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OF HISTORY
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The Glittery Fog of Civilization: Great Britain, Germany, and International Politics, 1854 - 1902

Jakob Lehne

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization
of the European University Institute

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Abstract

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For the last twenty years, the rhetoric of civilization has clawed its way back into international discourse, and into books and articles written by political scientists and scholars of international relations. Most of these emphasize the close connection between the concept of civilization and colonialism, suggesting that the main purpose of civilizational language in international relations has always been an imperial one. In this thesis, I argue that such interpretations are mistaken, and use British and German debates to retrace the complex political development of a concept at once popular and indeterminate, which Bismarck referred to as being covered by a 'glittery fog'. I argue that political civilizational language first started to be advanced by European liberals, who were not advocating colonialism, but instead opposing dynastic and non-national politics within Europe. Following these debates, the rhetoric of civilization was first officially employed in the Crimean War, and from then on remained an important fixture primarily of inner-European politics. The wars of the 1860s that followed in its wake were, I argue, as much wars about the correct definition of civilization, as they were about nationalism. It was only in the 1870s that the concept of civilization started to acquire the global profile and sometimes imperial connotation so often associated with it and the nineteenth century in general. But the bloom of this civilizational language was a short one. From the 1880s onwards, the appeal of civilization started to decline as the critique of modernity and its negative effects, first voiced by socialists and radicals, started to reach mainstream liberalism. With the end of the nineteenth century, I argue, the classic language of civilization also came to an end. Larger sections of the European public started to question the ulterior motives behind civilizational language and the main conflicts of the turn of the century, the Boer war and the Boxer rebellion, also produced new discourses of civilizational plurality, through which appeals to the singular of civilization became ever more difficult.

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Introduction¹

Interpreting the Return of Civilization

In 1993, Samuel Huntington burst the collective bubble of enthusiasm created by the dissolution of the Soviet Union with the grim assertion that what the world would now come to see was not the 'End of History', but a 'Clash of Civilizations'.² The word had a distant ring to it. Although some had written about civilizations during the Cold War, most would have agreed with Anthony Pagden, who just a few years earlier asserted: 'We do not, on the whole, speak of civilizations, except in the past tense'.³ Yet, Huntington's article was so successful that it, as he himself proudly noted in the book bearing the same title: 'stirred up more discussion in three years than any other article they [*Foreign Affairs*] had published since the 1940s'.⁴ Proponents and opponents of Huntington's thesis clashed in an academic debate of unparalleled proportions, whose echo reverberated in the higher echelons of power.⁵ Following a proposal from former Iranian president Muhammed Khatami in

1 All mentions of 'civilization' and similarly charged words like 'savages' and 'barbarians' should be understood as being in inverted commas. All the translations that follow, unless otherwise specified, are my own, and I have taken the liberty to refer to various countries by the names used in the decades analysed, even though they were sometimes not the official name of the country itself. So, when commentators in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, which was most frequently referred to as England, talked about Turkey or the Turkish Empire, a state officially known as the Ottoman Empire, I have used these designations interchangeably. It should be assumed that these words refer, respectively, to congruent political entities. The exception to this rule is the word 'Germany', that, although frequently used by commentators in the mid-nineteenth century, did not actually refer to a clearly designated unit. I have generally referred to 'the German-speaking lands' or have used similar words to describe a linguistically (widely) homogeneous region in Central Europe, and have reserved the word Germany for the territories inside the borders of the German Empire from 1871. The spelling of the word civilization itself has, as for most engaged in its study, been an ongoing concern for me. I have settled with spelling civilization with a z, except when quoting from original material.

2 Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (1993): 22–49; Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

3 Anthony Pagden, "The 'Defence of Civilization' in Eighteenth-Century Social Theory," *History of the Human Sciences* 1, no. 1 (1988): 33; Fernand Braudel, *Grammaire des Civilisations* (Paris: Arthaud, 1987); Philip Bagby, *Culture and History: Prolegomena to the Comparative Study of Civilizations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958); William H. McNeill, *The Rise of the West: A History of the Human Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963); Victor Fritz Lenzen et al., *Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959); Arnold Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948); Carroll Quigley, *The Evolution of Civilizations: An Introduction to Historical Analysis* (New York: MacMillan, 1961); Stanford M. Lyman, *Civilization: Contents, Discontents, and Malcontents and Other Essays* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, n.d.); Roger W. Wescott, "The Enumeration of Civilizations," *History and Theory* 9, no. 1 (1970): 59–85; "International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations," <http://wmich.edu/isccsc/Journal.html>, (n.d.), accessed December 25, 2014.

4 Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007), 13.

