure Austrian town of Mürzsteg in September 1903, Germany was isolated. The

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676 KZ 13 September 1903, Nr. 716. In addition to its series on Macedonia, the paper started to write vignettes about Bosnia-Herzegovina as well. “Auf Pfad in Bosnien I- VII”, August 1903-May 1904. The Berliner Tageblatt was even more laudatory: BT 4 March 1903, Nr. 114.“Ein Kulturwerk in Südosteuropa”.  
677 PA AA R 14500 op. cit.; See Bülow’s repsonse in R 13623, Bülow to Wedel 2 November 1902.  
678 Ibid.
sultan was forced to accept an international commission to administer Macedonia, in which a British general oversaw a re-organized Ottoman gendarmerie with the help of foreign officers from Italy, France, Russia, and Austria. Germany only grudgingly accepted the plan and refrained from sending officers.\textsuperscript{679}

As a co-founder and collaborator in Otto Hammann’s system of public relations, Marschall maintained contact to journalists, but the Macedonian uprising tested the Foreign Office’s ability to maintain a turcophile narrative of Ottoman legitimacy. Unable to stop correspondents in the field from posting reports directly to their newspapers, the Foreign Office resorted to using the \textit{Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung} to launch attacks on liberal papers for their news coverage. The semi-official paper claimed that reporters were relying on second-hand information and endangering the Prussian military mission by quoting officers anonymously and distorting their statements. Liberal papers like the \textit{Kölnische Zeitung} and the \textit{Berliner Tageblatt} stood by the accuracy of their information and, in turn, defended the Prussian military mission against accusations by the French press that German officers were taking part in the suppression.\textsuperscript{680} Scherl’s \textit{Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger} was the only major paper with original news coverage to moderate its tone, growing more turcophile by the end of 1903. Scherl was committed to \textit{Weltpolitik}, and the Foreign Office convinced the editors in Berlin to suppress articles by their correspondent in Constantinople, Bernd von Köller, who had grown critical of the

\textsuperscript{679} PA AA R 13654-13659 passim.
\textsuperscript{680} KZ 12 August 1903 Nr. 687; BT 24 August 1903, Nr. 249.
Ottoman army’s behavior.\(^{681}\) Marschall also began to clamp down on unfavorable press by paying German journalists in Constantinople to abstain from writing.\(^{682}\)

The Prussian military also took an interest in the Macedonian uprising and the Ottoman suppression, hiring the journalist Heinrich von Tzyska to report to the General Staff in March 1903.\(^{683}\) After several weeks of unsatisfactory work, Tzyska was replaced by Karl von Goeben, an active-duty Prussian officer, who supplied the army with intelligence reports about the counter-insurgency efforts by the Ottoman army.\(^{684}\) Goeben’s reports not only chronicled Ottoman efforts to quell the insurgency but also evaluated their efficacy. In response to insurgent attacks, exemplary violence against villagers was, he wrote, a brutal but effective means of subduing the local population. After an attack, Ottoman soldiers would march into the villages and hang adult males from trees in the town square or slit their throats in an adjoining field. While he doubted that such moves would endear the Ottoman soldiery to the local population, the Prussian officer thought that collective public punishment weakened villager support for rebels and allowed operations to reach deeper into the Macedonian interior by protecting convoys from surprise attack.\(^{685}\)

More revealing, both Tyszka and Goeben used the term *franctireur* to describe Macedonian insurgents, invoking the German experience during the Franco-German War of 1870-71 and strengthening sympathy for Ottoman soldiers. The *franctireur* was so

\(^{681}\)PA AA R 1201 Marschall to Richthofen 9 October 1903; Richthofen to Pera (Marschall) 13 October 1903.
\(^{682}\)See Chapter 3.
\(^{683}\)PA AA R 12785 20 April 1903 Schlieffen to Richthofen.
\(^{684}\)PA AA R 12786 17 May 1903 Cuntz to Richthofen.
\(^{685}\)PA AA R 12788-12789 passim. See his letter to General Staff, 12 August 1903 in PA AA R 12789.
named for the French guerilla fighters that German soldiers encountered in their march toward Paris in 1870. A symbol of French treachery, these fighters wreaked havoc on German units, killing and wounding soldiers as the German armies pushed into French territory. The *franc-tireur* were viewed by German soldiers thereafter as a evidence of French degeneration and indiscipline. Part of the popular imagination in Germany, the *franc-tireur* was the antithesis of proper (German) military values and drew the ire of nationalists.⁶⁸⁶ If German soldiers had fought a perfidious enemy in the French countryside in their war of national unity, the use of the word to describe the Macedonian insurgents established an explicit emotional link between German and Ottoman soldiers. Marschall and others in the Foreign Office occasionally used the term as well, along with a host of epithets for the Christian brigands and bandits of the Ottoman Balkans. Marschall and Kiderlen-Waechter used the Ottoman term *Rajah* for Christians, which denoted their subordinate status in the Ottoman order.⁶⁸⁷ Kaiser William often called Christian insurgents in Macedonia “goat thieves” and “thugs” and wrote to Marschall that the uprising would not stop until “every single Macedonian bandit and Bulgarian thief is strung up!”⁶⁸⁸

**Staging Sympathy**

As public sympathy in Germany waned, official policy became more wedded to the Ottomans. Although the Ottoman army had waged a successful campaign to retain control of Macedonia, the Mürzsteg agreement was a slap in the face to the Ottoman army

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⁶⁸⁶ Kramer and Horne, *German Atrocities*.
⁶⁸⁷ PA AA R 13564-13707, passim. See Marschall’s letter to Bülow 13 March 1906, R 13703.
⁶⁸⁸ PA AA R 13622 Marschall to Berlin 16 October 1902
and led to a profound sense of resentment among its soldiers toward both the Sultan and the intervening Great Powers. German reformers at the War Academy in Constantinople commiserated with their Ottoman counterparts and saw the reform project as a direct challenge to the authority of the Ottoman state. German diplomats also worried that the Mürzsteg program would mean the partition of Macedonia, for the agreement envisioned a reorganization of districts according to ethnicity, which would not only undermine Ottoman rule but make for easier incorporation of the territory into the border states. Germany, therefore, subverted the project as much as possible, passing on privileged information to the Sultan and delaying diplomatic circulars that required the consent of all the powers.  

The reform agreement could only stop the violence temporarily, and within a year marauding bands of Bulgarian insurgents began attacking Muslim villages in the Macedonian countryside. German officials were quick to blame Mürzsteg and mobilized the German press to highlight the region’s relapse into violence. Papers like the *Hamburger Nachrichten* and the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* fell in line behind the Foreign Office and decried the insurgents and chastised the reformers for their claims to be protecting “humanity”.  

Other papers like the *Vossische Zeitung* followed. With no correspondent of its own and readership sagging by the turn of the century, the traditional liberal paper became the premier turcophile paper in Germany, eager to highlight the worst news about Balkan violence that it had received from the Foreign Office.  

\[ \text{References:} \]

689 PA AA R 13178, Marschall to Bülow 16 October 1903.  
690 NAZ 13 June 1904; Hamburger Nachrichten (hereafter HN) 16 June 1904.  
papers gladly spread the joke sparked by an editorial in the *Vossische Zeitung* that the “Bulgarian Horrors” could refer as much to the atrocities committed by Bulgarian insurrects in 1906 as they did to Ottoman atrocities in 1876. Scherl’s *Der Tag* and *Berliner-Lokal-Anzeiger* also published pessimistic articles about Macedonia and highlighted the dangers to the international system that the subversion of Ottoman rule posed, while former enthusiasts of Macedonian reform like the *Berliner Tageblatt* became more cautious. Over the next several years, Hammann fed embassy reports of Greek and Bulgarian brigandage and violence to the *Vossische Zeitung*, which often made their way into the summer headlines, when acts of violence were at their height and news from Berlin was at an ebb due to the seasonal holidays of the Reich government. Major Berlin papers like the *Tageblatt* and the *Lokal-Anzeiger* followed suit and competed with the *Vossische Zeitung* over “horror-reports” (*Schrecken-Nachrichten*) from the Ottoman Balkans. Thus the government attempted to shore up German public opinion by trumpeting the increase in violence that the Mürzsteg program had induced, and such news stories made Great Britain and Russia responsible for the continuation of violence.

**Revolution and Reinvention**

As Abdülhamid II’s authoritarianism increased in the years after the Armenian massacres, secret organizations inside and outside of the Empire grew. By 1907 an underground political movement of dissatisfied officers, Muslim intellectuals, and clerics had coalesced around a platform to restore the constitution of 1876 and end the sultan’s

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692 The Reichslandbund has a wonderful compendium of conservative and government friendly papers in its press archive. BA R 8034/II 8461, vol. 1.
693 BAB-L N 2106 Folder 12
694 KZ 15 July 1906 Nr. 469, “Ein brennender Sommer”.

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oppressive regime, even bringing Christian minorities into the fold. Originally comprising marginalized non-Turkic Muslims, such as Albanians, Circassians, and Kurds, the movement spread to Turkic-nationalists in the officer corps, who were frustrated by the weakness and nepotism of the Hamidian regime. After representatives of Great Britain and Russia met at Reval to discuss taking more control over Macedonia in June 1908—and the sultan was preparing to consent—the Third Ottoman Army in Macedonia marched on Constantinople in early July. With large portions of the army behind the revolt, the sultan relented weeks later and agreed to convene the Ottoman parliament. Elections were scheduled for the end of 1908, censorship of the domestic press was lifted, and a new era appeared to begin.  

