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**The Universalism of Horror? Discourses of Non-Interventionism and International Law in Imperial Germany**

The last decades of the Ottoman Empire were racked by internal conflict between Christian minorities and a state that sought to maintain Muslim hegemony. The Eastern Question and the future of Ottoman rule were indelibly linked to the treatment of Christian minorities, and armed intervention by the Great Powers loomed as a real option when intercommunal violence flared up as it did during the Eastern Crisis (1875-78), leading Russia to war with the Ottomans in 1877. Within the context of the Eastern Question, Imperial Germany became one of the strongest supporters of non-intervention and the status quo in the Ottoman territories before the outbreak of World War I. Public discourse in Germany was dominated by concerns for order and rejected appeals to a common humanity, claiming instead that the alternative to Ottoman rule was a far worse medicine than the disease of religious strife. Many Germans appealed to the notion that violence was endemic to the Ottoman peoples, and that this situation could not be ameliorated by nationalism or good governance. I analyze German discourse in newspapers, illustrated magazines, and other published material as well as the views of diplomats and argue that an anti-humanitarian universalism developed, in which minorities were seen as a constant danger to the state. This view reflected Germany's own position as a "imperial" nation-state that contained minorities of various kinds, be they Catholics, Poles, Danes, Socialists, or Jews. It was a discourse that began fray with the end of the Kulturkampf, but remained a powerful trope that privileged international law, non-intervention, and the prerogatives of the state against claims of individual human rights.