5 Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, "'Civilization' on Trial," *Millennium*, no. 28 (1999): 141–53; Bruce M. Russett, John R. Oneal, and Michaelene Cox, "Clash of Civilizations, or Realism and Liberalism Déjà Vu? Some Evidence," *Journal of Peace Research* 37, no. 5 (2000): 583–608; Lene Hansen, "Past as Preface: Civilizational Politics and the 'Third' Balkan War," *Journal of Peace Research* 37, no. 3 (2000): 345–62; Giacomo Chiozza, "Is There a Clash of Civilizations? Evidence from Patterns of International Conflict Involvement, 1946–97," *Journal of Peace Research* 39 (2002): 711–34; Robert Cox, "Thinking about Civilizations," *Review of International Studies* 26 (2000): 217–34; James F. Hoge, *The Clash of Civilizations? The Debate* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2010).

1998, the UN decided to name 2001 'Year of Dialogue among Civilizations'.⁶ The following years, Khatami's intention to counter the threat of Huntington's best-seller becoming a 'self-fulfilling-prophecy' proved to be an enduring concern. In 2005, the Turkish President Erdogan and the Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero started another initiative for a 'UN Alliance for Civilizations'.⁷ The project was formalized a year later, and it is safe to say that political concerns expressed in civilizational terms, both amicably and antagonistically, have since remained a fixture of conceptualizations of the international sphere; a fact only recently proven by Putin's assertion that Crimea had 'invaluable civilizational [...] meaning for Russia', a status apparently implicitly justifying its annexation.⁸

The academic debates that followed Huntington's publications in the late 1990s and early 2000s were not limited to the theses and arguments of his books. They were also concerned with the concept of civilization as an analytical tool. In departments of international relations, politics and sociology, civilization became a new buzzword to be analysed in journals, conferences, congresses, and edited volumes.⁹ This interdisciplinarity was a natural phenomenon, as Johan P. Arnason noted: 'the problematic of civilizations is not reducible to particular ideological choices, nor can the more scholarly discussion be confined to a particular discipline.'¹⁰ All seemed to agree that the word civilization was particularly well suited to describe a fundamentally new international situation. Although many criticized Huntington's essentialist categories, it seemed obvious to most that a new vocabulary was needed to describe a new world. The concept of civilization would be at the heart of these endeavours, and sustain the work of several disciplines trying to adapt their theoretical apparatus. As the introduction to a themed issue of *International Sociology* triumphantly noted in

6 "UN Documents," <http://www.un-documents.net/a55r23.htm>, (n.d.), accessed July 29, 2014; M. S. Michael and Fabio Petito, eds., *Civilizational Dialogue and World Order: The Other Politics of Cultures, Religions, and Civilizations in International Relations* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

7 "United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)," *United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)*, accessed July 29, 2014, <http://www.unaoc.org/>.

8 Gregorio Bettiza, "Civilizational Analysis in International Relations: Mapping the Field and Advancing a 'Civilizational Politics' Line of Research," *International Studies Review* 16, no. 1 (2014): 1–28; Andrew Linklater, "Civilizations and International Society," <http://www.e-ir.info/2013/05/03/civilizations-and-international-society/>, *E-International Relations*, (n.d.), accessed March 30, 2015; Johan Eriksson and Ludvig Norman, "Political Utilisation of Scholarly Ideas: The 'Clash of Civilisations' vs. 'Soft Power' in US Foreign Policy," *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 01 (2011): 417–36; "Putin Says Crimea Sacred, Attacks U.S., EU Over Ukraine," <http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2014-12-03/ukraine-may-hold-new-talks-with-rebels-as-eu-nato-press-russia>, *Bloomberg Politics*, (n.d.), accessed February 10, 2015.

9 Stephen K. Sanderson, ed., *Civilizations and World Systems: Studying World-Historical Change* (Lanham: Rowman Altamira, 1995); Mehdi Mozzafari, ed., *Globalization and Civilizations* (London: Routledge, 2002); Jóhann Páll Arnason, *Civilizations in Dispute: Historical Questions and Theoretical Traditions* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Martin Hall and Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, eds., *Civilizational Identity: The Production and Reproduction of "Civilizations" in International Relations* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007); Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *Civilizations in World Politics: Plural and Pluralist Perspectives* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009).

10 Johan P. Arnason, "Introduction," *Thesis Eleven* 62, no. 1 (2000): iii – v.

September 2001: 'To develop the conceptual and methodological framework to do justice to this emergent global reality is the challenge for the sociology of civilization.'¹¹

A little more than a week later, 'this emergent global reality' revealed a cruel twist, and the word civilization a long-forgotten second face. As the dust slowly settled on the World Trade Center, the United States were 'waging a war to save civilization itself'.¹² Albeit reluctantly, other world leaders soon followed this rhetoric and the singular of civilization joined the plural as a tool to analyse and conduct international politics.¹³ US President Bush offered a characteristic, and inimitably nuanced, description of the situation, as he rallied a 'coalition of the willing' to engage in a 'crusade' to fight 'civilization's fight'.¹⁴ In a bizarre reversal of a scenario played out just a few years before, Bush threw the ball of civilization back to academia. Whereas Huntington's controversial theses had forced politicians to react, the US commander-in-chief's use of the word civilization had a similarly stimulating effect on the academic community. Throughout the next months, the president's speeches and their reference to civilization were dissected in numerous articles, all seeking to situate the new political rhetoric of civilization and to understand its role in a changing world order.¹⁵

These first responses were shaped by a post-colonial outlook and the suspicion that the rhetoric of civilization marked a return of imperialism. In academic fields marred by a colonial legacy the concept of civilization did not enjoy the best of reputations. Given their central involvement in the science of empire, anthropologists had insisted since the 1970s that the use of civilization in their discipline had sustained conquest and repression, yet other academic fields had equally been blamed

11 Edward A. Tiryakian, "The Civilization of Modernity and the Modernity of Civilizations," *International Sociology* 16, no. 3 (2001): 290.