The Young Turk Revolution and the promises of a constitutional regime posed immediate challenges for Germany, whose unyielding support for the sultan and whose advantageous economic concessions had long made it unpopular with the forces opposed to Abdülhamid II. Citing England and France as their role models, parties shunned the German embassy and implicated Germans with the oppressive Abdülhamid II, while the British ambassador, Sir Gerard Lowther became a key consultant and supporter of Ottoman constitutionalism. The hope that “Ottomanism” and the idea that all citizens were equal before the law, regardless of religion, would trump the “politicization” of Islam under Abdülhamid II, was another impediment to German influence. Christian parties saw Germany as a partisan supporter of Muslim interests, just as many Muslims viewed German concessions and proximity to the sultan as imperialist opportunism.

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695 Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, p. 183.
696 PA AA R 13182 Marschall to Bülow 18 July 1908.
The persistence of Christian banditry in the Balkans sowed discord between Muslims and non-Muslims, as did attempts by Armenians to enact laws that would give them more local autonomy. Muslims suspected Christians of wanting too much autonomy, and Christians suspected that Muslims would never grant them true legal equality.\(^{697}\)

While this tension strengthened the centrifugal forces within the empire and undermined the ideals of Ottomanism, Muslims were hardly unified either. The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), the umbrella organization that had brought the motley array of critics and detractors together, now began to exercise power from the shadows. The CUP’s leaders were mostly from Macedonia and consisted of progressive Muslims, who had strong roots in the professions as well as the Ottoman army. Committed to Western science, they sought to continue the centralization of power and began absorbing professional associations and merchants’ unions into their party organization, often by force. Liberals, who were largely a product of Abdülhamid II’s attempts to cultivate a Muslim capitalist class, as well as members of the bureaucracy, stood in the middle, wanting to retain their economic freedoms and exercise power as they had before.\(^{698}\)

Confusion as to who exercised power in the Ottoman state led to a protracted period of crisis in the German mission to Constantinople. Instability seemed so great in the Empire that Bülow rejected an offer of alliance by the Ottomans in August 1908, fearing Austrian alienation and skeptical that a deal with the CUP would be worth much a few months later amid the political uncertainty. The Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in October only deepened the mistrust between Germans and Ottoman

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\(^{697}\) Ibid.

\(^{698}\) Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, pp. 152-154.
leaders, while Christians worried that the annexation would endanger their already precarious status by fomenting anger among Muslims. After Austria formally annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina in October, the promise of unifying Muslim and Christian subjects under a common state became more tenuous.

With German standing in the decline, Great Britain’s was on the rise after the Young Turk Revolution. However, the upsurge in political violence and the growing prominence of the Ottoman army began to work against British influence as well. In a struggle for dominance in the spring of 1909, liberals and conservatives aligned against the CUP, staging a coup in April. Supporters of the coup argued that the constitution had been restored after the CUP had strong-armed cabinet appointments, while detractors feared that Abdülhamid II would reassert power as sultan. Within weeks, an “Action Army” organized by the CUP marched on Constantinople a second time and deposed Abdülhamid II, replacing him with Mehmed V. The countercoup was a blow to Great Britain, which had supported the liberals, alienating many within the CUP and allowing Germany a chance to regain some of its influence.

Marschall and the Foreign Office continued to hope throughout 1908 and early 1909 that some sort of restoration of the sultan would restore order and redeem Germany’s standing. But they were taken aback by the forceful display of the Action Army and its deposition of Abdülhamid II in April 1909. With the importance of the army on the rise and the CUP extending its power and passing emergency laws, Marschall and the Foreign

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699 PA AA R 13190 Marschall to Bülow 24 October 1908.
700 PA AA R 13183 passim.
701 The German government delayed turning over Abdülhamid II’s private bank account at the Reichsbank in Berlin to the CUP for over a year on this hope. They eventually relented. See PA AA R 13939-13940.
Office realized the potential role that military ties could play in re-establishing friendly relations.\textsuperscript{702} For its part, the CUP was growing into a mass party as it enveloped more organizations, associations, and parties, while officers in the Ottoman army began to reach out to their former mentors at the War Academy. The chief German military attaché at the embassy, Walter von Strempel, had already developed close relationships with CUP members in the Ottoman officer corps like Enver, Sevket, and Pertev Bey, who had either studied at the War Academy or taken part in an officer exchange program in Germany.\textsuperscript{703}

Colmar von der Goltz visited the Ottoman Empire as part of an official goodwill tour in July 1909 and again in October of 1910, receiving full military honors upon his arrival. Many of his former students were in senior positions such as Enver Bey, while a younger generation of officers tried to implement reform plans for the army that Goltz had drawn up decades before. His knowledge of Turkish impressed the general soldiery and his years of experience under the Hamidian regime gave him an unusually complex understanding of the challenges facing the Ottoman military, as well as the Empire more broadly.\textsuperscript{704}

\textbf{“Those nasty rags”}

Despite the military camaraderie, Germany continued to have an image problem in the Ottoman Empire, as Goltz himself noted on his second tour in 1910. Not only had most of the exiles now involved in politics sought refuge in England, Switzerland or France, and brought back to Constantinople fond memories of the freedoms in their adoptive home, but, according to Goltz, the “good for nothing” German press was also

\textsuperscript{702}PA AA R 13185 Marschall to Berlin, 28 May 1909.
\textsuperscript{703}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{704}PA AA R 13189 Marschall to Berlin 4 November 1909.
giving those Ottoman politicians who were interested in Germany terrible picture of what was going on in. “Unfortunately...the Berliner Tageblatt has replaced the Kölnische Zeitung as the most read newspaper here and gives the impression that a dark, absolutist regime rules in which saber-rattling, capricious police [Polizeiwillkür], and Junker arrogance reigns supreme.” Liberal papers--“those nasty rags” [diese häßliche Blätter]—were dominating the conversation. England was still the role model of liberalism and justice in the minds of most progressive politicians, according to Goltz, while Germany remained in the shadow of Abdülhamid II. 705

The German embassy’s press strategy had done little to alter this perception. The restoration of the constitution in 1908 had not just limited the sultan’s rule, but also ended his censorship regime, leading to an explosion of political papers in Constantinople and a host of recriminations against Germany and its history of accommodation. Marschall went on the offensive and turned his press strategy on its head. Instead of paying journalists not to write for the German public sphere, he established a German- and French- language newspaper in Constantinople, Der osmanische Lloyd, dedicated to news about the Ottoman Empire and Imperial Germany. The newspaper was intended for the Ottoman public sphere, and the ambassador hoped to portray German culture as a progressive force in Ottoman society. Organized by the Foreign Office and funded by German industry, the first issue appeared in mid-November, weeks before Ottoman parliamentary elections in December 1908. 706 A former editor of the Vossische Zeitung, Eduard Grunwald, became editor-in-chief, while Friedrich Schrader, a well-connected

705 BAMA N 737 V. 5, Nr. 181. 18 December 1910.
706 PA AA R 13897, passim.
orientalist scholar and journalist for the *Vorwärts* was put in charge of the feuilleton. The German embassy was also betting on the connections of Paul Weitz from the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, as it ended subsidies for other journalists and dedicated its resources toward keeping him in Constantinople. The liberal journalist continued to gather information for Marschall and aided the ambassador in his struggles to gain a toe-hold in the new political system taking shape.

This new media strategy, which incorporated liberal and Socialist journalists into the government’s campaign to better its image in the Ottoman Empire was the culmination of years of formal and informal cooperation between ambassadors and journalists. Marschall had been relying on Weitz for advice and subsidizing other correspondents since the turn of the century. Yet the establishment of *Der osmanischer Lloyd* was also a step backwards, a return to the heavy-handed semi-official papers of the nineteenth century. Although Marschall left day-to-day control in the hands of Grunwald and Schrader, hoping that their expertise would attract readers, the paper did not become an antidote to Germany’s old regime reputation, nor was it a reliable source of news. It was known as an organ of the German embassy and never became commercially viable. Schrader’s feuilleton was held in high regard, but the *Osmanischer Lloyd* always relied on subsidies from the German government until it was shut down in 1918.

The post-Hamidian world offered a minefield of public relations problems for Germany. With the sultan’s regime gone in April 1908, Marschall could no longer

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707 PA AA R 1487 Schön to Marschall 31 December 1908
708 *Farah, Deutsche Pressepolitik*, pp. 234.
709 Ibid.
threaten German journalists with expulsion if they wrote articles he disliked. The revolution had piqued the interest of German papers, and local correspondents made the front page, as they documented the breathtaking turn of events in Constantinople. Editorials took stock of German foreign policy, as the new Ottoman regime gave German newspapers an opportunity to explain their reservations about Ottoman power that had been gestating since the Macedonian Uprising. Constraints that had existed prior to the liquidation of the Hamidian regime melted away in both Berlin and Constantinople in 1909. What argument could Hammann or Marschall possibly use to justify censoring a candid reflection of German policy toward Abdulhamid II? Why would the new Ottoman leaders expel journalists for criticizing the previous regime? The old paradigm of turcophilism fell apart. No one wanted to be associated with the failed Hamidian system.

The Kölnische Zeitung damned German fealty toward the sultan and Germany’s blind support for the “Old Turkish element” against any reform; the Berliner Tageblatt accused Marschall of corruption and being all to close to the Hamidian regime. 710 The paper sarcastically wrote an imaginary letter of resignation by Marschall, in which the ambassador expressed his wish to bring his harem and “oriental grandeur” [orientalische Herrlichkeit] back with him to Germany. 711 The Germania wrote that Germany had engaged in a risky political strategy and “placed everything on one card”, as a new era of constitutionalism appeared to dawn. 712 The Frankfurter Zeitung muted its criticisms of the Foreign Office; the editors published Weitz’ detailed accounts of political life in the

710 KZ 12 June 1909, Nr. 447; BT 29 May 1909 Nr.89.
711 BT 21 July 1909, Nr 121.
712 Germania 11 June 1909.
Ottoman capital—which were themselves testimonies to Germany’s fallen position—but refrained from criticizing the German government and its tradition of obsequious accommodation. The Vossische Zeitung was completely captured by Hammann’s press section in the summer of 1908 and published articles by fiat according to the Foreign Office.713

Marschall’s relationship to the Frankfurter Zeitung and Hammann’s connections to the Vossische Zeitung provided a welcome exception to the welter of reports that painted an unflattering image of German foreign policy. When the annexation crisis emerged in October, the German mission was faced with another problem of perception. German news coverage did little to endear Germany to the reading classes in Constantinople, as German papers from across the political spectrum supported Austrian control of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Catholic papers took the lead in pleading with Bülow to support the annexation, and liberals celebrated the end of the crisis as a step forward for German economic interests in a peaceful Mitteleuropa. Echoing the sentiments expressed in the independent German press since the Macedonian Uprising, the Ottoman Empire had a long litany of problems that seemed insoluble, even with the Young Turks at the helm, while Bosnia-Herzegovina was a zone of peace and prosperity.714

The German government’s own eagerness for good publicity caused problems as well. As the coup against the CUP seemed to be succeeding in April 1909, Marschall pushed German newspapers to lionize the sultan and the army for restoring order, hoping to return to its preeminent position at court. But when the counter-coup started to unfold,

713BAB-L N 2106 NL Hamman.
714BA R 8034/ II 8461 Vol. 2.
the German ambassador quickly tried to shut these papers up. Managing news about the outbreak of massacres along the Anatolian coast during those uncertain weeks of April 1909 was another instance where the German embassy backtracked. An outbreak of violence in Adana between armed Armenians and the local police escalated into an all out assault on Christians. Initially unresponsive to reports that European Christians were also threatened, Marschall only sent a navy ship after the British had, because he feared that Great Britain might take credit for saving German lives and then only after much prodding from the Imperial Admiralty. Afraid of locking horns with the Ottoman military, the ambassador also tried to limit news coverage and the appearance that Germany was intervening in Ottoman affairs. True to form, the Frankfurter Zeitung provided little coverage, only reprinting the Havas reports, while the Kölnische Zeitung and the Berliner Tageblatt sent correspondents to cover the massacres in person. More than a week into their coverage of the Adana massacres, the Kölnische Zeitung tried to underscore the humanitarian dimensions of the German intervention after Hammann’s press office came calling. Mosse’s daily, however, excoriated the government for dragging its feet. Yet the issue of the massacres themselves was quickly dropped, as attention shifted back to Constantinople and the aftermath of the countercoup.

A New Dawn?

Abdülhamid II’s final departure in May 1909 brought the question of the Ottoman military to the fore. Would the army play a political role in the future Ottoman state, and

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715 PA AA R 13184 passim.  
716 PA AA R 13182 Marschall to Bülow 16 April and after.  
717 KZ 17 April-23 April 1909; BT 20 April-29 April 1909.  
718 PA AA R 13184 Alberts to Schoen 29 April 1909.
how interwoven was the CUP with the army? The Adana massacres had been a puzzle for many journalists and diplomats, for it was unclear whether forces loyal to the sultan had launched the massacre to distract attention from the capital, or whether it was a spontaneous reaction to an incipient revolt by Armenians. After forces loyal to the CUP shipped out to stop the violence, they instead continued it upon arrival, destroying the Armenian quarter, killing as many as ten thousand Armenians and three thousand non-armed Christians.  

Would the CUP be any different from Abdülmahid II and could it maintain power? By contrast, the countercoup in Constantinople had involved thousands of Christian soldiers fighting alongside Muslims to uproot Islamic reactionaries. Would the army be responsible for delivering the promises of Ottomanism? Or would the centrifugal forces of the Empire tear the army apart as well?  

The worries of German soldiers went deeper. Could the army be sufficiently reformed to fight a major war on Germany’s side? Goltz was encouraged by what he saw in 1909 and 1910, but he underscored that it would be years before such an alliance could materialize, if at all. The Prussian and Bavarian General Staffs were equally skeptical, especially after the nine German officers sent in 1909 to command so-called “model regiments” in the Ottoman army seemed to have little effect.  

The Foreign Office, however, tried to put a positive spin on the uncertainties of Ottoman military capabilities, seeing the Ottoman Army as Germany’s best way to regain

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719 Ibid.
720 PA AA R 13186 Marschall to Berlin 29 May 1909; KZ 11 June 1909, Nr. 445.
721 BAMA N 737 V. 5, Nr. 181. 18 December 1910.
influence in the post-Hamidian world. Although many German officials worried in private about the Empire’s ultimate usefulness and developed contingency plans for partition if the Ottoman order collapsed, in public the Foreign Office pushed hard to make the Ottomans into promising allies.\textsuperscript{723} Papers that had depended on the Foreign Office in the past like the \textit{Vossische Zeitung} wrote glowing portraits of the countercoup and sympathetic portraits of Unionist leaders. With Bülow’s chancellorship on its last legs by the summer of 1909, the State Secretary Alfred von Kiderlen-Waechter reached out to Friedrich Naumann. Since Naumann’s turcophilic conversion in the 1890s, the liberal theologian had made the case for strengthening ties between Germany and the Ottoman Empire, writing a glowing article about the countercoup in the summer of 1909 in the pages of \textit{Die Hilfe} and publishing a new edition of his turcophile travelogue “Asia”.\textsuperscript{724} Kiderlen-Waechter also enlisted Naumann’s friend and newspaperman, Ernst Jäckh, to tour the Ottoman lands that same year. Upon his return, Jäckh wrote \textit{Der Aufsteigende Halbmond: Auf dem Weg zum deutsch-türkischen Bündnis} in 1911 and became a supporter of an alliance with the Ottomans in his newspaper, the \textit{Neckar-Zeitung}. The Foreign Office also supported orientalists like Hugo Grothe, general secretary of the \textit{Vorderasiengesellschaft} in Munich and a fervent supporter of the Baghdadbahn and German economic development of Asia Minor, arranging for his publication catalog in 1909 to be distributed to various journalists in Berlin.\textsuperscript{725}

\textsuperscript{723}Aksakal, \textit{The Ottoman Road to War}, pp. 62-71.\textsuperscript{724} PA AA R 13188 passim.\textsuperscript{725} PA AA R 1201 10 December 1909.
Historians have often cited Jäckh and Naumann as examples of a popular German turcophilism, yet the activities of these men were part of a government-inspired campaign, however heartfelt their sympathies.\textsuperscript{726} Their arguments recycled the rhetoric of past conflicts and tapped into clichés that had enjoyed wide appeal in the German press. Accordingly, Ottoman Christians were unruly, backstabbing, and backward, whereas Muslims were a noble “ruler-people” that were helping to maintain world peace. The recent revolution had demonstrated that the Turks were capable of change and ripe for partnership. Newspapers influenced by the German Foreign Office, like the \textit{Vossische Zeitung}, trumpeted Jäckh’s vision of the future and, together with the \textit{Neckar-Zeitung}, remained some of the few “liberal” turcophile papers left by 1909. These papers propagated the CUP as a modernizing influence in Ottoman politics that would deliver the country from religious conflict by turning the Empire into a secular, rationalist state.

Such sentiments and rosy predictions of a common future with the Ottomans sat uneasily next to other German newspaper reports from the Empire, which documented the growing political take-over by the CUP as well as the perennial uncertainty of Christian minorities in the empire. Two conflicting visions of modernization stood in opposition to each other. The CUP wanted to continue the project of centralization started during the Tanzimat, while Ottoman Liberals, who included most Christians, coalesced around decentralization and more autonomy for local communities.

Editors at the *Kölnische Zeitung* damned the whole genre of *Türkenschwärmerei*. Although not naming Jäckh by name, it referred to a growing body of opinion written “with vigor and enthusiasm, certainly a product of our times, as so many are hopeful for a Turkish regeneration, but are, in the end, all too misguided and sentimental [*verklärt*] to be of any practical value”.

A year later, the Constantinople correspondent for the *Berliner Tageblatt* found the promise of a resurgent Ottoman Empire, which one read about so much in the pages of some German newspapers, to be “idiocy” and “the wishful thinking of scholars who have never set foot in the Orient”. Both newspapers pointed to the persistent challenges of absorbing Christians into a Muslim-dominated state, as well as the difficulties of the CUP in transforming itself from a secret society to a political party capable of governing and making compromises.

Although Colmar von der Goltz did his best to better relations between Germany and the Ottoman Empire through his tours and connections in the Ottoman army, his pessimism was great, too. Keeping a low profile, the old Ottoman reformer did not publish a single word about the Ottomans until the outbreak of the first Balkan War in 1912. Privately he worried about the incompetence of the young army leadership as well as the overconfidence of the CUP to remake Ottoman society. While turcophilism might have thrived in the minds of diplomats trying to improve Germany’s image and journalists willing to indulge the Foreign Office’s view, those with experience of Ottoman realities remained more skeptical.