12 "Bush: 'We Wage a War to Save Civilization Itself,'" <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/11/08/rec.bush.speech/index.html>, (n.d.), accessed July 29, 2014.

13 "Italy's Premier Calls Western Civilization Superior to Islamic World," <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/27/world/italy-s-premier-calls-western-civilization-superior-to-islamic-world.html>, (n.d.), accessed July 30, 2014; Lee Harris, *Civilization and Its Enemies: The Next Stage of History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004); "Kerry: Paris Gunmen 'Opposed to a Civilized World,'" <http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2015/01/07/john-kerry-charlie-hebdo-attackers-opposed-to-a-civilized-world>, *U.S. News*, (n.d.), accessed February 20, 2015.

14 "Transcript of President Bush's Address to a Joint Session of Congress on Thursday Night, September 20, 2001," <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/US/09/20/gen.bush.transcript/>, (n.d.), accessed July 30, 2014.

15 Maureen Montgomery, "Savage Civility: September 11 and the Rhetoric of 'Civilization,'" *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 21, no. 2 (2002): 56–65; Brett Bowden, "Reinventing Imperialism in the Wake of September 11," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 1, no. 2 (2002): 28–46; Henry A. Giroux, "Democracy and the Politics of Terrorism: Community, Fear, and the Suppression of Dissent," *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 2, no. 3 (2002): 334–42; Douglas Kellner, "9/11, Spectacles of Terror, and Media Manipulation," *Critical Discourse Studies* 1, no. 1 (2004): 41–64; David Palumbo-Liu, "Civilization and Dissent," *Amerasia Journal* 27, no. 3 (2001): 125–38; David Palumbo-Liu, "Multiculturalism Now: Civilization, National Identity, and Difference Before and After September 11th," *Boundary 2* 29, no. 2 (2002): 87–108; David P. Fidler, "The Return of the Standard of Civilization," *Chicago Journal of International Law* 2 (2001): 137.

for similar offences.¹⁶ As the sociologist Jonathan Fletcher had explained to his readers in 1997: 'The concept of civilization has been used [...] as an ideological, evaluative weapon employed by generations of historians in the service of Western colonialist aspirations [...].'¹⁷ Said's groundbreaking *Orientalism* inspired many to think of Western domination as a military-artistic complex sustained by academics and their arguments from civilization. With the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan these concerns returned to the centre of attention and Said himself described the interventions as 'the latest *mission civilizatrice* (sic)' defended by a 'chorus of willing intellectuals'.¹⁸

To many of those who continued to probe the concept of civilization in the aftermath of these events, its tandem appearance with imperialism was no coincidence. As the exploration of the term itself intensified in the early 2000s, a popular argument developed that effortlessly linked previous historical uses of civilization with the present.¹⁹ The concept of civilization, most argued, had been formed during the Enlightenment, but it expressed an ever-present desire of the 'West', in one way or another, to dominate the rest of the world.²⁰ The universal narratives provided by Enlightenment philosophers and their predecessors justified and sustained European imperialism (and its reincarnations in the US), and formed an integral part of what had become known as the 'rhetoric (or language) of empire'.²¹ The word civilization, according to some throughout centuries, never

16 Stanley Diamond, *In Search of the Primitive: A Critique of Civilization* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1974), 1; Thomas C. Patterson, *Inventing Western Civilization* (New York: Cornerstone Books, 1997).

17 Jonathan Fletcher, *Violence and Civilization: An Introduction to the Work of Norbert Elias* (London: John Wiley & Sons, 1997), 6–7.

18 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), xxi.