*War and Peace*

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727 *KZ* 10 March 1910, Nr. 189.
728 *BT* 12 February 1910, Nr. 46.
Italy’s attack on the Ottoman territories of modern-day Libya in September 1911 marked the beginning of a crisis period in Great Power diplomacy, which bled into the German-Ottoman alliance of World War I. Although Italy was unable to claim victory until October 1912, early military successes against the Ottomans created momentum for the Balkan states to build their own war alliance. In March 1912, Serbia and Bulgaria formed the Balkan League, an alliance whose goal was political unification with their co-nationalists in the remaining Ottoman territories of southeastern Europe. Greece and Montenegro joined the League in the following months, and while the Great Powers tried to prevent a conflagration, the Balkan states went to war against the Ottoman Empire on 18 October 1912. After seven months of fighting, the Balkan League achieved a stunning victory over the Ottomans, who were not only soundly defeated but also demoralized and teetering on the brink of collapse. A second Balkan War was fought in the summer of 1913, when Bulgaria, dissatisfied with its territorial gains, attacked its erstwhile partners, Serbia and Greece. Bulgarian aggression drew Romania into the conflict, whose armies threatened Sofia and caused the Bulgarians to sue for a quick peace. Not only did Bulgaria lose all of its gains from the first war, but the Ottomans regained control of a sliver of their former territory in eastern Thrace.\textsuperscript{729}

The wars sent shockwaves through the international system and created enormous challenges for Germany, which pursued a complex and, at times, contradictory policy of accommodating Austria and recalibrating its relationship to the Balkan states. Serbia had almost doubled in size and now threatened Austria-Hungary, Germany’s only reliable ally.

Bulgaria was angered by Russian interventions that had ended the second Balkan War. Russia, in turn, strengthened its support of Serbia as a means of maintaining influence in the region. Austrian fears of Slavic irredentism by Serbia, as well as German fears that the Kaiserreich would be isolated if it did not support Austria, coalesced to produce a vision of a coming conflict between Germans and Slavs. German diplomacy worked to forge a coalition of the non-Slavic Balkan states of Greece, Romania, and the Ottoman Empire, which could counteract Russian influence, but produced no concrete result. However, Anglo-German efforts to reign in the escalating tensions between Austria and Russia were successful and kept the Balkan Wars from spilling over into a larger conflict.

The decisive military defeat of the Ottomans took most German officials by surprise and strengthened fears that Germany’s strategic position was weakening. A collapse of the Ottoman Empire would endanger both German economic interests in Asia Minor as well as its leverage over Great Britain, with which Germany still wanted to reach a diplomatic agreement regarding African colonies and the Baghdad railroad. Germany, therefore, renewed its pledge to maintain the Ottoman Empire. The German ambassador in Constantinople, Hans von Wangenheim, argued that maintaining Ottoman power served the cause of “humanity”, while the State Secretary in the Foreign Office, Gottlieb von Jagow, thought that maintaining Ottoman rule was necessary to help Germany’s relationship with Great Britain.

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732 PA AA R 13193 Wangenheim to Jagow 14 July 1913; PA AA NL Wangenheim, Jagow to Wangenheim 28 July 1913.
Although German diplomats held out hope in 1913 and 1914 that a political rapprochement with Great Britain could de-escalate the confrontation between Austria and Russia, by the end of 1912, German military men thought that a continental war was unavoidable. The Prussian General Staff put pressure on the government to increase the military budget and the size of the army, preparing for a preemptive war in the near future. Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg sought to square the circle between the diplomats and the military in 1913, pushing for a new army bill that would strengthen the German land forces with increased funds and men, while simultaneously weakening the finances of the Imperial navy, so a deal with Great Britain would be more likely. Despite their differences, both the German military and the Foreign Office agreed that saving the Ottoman Empire was crucial in the medium term and worked together to organize a new military mission led by Otto Liman von Sanders in the summer of 1913.

**Spectacular News**

The Balkan Wars not only shook up Great Power politics but created a media frenzy as well. Newspapers from across Europe, the Americas, and Japan covered the wars by sending correspondents to the belligerents’ capitals. German newspapers alone had at least twenty-three war correspondents reporting on the war at the height of the conflict. As the belligerent armies did not open their operations to outside observers, most news on the war came from behind the frontlines. Attached to the Bulgarian and Ottoman armies, the British journalists Philip Gibbs and Bernhard Grant claimed they

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733 PA AA R 14272 passim.
were treated like “prisoners of war” by their respective armies.\textsuperscript{734} Not only were journalists subject to censorship and dependent on the military for information, but the imperative to write reports might also have led some journalists to fabricate stories, so editors at home would continue to support their travels. British journalists claimed, for example, that the war correspondent for the \textit{Reichspost} had made up entire battle scenes in his depictions of the war.\textsuperscript{735}

Yet, despite the limitations on information and the propensity to inflate stories, the Ottoman side of the fighting offered journalists more opportunities to cover the war. Disorganization and retreat on the Ottoman side meant that foreign correspondents could get closer to the eastern front as the fighting progressed. After taking Kirkkilisse in mid-October 1912, the Bulgarians racked up a series of victories as they marched eastward and the Ottomans fell back on the Chataldza line in November, which was only twenty kilometers from Constantinople. With the Bulgarian and Ottoman armies dug in so close to the capital, so soon into the war, it was not hard for journalists to realize what was going on. Spectacular descriptions of Ottoman retreat were telegraphed to the capitals of Europe, and newspaper headlines were updated over the course of the day for afternoon and evening editions.\textsuperscript{736}

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\textsuperscript{734}Philip Gibbs and Bernhard Grant, \textit{Adventures of War with Cross and Crescent} (London, 1913).
\textsuperscript{735}Keisinger, \textit{Unzivilisierte Kriege}, pp. 38-44. One should bear in mind, however, that accusations of inaccuracy and fabrication almost always came from either rival journalists of different countries or military men upset at a paper’s sensationalism. See PA AA R 14272, von Lossow to Wangenheim, 11 November 1912.
\textsuperscript{736}Based on survey of KZ, BT, FZ, and the Press archive of the Reichlandsbund, BAB-L R 8034/ II 8461 vol. 9.
\end{flushright}
In the western theater, the flow of information was slower and more tenuous, but correspondents told a similar story. The Serbian Army pushed south into Macedonia relatively easily, while Greece took Salonica and the surrounding territory of Eprius with the help of the Greek navy. By December the Ottoman Army was pinned back behind Chataldzha, and while a coup by the CUP in January 1913 threw out the Liberals and kept the Ottomans in the war a little longer, a series of sieges on the remaining Ottoman cities in Thrace led to an armistice in April. When the second war broke out in June 1913, many correspondents had already gone home, and newspapers relied on those who had remained. After hostilities had subsided for a final time, reporters traveled into the Balkan interior, hoping to document the horror stories of ethnic violence that they had heard about during the wars.\textsuperscript{737}

Although some of the information that made its way into the news coverage was false—as many editors reminded their readers—German papers rushed to judge the unfolding events as the reports came in. Papers like the Kölnische Zeitung, Frankfurter Zeitung, and Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger regretted the outbreak of war, but editors thought that the Balkan League would surely win. Catholic papers were equally weary and feared that a Pan-Slavic Übermacht in the region would be bad for Germany. Mosse’s Berliner Tageblatt got behind the League, leading off with “The Balkans for the Balkan peoples” [Der Balkan den Balkanvölkern] and celebrating the war as liberation. Scherl’s magazine, Die Gartenlaube, was also euphoric, praising the “courage” [Opfermut] and “self-

\textsuperscript{737}\textit{Ibid.}
privations” [Selbstverleugung] of the attacking armies. The Socialist Vowärts decried the war but maintained that it was an understandable reaction to “Turkish oppression” and goaded on by the imperialist designs of Russia. Only the semi-official press like the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung and the Hamburger Nachrichten, as well as the Vossische Zeitung remained whole-heartedly turcophile. On the eve of war, the “Tante Voss” repeatedly warned that the Ottomans were tougher than the Balkan League realized. After the war had commenced, the paper claimed that the attack was a crusade against the Turks, in which Christian values played no role. Eager to paint the war in the darkest possible terms, the Vossische Zeitung was also one of the first papers to report atrocities committed by the Balkan armies, and it predicted a guerilla war in which ethnic violence would ravage the Balkans. By November, the entire German press was reporting on Bulgarian and Serbian atrocities after stories had multiplied.

While moral outrage in the German headlines was great, and many papers asked whether the Ottomans’ reputation for brutality was merited, editorials from liberal and left-liberal papers saw the Balkan League as a harbinger of the future rather than a relic of the past. Instead of portraying the Ottomans as keepers of the peace or as the only true “ruler-race” [Herrschervolk] as the Vossische Zeitung maintained, they characterized the successes of the Balkan League as the hard fought result of nation-building and national armies. The Kölnische Zeitung called the war a “people’s war [Volkskrieg], a war of national duty and honor, 35 years in the making, they [the Balkan League] are jumping

738 Gartenlaube, No. 48, 1912.
739 Vorwärts 24 October 1912.
740 Voss Z. 24 October 1912, Nr. 544.
741 Voss Z., 28 October 1913, Nr. 548.
into the fire of the fight[...]the believe in their war of liberation and act with cool passion for their oppressed brothers[...]Can one really be surprised?" The *Berliner Tageblatt* claimed that “the fateful moment of the Balkan peoples had come and the morass called the Ottoman Empire was most likely finished. For some it is revenge, for others justice.”

It was not by accident that the *Vossische Zeitung* had gotten the scoop on atrocities. The Foreign Office had leaked the damaging information to German correspondents and worked to influence the German news coverage about the Balkan League. In Constantinople ambassador Wangenheim had first briefed the *Vossische Zeitung*’s B. Pietsch with information from military attachés in the field. Soon thereafter he briefed all available German correspondents about what was transpiring, as did an embassy official in Athens, Alexander Quandt. Reports from the German consulates in Belgrade and Sofia, which included depictions of Ottoman atrocities committed by Bashi-Bozuks, were conveniently ignored. Yet for all their attempts to steer news coverage, Wangenheim and the Foreign Office failed to keep journalists from reporting on atrocities committed by the Ottomans. After long-time editor and correspondent Arthur von Huhn died in November 1912, relations between the Foreign Office and the *Kölnische Zeitung* deteriorated. The paper’s chief correspondent in the Ottoman lands, Richard von Mach, had remained resistant to the interventions of the Foreign Office during Marschall’s tenure, and Wangenheim proved equally unsuccessful during the Balkan Wars. Known to

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742 KZ 11 November 1912, Nr. 823  
743 BT 28 October 1912, Nr.  
744 PA AA R 14272 Note from Wangenheim 18 October 1912.
harbor sympathies for the Bulgarians, after having reported from Sofia in the 1880s, Mach was scrupulous about reporting atrocities from all sides. Contact with traditional turcophile reporters like Hans Barth of the *Berliner Tageblatt* did not help the Foreign Office either. He remained on friendly terms with the German embassy in Athens, where he was stationed during the war. However, he and his paper could hardly be expected to support the Ottomans after years of calling for the liberation of the Balkan peoples from Ottoman rule. They were eager to document all the atrocities that they could.

Barth was also one of the first observers to anticipate conflict within the Balkan League, which blossomed after the first war and led to another round of frantic reporting. Writing from Salonica, where the Greek and the Bulgarian armies met in the spring of 1913, Barth highlighted the ethnic tensions between the armies, as well as the competing nationalist claims on Macedonia. Not only did the Serbian, Greek, and Bulgarian troops brutalize and expel the local Muslim population as they rolled into Macedonia, but they turned against each other as well. By June 1913 Bulgarians had begun to fight Serb forces for primacy in western Macedonia, just as they fought Greeks in Epirus. Stories of atrocities committed against women, children, and unarmed men of rival ethnic groups multiplied and bore striking resemblance to earlier stories of outrages against Muslims. By the summer of 1913 such stories were commonplace, and the German public sphere once again experienced “compassion fatigue”. The *Kölnische Zeitung* took stock in July 1913 after the second Balkan War was winding down:

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745 PA AA R 1233 Wangenheim to Berlin 21 February 1913; von Mach had written a series of books sympathetic to the Bulgarian cause; *Elf Jahre Balkan: Erinnerung eines preußischen Offiziers* (Breslau, 1889); *Machtbereich des bulgarischen Exarchats in der Türkei* (Leipzig, 1906).

746 PA AA R 14727
What is one supposed to think after all these scenes of horror? Every party was fighting for law and order, everyone was fighting against oppression. No one wants to be guilty, but no one can be innocent! ‘Freedom’ is just as hollow as ‘humanity’. 747

When the Carnegie Foundation sent an international team of academics to investigate the violence, the American representative, Samuel T. Dutton, a professor at Columbia’s Teaching College, claimed that the report would “shock the world”. 748 Yet upon its release, the German papers were largely unimpressed. They found the statistics about the atrocities helpful and eagerly published them, but these numbers fit into interpretations of the war that had been operative since the summer campaigns had ended. Turcophile papers, like the Vossische Zeitung, highlighted the Carnegie report as further evidence that the Balkan states were rapacious, and it wondered how long before Europe would wish for the Turks to return. 749 Yet other liberal papers like the Kölnische Zeitung and the Frankfurter Zeitung did not think a return to the old Ottoman order was possible. They feared that the Treaty of Bucharest, which had ended the second war and punished Bulgaria by taking away many of its gains, was paving the way for a further round of

747 KZ, 28 July 1913.
748 New York Times, 13 October 1913
749 VossZ 6 September & 18 November 1913
“guerilla warfare” [Bandenkrieg] by a revisionist state. All papers agreed, however, that the Ottoman Empire was no longer a European power and could never become one again.

**Dealing with Defeat**

The structure of news coverage as well as its message of defeat created a public-relations problem not only for the Foreign Office, but for the German military as well. Although the Ottoman army had some military successes and showed intermittent bouts of resolve and bravery in defending the Chataldzha line, its overall performance was abysmal. Cholera had spread quickly among soldiers and Muslim refugees, who streamed into the remaining Ottoman territories around Constantinople. A general sense of disaster was transmitted to the German public sphere via news reports from journalists as well as by the memoirs of volunteers from the German Red Cross, who had made their way to Constantinople and documented their struggle to bring succor to Ottoman troops and Muslim refugees.  

Thirty years of German reform efforts were now under scrutiny as an indicator of Germany’s own military readiness, and the public perception fostered by German turcophiles since the Young Turk Revolution of a convalescing Ottoman Empire under German tutelage was shattered. In the wars’ aftermath, a public battle in European newspapers was waged not only over whether French-made Schneider-Creuzot guns of the Greek army had out-performed the Krupp howitzers of the Ottomans, but also whether

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750. FZ 11 September 1913, Nr. 252; KZ 13 September 1913, Nr. .  
German military organization and strategy had been to blame for the Ottoman defeat. While accusations that linked Ottoman failure to German reform came largely from foreign papers, it was echoed in the German press. Moreover, publicists like August Keim used the wars to press for an enlarged German army, as the Balkan League had demonstrated that only a “people’s army” on the offense could win a modern war. This discourse on the Ottoman defeat drew on the experiences of German soldiers who had served in the Ottoman military or witnessed the fighting as military attachés. A new form of turcophilism emerged in which German soldiers sought to exculpate the Ottoman army for defeat by blaming the Ottoman home front for the disastrous course of the war. It anticipated the “Stab in the back” narrative that German soldiers used to explain their defeat at the end of the First World War and lent credibility to calls by the military to increase armaments and prepare the German nation for a continental war of its own.

Colmar von der Goltz broke his public silence as soon as the embarrassing defeat of the Ottomans at Kirkilisse made the news. Writing in Der Tag, he claimed that the Ottoman soldiers’ problems were purely psychological. “Years of mismanaging the economy and the program of these inexperienced [i.e. the CUP] have left the soldiers nervous and scared. They needed a secure and a supportive home (Heimat) and did not have it.” At a banquet for the Deutsche-Asiatische Gesellschaft in Berlin, Goltz underscored the necessity of understanding the “essential message” of the wars: “Every member of society has to be a productive force for modern warfare. The bravest and

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752 PA AA R 14272 Renner (Brussels) to Berlin 5 November 1912 and hereafter.
753 Der Tag 29 October 1912.
754 30 October 1912.
smartest army cannot win without a society behind it that believes and supports its soldiers.” Goltz’ also made the case at a meeting for his most high-profile project, the Jungdeutschlandbund, a youth organization designed to cultivate physical fitness and “soldierly morals”.

“The Turks did not lack good officers or weapons,” he claimed. “[T]hey lacked proper mental and physical training. Whole segments of the collective body (Volkskörper) had been wasting away in the tobacco bars and cafes.”

German soldiers stationed in the Ottoman Empire echoed this interpretation of defeat. Otto von Lossow was a member of the Bavarian General Staff, who had taught tactics at the war academy and was attached to General Abdullah Pasha’s Eastern Army in Thrace. In a summary of the lessons from the first Balkan War, he too blamed psychological factors for the early Ottoman setbacks. Yet his experiences along the Chataldzha line led him to conclude that the Ottoman home front had been largely responsible for the army’s poor performance. Tactics and weapons were sound, but soldiers simply went hungry, causing increased likelihood of disease and desertion. Lossow had led his own successful attacks on Bulgarian positions, and he cited his experience as evidence that properly motivated troops “with food in their bellies” could accomplish much.

Gustav von Hochwaechter had come from Damascus to see the fighting and joined the staff of General Mahmud Muktar Pasha. He published a report of

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755 BAMA Goltz N 737 v. 25.
757 BAMA Goltz N 737 v. 23.
758 PA AA R 13178 Military report from Lossow 10 October 1912.
759 PA AA R 14344 Military report from Lossow 13 June 1913 to General Staff (copy in to Foreign Office).
his experiences in a wide-ranging book, blaming the foibles of the younger officers as well as the enormous physical privations that the average soldier had to bear. “Far away from their homes and often without food, or shoes even, the Turk fought bravely. But the people back home were fatalistic, lazy, and did not give a damn about their soldiers!”\(^{760}\) Other German officers told similar stories.\(^{761}\)

Fears for Germany’s reputation culminated in August 1913 as the Prussian military began its own intervention into the public sphere. Only in February of 1912 did the Ministry of War establish a press section after the Italian campaigns in Libya brought the first inklings of what was to come. French newspapers had claimed that the Ottoman military failures were the result of German weapons and training, and the ministry responded by launching a campaign in “government-friendly” papers.\(^{762}\) Initially staffed with part-timers, press work within the ministry got its first full-time employee in August 1913 with the appointment of Erhard Deutelmoser, a captain in the Prussian army who had previously worked for the General Staff.\(^{763}\) His primary tactic was to launch articles in the \textit{Militär-Wochenblatt} and distribute anonymous letters to journalists from “German soldiers”, which gave explanations for the Ottoman defeat. An amalgam of Lossow’s ideas as well as those of Franz Carl Endres, a Bavarian Captain who had seen action on along the Chataldzha line, these described an army outmatched and under-resourced by an alliance of hostile states. German weapons had performed well, as had Ottoman officers,

\(^{760}\) Hochwaechter, \textit{Mit den Türken in der Front im Stabe Mahmud Muchtar Paschas} (Berlin, 1913)
\(^{761}\) PA AA R 14344 passim.
\(^{763}\) PA AA R 14231-14232 passim.
but Ottoman society was mismanaged. These letters made their way into all of the major German newspaper and began to circulate a story of defeat that would be relaunched in 1918.  