19 Mark B. Salter, *Barbarians and Civilization in International Relations* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Richard Jackson, *Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics and Counter-Terrorism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005); Brett Bowden, "Civilization and Savagery in the Crucible of War," *Global Change, Peace & Security*: 19, no. 1 (2007): 3–16; Christopher Hobson, "Democracy as Civilisation," *Global Society* 22, no. 1 (2008): 75–95; Boris Kapustin, "Some Political Meanings of 'Civilization,'" *Diogenes* 56, no. 2–3 (2009): 151–69; Mark Neocleous, "The Police of Civilization: The War on Terror as Civilizing Offensive," *International Political Sociology* 5, no. 2 (2011): 144–59; Aziz Al-Azmeh, "Civilization as a Political Disposition," *Economy and Society* 41, no. 4 (2012): 501–12; Helen M. Kinsella, "Discourses of Difference: Civilians, Combatants, and Compliance with the Laws of War," *Review of International Studies* 31, no. Supplement S1 (2005): 163–85; Roland Paris, "International Peacebuilding and the 'Mission Civilatrice,'" *Review of International Studies* 28, no. 04 (2002): 637–56; Alexandra Gheciu, *Securing Civilization? The EU, NATO and the OSCE in the Post 9/11 World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Armel Brice Adanhounme, "Corporate Social Responsibility in Postcolonial Africa: Another Civilizing Mission?," *Journal of Change Management* 11, no. 1 (2011): 91–110; Jan Zielonka, "Europe's New Civilizing Missions: The EU's Normative Power Discourse," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 18, no. 1 (2013): 35–55.

20 The 'West' is almost as slippery a concept as civilization, for a brief introduction see Riccardo Bavaj, "The West': A Conceptual Exploration," *EGO | Europäische Geschichte Online*, accessed July 30, 2014, http://ieg-ego.eu/_theme/temporary_manifest_hack.html; Alastair Bonnett, *The Idea of the West: Politics, Culture and History* (Palgrave USA, 2004). Riccardo Bavaj, "The West': A Conceptual Exploration," http://ieg-ego.eu/_theme/temporary_manifest_hack.html, EGO | Europäische Geschichte Online, (n.d.), accessed July 30, 2014; Alastair Bonnett, *The Idea of the West: Politics, Culture and History* (Palgrave USA, 2004).

21 Bruce Buchan, "Enlightened Histories: Civilization, War and the Scottish Enlightenment," *The European Legacy: Toward New Paradigms* 10, no. 2 (2005): 177–92; Bruce Buchan, "The Empire of Political Thought: Civilization, Savagery and Perceptions of Indigenous Government," *History of the Human Sciences* 18, no. 2

fulfilled another function than to dominate, to enslave and to suppress. The discourse of progress and civilization, wherever it appeared, did not just smack of imperialism – it was.²² In the international sphere, civilization could serve as a litmus test for empire, as it was always indicative of sinister politics.

Questions and Arguments

At first glance, this interpretation of civilization as an exclusively imperial tool is a powerful and succinct explanation of its history and use in the international sphere, but we should be wary of reducing this concept to a particular meaning or area of politics. Throughout the nineteenth century, the rhetoric of civilization combined an indeterminate nature with enormous emotional appeal in virtually all aspects of European debates; a fact often lamented by its critics. As the idiosyncratic British politician, David Urquhart, put it in 1855: “Civilisation” is, in fine, a monster without brain or heart, or noble organ, but with a life of mere limb, such as belong to the order of polypi destitute of cerebral function’.²³ Yet, this lack of independent cerebral function seemed to have only increased its political power, and as I will demonstrate the word civilization served as the cover for a bewildering variety of political aims. Seeking to sum up its simultaneously attractive and hazy nature for Western Europeans, Bismarck described the rhetoric of civilization as covered by a ‘glittery fog’.²⁴ This phenomenon, I argue, spread over and enveloped most political debates during the nineteenth century. While imperialism was perhaps the first structure to be revealed after it had lifted and has therefore become associated with it, we should think of the whole nineteenth century as covered by the ‘glittery fog’ of civilization.

In the following chapters, I will trace and explore a multitude of international uses of the concept of civilization, seeking to answer three essential questions implicitly raised but not explicitly treated in recent literature on the topic. When and why did civilization first become used as justification in international politics? How did it become and remain so successful? And when did it start to be seen

(2005): 1–22; David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1993); Robert H. MacDonald, *The Language of Empire: Myths and Metaphors of Popular Imperialism, 1880-1918* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994); Alastair Pennycook, *English and the Discourses of Colonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

22 For the most explicit formulation of this argument see Brett Bowden, *The Empire of Civilization: The Evolution of an Imperial Idea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Antony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

23 David Urquhart, *Familiar Words, as Affecting the Conduct of England in 1855* (London: Trübner & Company, 1855), 182.

24 Otto v. Bismarck, *Gedanken und Erinnerungen*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Verlag der J.G.Cotta’schen Buchhandlung, 1898), 102.

as associated with imperialism, as it is predominantly today? The argument that I want to propose is that civilization did not originally become an essential concept of international politics because of its imperial connotations, but because the word took on a central role in the rhetoric that accompanied the major political shifts in nineteenth-century Europe. In the hundred years in which the continent shifted from the Vienna to the Paris system, as Weitz has described it, civilization was the major rhetorical tool driving political change, including a turn to empire amongst many other developments.²⁵ Civilization should therefore not be seen as an essentially imperial concept but an incidental one.