Yet major German newspapers remained skeptical of Deutelmoser’s public relations campaign. The Könische Zeitung claimed that the Ottoman economy had made progress in recent years. The real problem lay in the failure of Ottomanism and government efforts to integrate Christians into political institutions like the army, which, despite a new law in 1910 that had called for multi-confessional conscription, still consisted almost exclusively of Muslims in 1912. War with Italy in 1911 had also weakened the resolve of Muslims to integrate Christians into the state, according to the paper, and a coup led by the CUP in January 1913 during the First Balkan War did not change things either. The centrifugal forces of religious difference and nationalism, which had acted as solvents on the Ottoman order since the nineteenth century, were still thriving. Not the economy, but rather the state, to which many citizens demonstrated no allegiance, had been the source of Ottoman defeat. The Berliner Tageblatt echoed these sentiments in a pithy editorial on the aftermath of the Balkan Wars: “Muslims can fight well but cannot rule well. Christians can do neither. Therefore, they [Christians] will seek help from their neighbors in the West and the Turks will turn, more and more, to the Muslim peoples of the East.”  

Even the Frankfurter Zeitung, which tried to help out the

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764 Ibid.
765KZ “Die Niederlage” 31 July 1913, Nr. 412.
766BT “Londoner Frieden” 12 August 1913.
government as best it could, admitted that the entire “framework of the state” was the chief problem, not the economic energy \([Wirtschaftskraft]\) of the population.\(^{767}\)

**Preparing for the Future**

Beyond the public relations battle over the Ottoman defeat, German soldiers brought other stories with them back home to Germany that had consequences for military doctrine. On both sides of the Balkan Wars, guerillas \([Freischaaren]\) had been the unfortunate outgrowth of undisciplined armies. Their most dangerous effect was the psychological terror they spread to the common soldier, blurring the distinction between soldier and civilian, much as the \(frantzireur\) had during the Franco-German War.\(^{768}\)

Writing to the Bavarian General Staff, Count Heinrich von Gagern thought that these guerilla soldiers were one of the most important factors in the expansion of atrocities during the second Balkan Wars. Quick to draw parallels between fighting in the Balkans and a future war in the west, von Gagern continued:

> The principle that whoever wants to serve his fatherland in armed combat must do so within the framework of the regular army is so ingrained in the German nation that we need not worry ourselves about guerilla fighters in our midst. But our neighbors to the west continue to toy with idea[...]and we must, in my opinion, be ready to put down any attempt to put guerilla fighters in the field with the most ruthless and draconian measures[...] War is brutal and needs to be waged

\(^{767}\)FZ 26 September 1913.  
\(^{768}\)PA AA R 14344 Military Report Lossow 13 June 1913.
brutally [...] If we derive anything from the Balkan Wars, then it should be this lesson, which confirms the old, German ways of war. 769

He went on to suggest that if guerillas could not be stopped, the military would be forced to quarantine them as the British had during the Boer Wars. If that did not work, the old Ottoman technique of exemplary violence (Abschreckung durch öffentliche Straffe) was the only thing proven to work. 770

There is little doubt that German experiences in the Ottoman Balkans contributed to the formulation of policies that were used in Belgium in the autumn of 1914, once German armies encountered what they thought to be sniper fire from church belfries in Belgian villages. John Horne and Alan Kramer have documented the history of the German military’s attempts to stop what many soldiers perceived to be the beginnings of a guerilla war during their occupation of Belgium. Horne and Kramer argued that a “myth-complex” surrounding franc-tireurs from war experiences in 1870-71 informed German war-making in 1914 and the perpetration of “atrocities” by the German armies in Belgium in the opening weeks of war. Yet there was ample experience of guerilla warfare—as well as prescriptions to stop it—that German soldiers had gained in the Ottoman Empire as well. German soldiers followed the Ottoman practice of exemplary violence in the Belgian countryside, echoing the counter-insurgency efforts that the Ottoman army had mounted in Macedonia in 1903. Belgian villagers were threatened with collective punishment in town squares and brought into open fields and shot as Germans cleared key villages for

769 Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Abteilung IV. Kriegsarchiv (hereafter, BayHStA IV), Generalstab 258. 770 Ibid.
control, not unlike what the Ottomans had done a little more than ten years prior in the Balkans.\textsuperscript{771} Goltz used his experience in the Ottoman Empire as the German military governor in Belgium in September and October 1914, ordering summary executions in Belgian villages close to lines of railway and telegraph, claiming that villagers needed to be “punished without pity”, if order behind the lines was to be restored.\textsuperscript{772}

\textbf{On the Eve of War}

If the outcome of the Balkan Wars provided the setting for the Great War, then the experiences, impressions, and images of war and violence gained on the Ottoman Balkans and transmitted westward have implications for our understanding of what was unleashed in 1914. Historians have investigated culture and the First World War from a variety of perspectives and with a variety of motives. And culture has often been framed around objects and practices, whose gestation-periods are long but whose impact can be found in concentrated, concrete events.

German reactions to violence in far away places like the Ottoman Empire were important. The presence of the Balkan Wars in the press strengthened cultural currents and underwrote feelings and anxieties already in play. While German military men did not choose to go to war in 1914 because of the Ottoman defeat in 1913, the Balkan Wars confirmed their fears and reinforced the choice to gamble on a major continental war, adding to the sense of pessimism and urgency to fight sooner rather than later. There was little talk of the \textit{franctireur} in the German press, but the fear of guerilla war was

\textsuperscript{771}Horne and Karmer, \textit{German Atrocities}, pp. 1-47.
omnipresent in the German military intelligence from the Balkan Wars. While German news coverage of the Balkan Wars filled the German public sphere with stories of atrocity and ethnic violence in the Balkan countryside, most journalists had given up on the Ottoman order and highlighted the shortcomings of the Ottoman state. Soldiers, on the other hand, continued to identify with the Ottoman army, and the public relations campaign by Deutelmoser mobilized a turcophile narrative of Ottoman defeat to counteract negative publicity in Europe.

Goltz crafted his own turcophile narrative after the Balkan Wars that unwittingly caused controversy in the Ottoman Empire. He offered his advice for Ottoman renewal in a book published in the summer of 1913, which reiterated ideas that he had long discussed in private, such as moving the Ottoman government from Constantinople to a more secure location in the interior of Asia Minor. With their remaining Balkan territories gone, Goltz also believed that the Ottomans needed to rethink the ideals of Ottomanism and build a state that would command the allegiance of the Muslim population. He argued that the remaining Christian minorities would need to “dissolve” into a larger Muslim body politic through a process of acculturation.  

The Foreign Office dismissed the book as wishful thinking, and Hans von Wangenheim sought to limit the damage done by the book’s reception in Constantinople, as many Ottoman officials were angered at Goltz’ suggestion that the historic capital be sacrificed. But Goltz was an anomaly in the complex of

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773 Goltz, Der junge Türkei Niederlage und die Möglichkeit ihrer Wiedererhebung (Berlin, 1913), pp. 44-47. The CUP, however, was very interested in what Goltz had to say. F.A.K. Yasamee, “Colmar von der Goltz and the Rebirth of the Ottoman Empire” Diplomacy and Statecraft 9/2 (1998): 91-128.

774 PA AA R 15166 Wangenheim to Berlin, 12 October 1913.
voices within the military, and he did not find much support in the Foreign Office for his vision either.

After the Balkan Wars, the contradictions of private skepticism and public support by German officials came to a head in the lead-up to war. In the German Foreign Office, Jagow and Wangenheim planned for a general partition of Ottoman holdings and had given up on the Ottomans as military allies, yet the fear of Russian expansionism seeped into both public opinion and official calculations. In early 1914 the Ottomans pivoted toward the Entente, which made the Germans increasingly nervous, especially as the Liman von Sanders mission had provoked loud protests in late 1913 by the Russians, who saw the mission as an attempt by Germany to take control of Constantinople and the Straits.775 Beyond the turcophile press, newspapers from across the political spectrum in Germany supported the mission as essential to counter-balancing Russia.776 Yet German expansionism was not on the minds of officials or newspapers, but rather the maintenance of a status quo that seemed to be slipping away. In the wake of the July Crisis in 1914 and the German decision for war, the Ottomans convinced reluctant German officials to sign a defensive alliance on 2 August, after pressure from Austria and the Kaiser. Germany was not only gambling on a war for the European continent but also on the Ottomans, who the Germans hoped would enter the war immediately and open a new front in Egypt against the British or in Caucasus against the Russians. Yet the Ottomans dragged their feet and entered the war on their own terms.777 While the war would necessitate solidarity between

775 Aksakal, The Ottoman Road to War, pp. 80-81.
776 Ibid. Hewitson, Germany and the Causes of the First World War, pp. 123-125.
777 Aksakal, The Ottoman Road to War, pp. 93-118.
Germany and the Ottoman Empire, it was an inauspicious beginning to the last chapter of the German-Ottoman partnership.
Conclusion

James Retallack’s contention that journalists had influence and power in Imperial Germany but “left no shadow” on political life is important. The failure in the years before the Great War to turn journalism into a professional association with a set of values, practices, and criteria for membership suggests that the field in which journalists toiled was diffuse, unbounded, and constantly contested. Professional journalists were both serious-minded intellectuals, who were dedicated to understanding contemporary affairs, as well as unsavory sensationalists or corrupt sycophants, who were interested in financial gain, social recognition or generating attention. The history of German turcophilism is not only a story of the ebb and flow of sympathy for the Ottoman Empire and the fortunes of German diplomacy but also a history of journalistic practice that helps us trace the power and influence of the mass media in German society.