As I will argue, the rise of civilization as a political term was closely connected to liberal politics, but while liberalism was the driving force behind most early nineteenth-century debates, we should not think of the concept of civilization as a tool exclusively tied to one ideology. Liberal rhetoric of civilization found a conservative echo in most political discussions in which those claiming to speak for the future of civilization opposed those who sought to protect it from revolutionary influences. The progress of civilization was the rallying cry in demands for the downfall of the dynastic empires in Europe, while the opponents of such politics claimed that the Holy Alliance was protecting civilization from the 'barbarism of the educated West'.²⁶ As the century advanced, the politics of liberalism started to prevail, and civilization as a key-word of the 1830 and 1848 revolutions became the main justification of the Crimean War, thereby bringing an end to the conservative European order.²⁷ With the downfall of the Vienna system a new era in international politics began, whereby liberal ideas of a national and civilized state came to replace the divine right of kings and Christianity as the standard model of European politics.

Liberal nationalism soon turned to empire and the concept of civilization started to lend its name to the 'civilizing mission'. With the Great Game in Asia and the Scramble for Africa, the aims of civilization quickly covered the whole globe and the standard of civilization became a tool to judge and rank non-European states and regions. With European wars and conquests all over the world continuously justified with civilizational rhetoric, socialists and others critical of empire turned against the concept of civilization as a tool of international politics. As they started to claim at the

25 Eric D. Weitz, "From the Vienna to the Paris System: International Politics and the Entangled Histories of Human Rights, Forced Deportations, and Civilizing Missions," *The American Historical Review* 113, no. 5 (2008): 1313–43.

26 Friedrich Julius Stahl, "Der Orientalische Krieg. (Sitzung Der Ersten Kammer Am 25. April 1854)," in *Siebzehn Parlamentarische Reden Und Drei Vortraege von Stahl. Nach Letztwilliger Bewilligung Geordnet Und Herausgegeben* (Berlin: Verlag von Wilhelm Hertz, 1862), 200–218.

27 See chapter 2.

end of the nineteenth-century, civilization was a 'masked word' of imperialism and could therefore not be trusted in political discourse.²⁸ While civilization as an international tool was weakened through this criticism, it continued to be politically effective. As the first global catastrophe of the twentieth century, the Great War for Civilization, ripped Europe apart, the rhetoric of civilization found another inner-European target. The political concept of civilization continued to endure in diluted and debated form in the mandates system of the League of Nations, only to be finally swept away by the Second World War.²⁹

While the history of the political uses of civilization stretches into the middle of the twentieth century, the scope of this thesis is limited to answering the three questions outlined above and is therefore focused on the nineteenth-century. In seeking to trace the political history of civilization, it can rely on a long historiographical tradition exploring various aspects of civilization since the early twentieth century. But as I will argue in the next section, dedicated to this literature on civilization, the disputed character of the concept itself and its turbulent history have also had a major impact on its academic examination. The historical study of the concept of civilization has been an exercise almost as political as the use of the concept itself. Indeed, as I show in a quick overview of nearly a hundred years of historiography, the academic interest in civilization was often closely related to its political use. In light of this historiography, the latest interpretations of civilization as an imperial concept, triggered by the suspicion of the return of imperial politics, appear to be following a long tradition stretching back almost a century.

Historiography

Serious historical investigation into the problem of civilization originated in the inter-war period when, as Fernandez-Armesto casually explained: 'Civilizationology could be said almost to have constituted an academic discipline in itself'.³⁰ In the aftermath of a catastrophic war fought in its name, the future of civilization was everyone's concern. The history of Germany's prophet of doom, Oswald Spengler, and the public debates that followed the publication of his book are well documented and known, but the debate about civilization affected other European countries as well.³¹ In France, Paul Valéry was describing 'la crise de l'esprit' gripping Europe in the aftermath of

28 J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study* (London: J. Nisbet, 1902), 219.

29 For the most treatment of these questions, see Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2015).

30 Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, *Civilizations: Culture, Ambition, and the Transformation of Nature* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001), 18; Adam Kuper, *Culture: The Anthropologists' Account* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 23–46.

31 Adam Paulsen, "Reconstruction or Decline? The Concept of Europe and Its Political Implications in the Works of Ernst Troeltsch and Oswald Spengler," in *European Self-Reflection Between Politics and Religion: The Crisis of Europe in the 20th Century*, ed. Lars K. Bruun, Karl Christian Lammers, and Gert Sørensen (Basingstoke:

the war, Spain's Ortega Y Gasset predicted the devastating effects of the rise of the masses, and Britain slid into a 'morbid age of civilizational crisis', as Overy has recently called it.³² In times of social and economic depression, T.S. Eliot and W.H. Auden were contemplating how their poetry could help to save civilization, and a young Arnold Toynbee started to think about the larger life-cycles of civilization in a comparative perspective to understand current events.³³