Scholars often have claimed that the semi-official press in Germany exercised a onerous influence over political life and symptomized the state’s undue encroachment into civil society or the public sphere. The Kölnische Zeitung has enjoyed special status in the literature as a historically independent newspaper so corrupted by its relationship with German officials that it became an extension of the state or representative of government views. By contrast, historians have often looked to the Frankfurter Zeitung or the Vossische Zeitung as the standard-bearers for journalistic independence, largely because they criticized the government in editorials and supported left-liberal politicians in the

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778 Retallack, “From Pariah to Professional”, p. 209.  
domestic sphere.\textsuperscript{780} These judgments are wrong. Political affiliation was no guarantee of journalistic independence, just as proximity to government officials did not mean that a newspaper was compromised. Journalists from a variety of mainstream newspapers maintained contact with the Imperial government, especially after Otto Hammann’s power expanded during Bülow’s chancellorship. Visiting with officials became a necessary part of obtaining information from the government and was not an index of corruption.

If we want to trace the shadows of power cast by the government, the history of German news coverage in the Ottoman Empire is instructive and highlights the importance of situating journalistic practice in specific fields of contestation. The Eastern Question provides an enlightening example of the negotiation of power between journalists and officials. After Marschall had reached out to Paul Weitz in 1897, the Frankfurter Zeitung tacked toward the government in subtle, yet unmistakable ways. The paper provided the most detailed coverage of the Kaiser’s tour of the Orient and refrained from reporting on news in the Ottoman lands that was not congenial to the government’s policy. After the Macedonian uprising began in 1902, Weitz downplayed the violence of the Ottoman counter-insurgency and provided coverage of the Mürzsteg agreement along with critical commentary that bore striking similarity to Marschall’s classified telegrams to the Foreign Office. When the German policy of accommodation toward Abdülhamid II collapsed after the Young Turk Revolution in 1908, the Frankfurter Zeitung did the government a service by remaining silent on the editorial page, when many other German papers were lamenting the obsequious stance of Marschall and the Foreign Office. The

\textsuperscript{780}For the lastest articulation of these assumptions, see Keisinger, Unzivilisierte Kriege, 1-14.
**Vossische Zeitung** was even more obliging to the Foreign Office and became a platform through which Hammann launched press campaigns. He began passing on reports to the paper in 1903 that highlighted the Bulgarian insurgency in Macedonia as a means of attacking the Mürzsteg agreement. The paper stood ready to help Hammann at every turn with favorable articles on German policy during the Young Turk Revolution, sending one of its own editors, Eduard Grunwald, to Constantinople to assist Marschall in establishing the semi-official *Der Osmanischer Lloyd*. By the time the first Balkans War broke, the **Vossische Zeitung** was a lone turcophile voice in the liberal camp, even after the Ottoman defeat. By contrast, news coverage from the **Kölnische Zeitung** and the **Berliner Tageblatt** had put pressure on official narratives and policies since the Great Eastern Crisis. Journalists who wrote for these papers traveled to the zones of conflict from Salonica to Smyrna, describing scenes of violence that did not serve official narratives. The **Kölnische Zeitung** cooperated with the Foreign Office on many occasions, publishing the thoughts of Bismarck and relaying official thinking on issues of foreign policy, but this collaboration suited the interests of the paper and its mission to provide good and timely information. The paper never published reports given to its journalists by Hammann or other government officials. The **Berliner Tageblatt** was even fiercer in its critical reporting on both the Ottoman Empire and German policy, cooperating infrequently with the Foreign Office. The **Berlin Lokal-Anzeiger** was somewhere in the middle, caving to pressure from Hammann on occasion, but showing sustained interest in original news reporting that put it at odds with the government in its competition with the **Berliner Tageblatt**.
Size mattered. The *Frankfurter* and the *Vossische Zeitung* were small papers in comparison to the *Kölnische Zeitung*, the *Berlin Lokal-Anzeiger* or the *Berliner Tageblatt*, which were parts of larger media concerns and had circulation numbers eight to nine times the size of the co-opted liberal dailies. The *Vossische Zeitung* had been in dire financial straits since the turn of the century and was losing readers, which helps explain its reliance on Hammann and the government. The Ullstein group allegedly bought the *Vossische Zeitung* at the end of 1913 to save this historically independent liberal paper from becoming a shell for the government. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* was more complicated, and Weitz’ role as Marschall’s chief advisor remained unique. His views gradually coalesced with Marschall’s after years of meeting everyday for lunch in the tony village of Pera outside of Constantinople. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* never became a platform for the government, as the *Norddeutsche Allegemine* or the *Vossische Zeitung* had, but Weitz soft-pedaled unfavorable news from the Ottoman lands and helped the Foreign Office in a variety of direct ways as an adviser and indirect ways in his role as foreign correspondent. Marschall was so desperate for good publicity in the Ottoman Empire that he even worked with a journalist from the Socialist *Vorwärts*, Friedrich Schrader, who remained in the pay of the German embassy in Constantinople until the end of the war. The German government had to buy favorable coverage at various times, because it could not rely on traditional coercive means like censorship and political pressure for its ends.

After the war began in 1914, the gulf separating big, independent papers like the

*Kölnische Zeitung* and *Berliner Tageblatt* from turcophile government collaborators

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782 PA AA NL v. Eckardt
narrowed in the wake of the German censorship regime. In October 1914 the Imperial Chancellory established the *Zentralstelle für den Auslandsdienst*, an agency designed to propagate the German war effort abroad by monitoring foreign news and writing pamphlets, news articles, and periodicals. The agency hired the turcophile Ernst Jäckh for his commitment to a German-Ottoman alliance and relied on a network of freelancing journalists for support in both surveying the foreign press and distributing materials in non-belligerent countries. Together with a host of other propaganda agencies in the Foreign Office, Prussian General Staff, and Ministry of War, the space in which German newspapers could maneuver shrunk dramatically as censorship expanded.\(^{783}\)

However, conflicts over news coverage persisted. Harry Stürmer, a journalist for the Viennese *Neue Freie Presse* as well as the *Berliner Tageblatt*, soon found himself in trouble for his reporting of the war. Following the German army into Belgium in late August 1914, Stürmer drew the attention of army censors for his critical reporting of the German occupation and his claims that German soldiers were unnecessarily brutal in their suppression of the Belgian population. Forced to leave the Western front in November 1914, the journalist made his way to Constantinople and became the *Kölnische Zeitung*’s chief correspondent from February 1915 to October 1916. There he grew so concerned over the CUP’s deportation and mass murder of Armenians that he left for Switzerland, determined to publish a book on his experiences in Constantinople that would not be censored by the German government. The *Kölnische Zeitung* stood by its correspondent

but came under pressure from the German censors and offered Stürmer an editorship position in Cologne, which he refused.\(^\text{784}\) After his book was published in 1917, the Zentralstelle made a concerted effort to personally discredit Stürmer, drawing upon the advice of Paul Weitz in Constantinople to do so. Former journalists for the *Vossische Zeitung* were charged with keeping the book from being translated and published in Great Britain and Sweden.\(^\text{785}\) Such a degree of collaboration between the government and journalists would have been unthinkable without the war, but the Zentralstelle mobilized relationships between the government and journalists that had existed well before 1914.

The Armenian Genocide is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but the prominence of turcophile sympathies in the Kaiserreich has led some scholars to see German turcophilism in the Imperial period as a dress-rehearsal for German acquiescence in the Armenian Genocide, if not the genocidal anti-semitism of the Nazi regime. Writing during the Second World War, Erich Eyck claimed that Bismarck was a key figure in Germany’s pathological development and highlighted the Iron Chancellor’s disregard for Balkan Christians in the nineteenth century as a dark portent of the anti-democratic and racist politics of National Socialism.\(^\text{786}\) For scholars who have focused more narrowly on Germany and the Armenian Question, the support for Ottoman rule seemed to demonstrate that Germans privileged violence as an extension of politics and saw minority groups as dangers to the nation. Thus German indifference to or culpability in the Armenian Genocide during the First World War prefigures the Holocaust and lends support to


\(^\text{785}\) BAB-L N 901/71780, 31 August 1917. Note from Dr. Übelhör.

\(^\text{786}\) *Bismarck: Leben und Werke*, 3 Vols. (Erlenbach-Zurich, 1943).
Sonderweg narratives of modern Germany, in which political authoritarianism and nationalist paranoia in the Imperial period help explain the racist politics of Nazism. However, such views telescope the broader history of the Eastern Question into narratives that are populated solely by Armenians and present a distorted picture of the German engagement with the Ottoman Empire. This scholarship not only ignores Germany’s relationship to other Christian minorities as well as the domestic sources of conflict over the meaning of Ottoman violence, but it ignores the trajectory of turophile sympathies over a longer period of German history. These narratives juxtapose German propaganda activities during the First World War and the reception of the Armenian massacres in the 1890s, without investigating the intervening period before the Great War or precedents further back in German history.