These concerns for civilization as a phenomenon inspired others to investigate the history of its political use in different arenas. The Fabian Leonard Woolf dedicated several works to questions of the League of Nations and how the mandates system and its notorious 22nd article, 'the sacred trust of civilization', were just an updated version of previous imperialism.³⁴ The current international language of civilization, he argued in 1920, was a cover-up: 'The League, as it exists to-day, and its mandates system are both shams, and article 22 is simply being used to obscure the fact that France and Britain are obtaining large accession of territory for economic exploitation in Africa and Asia'.³⁵ His close friend, the art critic Clive Bell, meanwhile, explored the historical use of civilization from an inner-European angle, an examination triggered by a European catastrophe. In an essay simply entitled *Civilisation*, and dedicated to Woolf's wife, Virginia, he explained that his curiosity in the history of the word civilization was piqued by the question of how it had transformed from an 'abstraction' to holding 'the highest place amongst British war aims' in the latest European conflict.³⁶

Similar questions were asked in Germany, if not about Britain but France. The assertion that 'la France marche toujours à la tête de la civilisation' had long been an often ironic dictum in Germany, but with the First World War the association of France with the rhetoric of civilization had deepened dramatically.³⁷ In the years leading up to and during the war, Germans had been bombarded with official and unofficial propaganda, explaining how this conflict had to be framed as an opposition between French *Zivilisation* and German *Kultur*.³⁸ To those who were now urging for Franco-

Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 58–79; Joanne Miyang Cho, "The German Debate over Civilization: Troeltsch's Europeanism and Jaspers's Cosmopolitanism," *History of European Ideas* 25, no. 6 (1999): 305–19.

32 Paul Valéry, "La crise de l'esprit," in *Europes: De l'Antiquité au XXe siècle: Anthologie critique et commentée*, ed. Yves Hersant and Fabienne Durand-Bogaert (Paris: Robert Laffont, 2000), 405–14; José Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1993); Richard Overy, *The Morbid Age: Britain and the Crisis of Civilisation, 1919 - 1939* (London: Penguin, 2009).

33 Lucy McDiarmid, *Saving Civilization: Yeats, Eliot, and Auden Between the Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial*, 21.

34 Leonard Woolf, *Imperialism and Civilization* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928); Anna Snaith, "Leonard and Virginia Woolf: Writing against Empire," *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, 2014.

35 Leonard Woolf, *Economic Imperialism* (London: Swarthmore Press, 1920), 105.

36 Clive Bell, *Civilization. An Essay* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928), 3.

37 See the entry in Georg Büchmann, *Geflügelte Worte: Der Citatenschatz des deutschen Volks*, 11th ed. (Berlin: Haude & Spener'sche Buchhandlung, 1879).

38 Eckart Koester, "'Kultur' versus 'Zivilisation': Thomas Mann's Kriegspublizistik Als Weltanschaulich-

German reconciliation in books, and in the various reviews and journals founded exclusively for this purpose in the Locarno era, *civilisation* and *Kultur* were not just philosophical ideas, but expressions of national character in need of further exploration. As the Alsatian-born, francophile, literary scholar Ernst Robert Curtius explained in the first volume of the *Deutsch-Französische Rundschau*, anyone studying the history of France should know:

Wer sich damit abgibt, der sollte – als heuristisches Prinzip gleichsam – immer die Voraussetzung machen: In Frankreich ist alles anders als bei uns. [...] Eine französische Kulturkunde muesste bei dem Wort ‘Kultur‘ anfangen und sich fragen ob man den deutschen Begriff ohne weiteres auf Frankreich uebertragen kann. Und man kann es natuerlich nicht! Man steht sofort vor der Antithese: Kultur, und Zivilisation.³⁹

Curtius' advice to explore the history of the word civilization along national lines was heeded across the border, where in 1929 the notables of French sociological and historical research met at the *Centre International de Synthèse* in Paris to discuss both the past as well as the present of the concept of civilization in a star-studded conference.⁴⁰ While Marcel Mauss's presentation focused on the anthropological use of the concept of civilization more broadly and others commented on the new research program Alfred Weber and Karl Mannheim had started at Heidelberg, the historical part of the colloquium was clearly split between German and French understandings of civilization.⁴¹ Lucien Febvre explored the history of the evolution of *civilisation*, presumably a peculiarly French word, whereas Emile Tonnelat dedicated his time to the exploration of German *Kultur*.⁴² In a time of European reconciliation, presumed national differences paradoxically did not evaporate but were indeed emphasized.

Ästhetische Standortsuche,” in *Kultur Und Krieg : Die Rolle Der Intellektuellen, Künstler Und Schriftsteller Im Ersten Weltkrieg*, ed. Wolfgang J. Mommsen, vol. 34, Schriften Des Historischen Kollegs: Kolloquien (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1996), 249–58; Nils Bruhn, *Vom Kulturkritiker zum “Kulturkrieger”: Paul Natorps Weg in den “Krieg der Geister”* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2007); Peter Hoeres, *Krieg der Philosophen: die deutsche und britische Philosophie im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schoehning, 2004).

39 Ernst Robert Curtius, “Frankreichkunde,” *Deutsch-Französische Rundschau* 1 (1928): 28. 'Whoever undertakes this study should start with the assumption – as a heuristic principle – that in France everything is different from here. A study of French culture would have to start with the word 'culture' and ask whether the German concept could easily be applied to France. It cannot, of course! One is immediately confronted with the anti-thesis of culture and civilization.'

40 Lucien Febvre et al., *Civilisation. Le mot et l'idée* (Paris: La Renaissance du livre, 1930); Kuper, *Culture*, 23–46.

41 Marcel Mauss, “Les Civilisations. Éléments et formes,” in *Civilisation. Le mot et l'idée*, ed. Lucien Febvre et al. (Paris: La Renaissance du livre, 1930), 82–104; Henri Berr, “Avant-propos,” in *Civilisation. Le mot et l'idée*, ed. Lucien Febvre et al. (Paris: La Renaissance du livre, 1930), 8; Colin Loader, *Alfred Weber and the Crisis of Culture, 1890-1933* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

42 Lucien Febvre, “Civilisation: l'évolution d'un mot et d'un groupe d'idées,” in *Civilisation. Le mot et l'idée*, ed. Lucien Febvre et al. (Paris: La Renaissance du livre, 1930), 10–59; Emile Tonnelat, “Kultur. Histoire du mot, évolution du sens,” in *Civilisation. Le mot et l'idée*, ed. Lucien Febvre et al. (Paris: La Renaissance du livre, 1930), 64–81.

In Bonn, where Curtius became professor the same year, the study of the word civilization was naturally also considered a French affair. Obsessed by the role of civilization in French culture, Curtius fielded two doctoral students to for the first time trace the history of the French use of civilization in its entirety. Joachim Moras explored the historical path of the word civilization from its origins in 1756 to its use in Guizot's works of the late 1820s, focusing on the philosophical debates of the Enlightenment and its aftermath.⁴³ Moras' New-Zealand-born colleague Reuben Ansome Lochore continued the task, and took the examination of French uses of civilization up to the 1870s.⁴⁴ The watershed of 1830, the young doctoral students had introduced, was not accidental, as Moras and Lochore agreed that the character of the word civilization changed dramatically in the early decades of the nineteenth century. As Moras put it:

Der Zivilisationsbegriff war in seiner substanzlosen Allgemeinheit einer unbegrenzten Funktionalisierung ausgeliefert; er kam auf den Markt; jeder konnte ihm nun den Sinn geben, der ihm beliebte, und jeder musste ihn umso mehr auf seine Seite zu bringen suchen, je höher er im Kurs der öffentlichen Meinung stieg.⁴⁵

Slowly, throughout the nineteenth century, the enlightened philosophers and intellectuals originally concerned with the term civilization would have had to witness its adoption into general political discourse.⁴⁶ Civilization, Moras and Lochore claimed, became a term every political party sought to identify with. Like other words, such as freedom or liberty, whose popularity rose as the nineteenth century advanced, civilization was filled with various meanings, and employed in changing contexts. Through the noise of politicization, or as Moras preferred to call it, 'vulgarisation', more academic discussions became ever less audible.⁴⁷ Although few have since directly referred to Moras and Lochore's work, the 1830 line of separation they introduced is in many ways still active, as most of the research examining civilization's purely philosophical meanings is not concerned with anyone after Guizot.⁴⁸

43 Joachim Moras, *Ursprung und Entwicklung des Begriffs der Zivilisation in Frankreich (1756-1830)* (Hamburg: Seminar für romanische Sprachen und Kultur, 1930).

44 R.A. Lochore, *History of the Idea of Civilization in France (1830-1870)* (Bonn: Roehrscheid, 1935); Freya Klier, *Gelobtes Neuseeland: Fluchten bis ans Ende der Welt* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 2012).

45 Moras, *Zivilisation*, 85. The concept of civilization was, in its substance-less generality, subjected to unlimited functionalization. It became part of the (political) market. Everyone could give it their preferred meaning, and all had to seek to have it on their side the higher it rose in public appreciation.

46 *Ibid.*, 75–87.

47 *Ibid.*, 85.

48 Bertrand Binoche, ed., *Les équivoques de la civilisation* (Seysse: Editions Champ Vallon, 2005); Émile Benveniste, "Civilisation. Contribution à l'histoire du mot," in *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, vol. 1 (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), 336–45; Pagden, "The Defence of Civilization"; Raymonde Monnier, "The Concept of

The rise of Nazism and the Second World War once again pushed civilization to the centre of international discussions. Already in 1934, a mock trial of Hitler in Madison Square Garden had found him guilty of having committed 'crimes against civilization', but such rhetoric would naturally intensify over the following years.⁴⁹ During the war, civilization featured more frequently in the pages of the international law journal, AJIL, than ever before; usage that culminated in the Nuremberg trials.⁵⁰ Here, as Justice Robert Jackson argued in his closing statements, civilization itself was the 'real complaining party', as the wrongs committed in previous years had 'been so calculated, so malignant, and so devastating, that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored, because it cannot survive their being repeated'.⁵¹ These legal uses of civilization tied in with a larger discussion of how Germans could be reintegrated into a civilized international society, a topic that has received more attention in recent US historiography, in which both the short-term rhetoric as well as the long-term processes of 're-civilization' have been explored.⁵²