Continuities are important to the history of German turophilism, but they run from Bismarck to Bülow, not Hitler. While Eyck’s view is flawed, there is an unmistakable connection between the Bismarckian and the Wilhelmine eras regarding the Eastern Question. The ambivalence toward Balkan Christians after the Crimean War, which separated Bismarck from his fellow Prussian conservatives, were essential to Bismarckian politics and the skillful use of Russian resentments to unite Germany under Prussian hegemony. Yet this ambivalence also left a dubious legacy on German foreign policy, especially after maintaining the Ottoman Empire became a component in his later

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policy. Although ignoring the welfare of Balkan minorities had been a pragmatic decision before German unification and a prudent choice in the 1870s as part of Bismarck’s larger efforts to consolidate the new German state, the Eastern Question came to symbolize the failure of Bismarckian diplomacy to find a durable international solution to German unification. Bismarck pivoted in his last years between Great Britain and Russia in the hopes that he could avoid isolation and Germany’s increasing reliance on Austria for its security. The Ottoman Empire was “the bait” in this desperate game, as the historian Friedrich Scherer dubbed it, but momentum for developing Ottoman strength was initiated by Bismarck as a form of insurance in the face of British reluctance to challenge Russia over the Eastern Question. German banking and industry were also looking for opportunities to expand internationally and, in concert with the Prussian military mission and the German Foreign Office, found Ottoman partners to buy German arms and railroads starting in the 1880s.

When Bülow and the Kaiser embarked on Weltpolitik in 1898, disdain toward Ottoman Christians replaced ambivalence. Policy makers now saw Christian minorities as a threat to the integrity of the Ottoman state and, hence, German security. With an intact Ottoman Empire serving as an important bargaining chip for future German negotiations with Great Britain, official German sympathies coalesced around the turcophile narrative of modernization and partnership, which were publicly championed by operatives close to the state. German officials understood domestic concerns for “humanity” and better governance in the Ottoman Balkans as the naive opinions of those insufficiently aware of
Germany’s national interests. Marschall’s conversations with Bülow and the Kaiser during the Macedonian Uprising were representative of this sentiment.

Colmar von der Goltz took Bismarckian ambivalence toward Ottoman Christians to new heights after the Balkan Wars, and his ideas were shared by turcophiles such as Jäckh and Naumann. But the Goltzian vision of an Ottoman partner, whose strength derived from a consolidation of Muslim power in Asia Minor and the Arabian Peninsula, was a distant hope in the immediate aftermath of Ottoman defeat in the summer of 1913. The Kaiser had also lost confidence in a resurgent Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Wars, and the Foreign Secretary Jagow became equally skeptical. Only the imperative of keeping Great Britain involved in the Eastern Question led Germany to ramp up its military mission to the Ottoman Empire with the dispatch of Liman von Sanders, who came after the British had begun to reform the Ottoman navy. Although Germany was preparing for some form of partition by the end of 1913, the July Crisis in 1914 and Ottoman overtures of alliance turned Germany the other way.

Beyond the calculations of statecraft, sources of German turcophilism also stemmed from Bismarck’s legacy, especially the long-running culture wars over German identity and the liberal traditions of anti-Catholicism. During the Great Eastern Crisis, liberal turcophiles were dismissive of Balkan Christians and tapped into established anti-Catholic tropes of backwardness and obscurantism. When turcophiles battled evangelical Philarmenians over the meaning of the Armenian massacres in the 1890s, the rejection of

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item Trumpener, “Germany and the End of the Ottoman Empire”, pp. 141.
\item Hildebrand, Das vergangene Reich: Deutsche Aussenpolitik von Bismarck bis Hitler 1871-1945 (Stuttgart, 1995), p. 296.
\end{itemize}}
Christian solidarity with Armenians was a small step for liberals, who had been suspicious of German Catholics for decades as a result of the Kulturkampf. The Kaiser’s impressions of Ottoman Christians and his enthusiasm for Islam during his trip in 1898 are unthinkable without the hegemonic position of Protestantism in Imperial Germany. Friedrich Naumann’s advocacy of a German-Ottoman partnership in the wake of the Kaiser’s tour was not only an articulation of the affinities between Islam and Protestantism but also emphasized the chasm separating German Protestants from “Oriental” Christianity, which was a reformulation of the age-old Protestant distain for Catholic piety.

Yet turcophile sympathy in Germany was not reducible to liberal anti-Catholicism, and our understanding is complicated by minorities in German political life opposed to Bismarck, who also expressed sympathies for the Ottomans. Catholics, Socialists, and Jews had come out in favor of the Ottoman rule too. Since the mid-1860s, the Papacy had supported the Ottoman Empire against Great Power intervention and saw the Ottoman order as the best political situation for Ottoman Catholics. During the Great Eastern Crisis, Bismarck excoriated Catholics as fellow fanatics with Muslims, while Catholic news coverage was sympathetic to the Ottomans. But the Armenian massacres and the Philarmenian agitation by German Protestant evangelicals did stir some German Catholics to action, although Catholic papers provided turcophile news coverage. Wilhelm Liebknecht and his rabid turcophilism cast a long shadow over the German Social Democratic Party, even though upstarts from within began to criticize his unyielding stance during the Armenian massacres. The anti-semitic subtext of the Philarmenian movement also stirred liberal Jewish papers like Mosse’s Berliner Tageblatt to undermine
sympathies for Armenians by underscoring the terroristic character of Armenian revolutionaries.

After the Macedonian Uprising in 1902, German turcophilism began to crumble across the political spectrum. After Liebknecht died, German Socialists largely abandoned the Ottoman Empire as a bulwark against Russian “reaction” and began to see the independence of the Balkan states as a necessary part of the development of capitalism before the revolution. German liberals grew weary of Ottoman rule as the guarantor of European peace and saw Balkan independence as an inevitable consequence of nationalism and modern state-building. With the specter of political anti-semitism in decline and the steady drumbeat of advocates like Johannes Lepsius, who wrote article after article on Armenian orphans and sought donations for their succor, the meaning of the Armenian massacres lost its connection to Socialist revolution or anarchist terrorism and became a depoliticized story of human suffering. Catholics remained ambivalent to open criticism of the Ottoman Empire as official Papal policy toward the Ottomans did not change before World War I, but German Catholic newspapers joined the majority of the German press in their enthusiastic celebration of the Bosnian annexation and skepticism of an Ottoman regeneration after the Young Turk Revolution in 1908.

Although German officials remained aloof to a formal alliance with the Ottomans before 1914, the turcophile public relations campaign by the government provided a form of insurance against waning public sympathy in Germany, in the event that an alliance ever materialized. In the face of growing German isolation after 1909 and partly in response to the fetters of the global telegraph system, the campaign was also designed to
help shore up Ottoman sympathies for Germany by demonstrating to the Ottoman reading public that at least some elements of German society were still in favor of an Ottoman partnership. Marschall, and later Wangenheim, constantly worried that the CUP would change course and develop closer ties to Russia, leaving Germany with one less option.  

While the CUP eventually came to see Germany as the only alliance option that could save the Ottoman system from complete destruction, flirting with Russia was a classic Ottoman strategy in the inter-imperialist rivalry and was used by Ottoman diplomats to great effect. This game was also a continuation of the strategy that Bismarck had favored as well. Germany remained formally neutral in the Eastern Question but cultivated the Ottomans as partners, in order to keep the “oriental ulcer” open. Although Deutelmoser used the heartfelt sympathies of German soldiers with Ottoman experience in his turcophile public relations campaign, the Prussian army was concerned with its own reputation, not the Ottoman Empire’s.

The shifts between German turcophile and turcophile sympathies were encouraged by the growth in original news reporting from the Ottoman Empire, despite the government’s efforts to steer and censor the press. During the Great Eastern Crisis, liberal papers with correspondents in the battlefield pushed back against an official Pro-Russian narrative fostered by Bismarck, just as journalists in Constantinople questioned the turcophile narrative propagated by the Foreign Office after 1909. During the Armenian massacres, the German government did not have a definitive narrative, and journalists provided coverage that documented the Hamidian suppression but questioned

791 PA AA R. 14162-14163 passim.
792 Aksakal, The Ottoman Road to War, pp. 93-118.
the Philarmenian narrative that there was no Armenian terrorist activity at all. While Marschall began to put pressure on journalists in Constantinople to whitewash the political problems of the Hamidian regime after Germany tacked toward partnership around 1900 and Kiderlen-Waechter encouraged publicists like Ernst Jäckh and Friedrich Naumann to tout the advantages of an German-Ottoman alliance, serious journalists gave the German reading public a window into the violence and political uncertainty that accompanied the late Ottoman Empire. When the Balkan Wars almost destroyed the Ottoman Empire in 1912-1913, German public opinion did not rally around the Ottomans but became wearier of the dangers of Russian expansion. Although the Foreign Office tried to push turcophile narratives of Balkan rapaciousness during the Balkan Wars and the German military tried to spin the Ottoman defeat as a failure of the Ottoman homefront, serious German newspapers like the Kölnische Zeitung and the Berliner Tageblatt never lost sight of their commitment to provide readers with good information from far-away lands. Only after Germany went to war in 1914 was the German press forced to give up that commitment, as the war effort put propaganda ahead of the news.

German turcophilism not only survived but thrived in the war years, as the government mobilized orientalist scholars, journalists, and diplomats to spread the idea of a common future with the Ottomans and underscore the common affinities between Germandom and Islam. The sympathy that German soldiers had shown for the struggles of the Ottoman army got a new lease on life, as several thousand German officers were seconded to the Ottoman war front, including Goltz, who became a Field

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793 Hagen, “German Heralds of Holy War”; Marschand, German Orientalism, pp. 436-454.
Marshall and chief of the Sixth Ottoman Army in 1915. While Bismarck was the first to entertain an Ottoman partnership as a way out of the nightmare coalition, his predecessors were ultimately responsible its realization.
Appendix: Illustrations

Illustration 1
Illustration 2
Illustration 3
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