This reconciliation of former enemies was partly the result of the final disintegration of both war-time alliances and the concept of civilization as a tool structuring international society. For different reasons the atomic bomb, the threat of communism, and decolonization convinced many in the aftermath of the war that the concept of civilization as an ordering principle of international affairs was a phenomenon of the past. The international lawyer, Georg Schwarzenberger, wrote of 'the double-challenge' of totalitarian systems and nuclear war in whose shadow he attempted to trace 'the ominous character of a movement which has first led to a coalescence of international law and civilisation, but, on a global level appears now to point towards the evanescence of the standard of

Civilisation from Enlightenment to Revolution: An Ambiguous Transfer," *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 4, no. 1 (2008): 106–36; Hugh L. Gilderson, "From the State of Nature to the Empire of Reason: Civilization in Buffon, Mirabeau, and Raynal," *Comparative Civilizations Review* 34 (1996): 27–44; Pim den Boer, "Towards a Comparative History of Concepts: Civilisation and Beschaving," *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 3 (2007): 207–33; Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, *The American Spirit. A Study of the Idea of Civilization in the United States* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1941), 62–97; Jean Starobinski, "The Word Civilization," in *Blessings in Disguise; Or, the Morality of Evil* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 1–35.

49 Louis Anthes, "Publicly Deliberative Drama: The 1934 Mock Trial of Adolf Hitler for 'Crimes against Civilization,'" *The American Journal of Legal History* 42, no. 4 (1998): 391–410; Mark Mazower, "An International Civilization? Empire, Internationalism and the Crisis of the Mid-Twentieth Century," *International Affairs* 82, no. 3 (2006): 553–66.

50 Christiane Wilke, "Reconsecrating the Temple of Justice: Invocations of Civilization and Humanity in the Nuremberg Justice Case," *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* 24, no. 2 (2009): 187.

51 "Avalon Project : Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression - Chapter 5," http://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/chap_05.asp, *The Avalon Project*, (n.d.), accessed November 16, 2015.

52 Konrad H. Jarausch, "German Civility? Retying Social Bonds after Barbarism," *European Review of History: Revue Européenne D'histoire* 18, no. 3 (2011): 373–86; Konrad H. Jarausch, *After Hitler: Recivilizing Germans, 1945-1995* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *Civilizing the Enemy: German Reconstruction And the Invention of the West* (University of Michigan Press, 2006).

civilisation from international law.⁵³ This lack of trust in previous European rhetoric of civilization drove the process of decolonization. As Mazower has argued, the downfall of civilization used as a hierarchical principle of international relations paralleled an adoption of the language of human rights as a thoroughly universal framework.⁵⁴ With the abolition of a system of European domination the word civilization also disappeared from view.

The declining importance of civilization as an international principle opened it up to more thorough historical exploration and enabled new perspectives on its use. The Polish scholar of international law, Alexandrowicz, argued that similar systems to the standard of civilization had existed in other areas of the globe before, and that academic attention should not be focused on the meaning of civilization, but instead on these systems of order.⁵⁵ The same year, Notker Gloker explored what he understood to be the the end of the French fascination for the concept of civilization. As Gloker claimed, with the catastrophes of previous decades and a general decline of national ideas in Europe, the French association with civilization had evaporated.⁵⁶ While the French links to civilization were weakened in the literature, new studies of German uses of civilization reconnected France's eastern neighbour with the rhetoric of civilization. Pflaum, like Gloker a doctoral student, started to question whether the ideas of the inter-war period of a German opposition to civilization were based on historical evidence and found that at least until the 1880s Germans had not distinguished between *Zivilisation* and *Kultur*.⁵⁷ Although he could not quite explain how and why this shift had happened, his work has since formed the basis of most studies concerned with the distinction between *Zivilisation* and *Kultur*. Most importantly, Fisch has relied on Pflaum's findings for his article on *Zivilisation* and *Kultur* in the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, but this research of the 1960s also sustains more recent work on the development of German *Kulturpropaganda*, like Besslich's *Wege in den Kulturkrieg*.⁵⁸

53 Georg Schwarzenberger, "The Standard of Civilisation in International Law," *Current Legal Problems* 8, no. 1 (1955): 234.

54 Mark Mazower, "The End of Civilization and the Rise of Human Rights," in *Human Rights in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

55 C. H. Alexandrowicz, *An Introduction to the History of the Law of Nations in the East Indies: (16th, 17th and 18th Centuries)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).

56 Notker Gloker, "Die Entwicklung von Zivilisation und Kultur in Frankreich seit 1930," in *Europäische Schlüsselwörter. Wortvergleichende und wortgeschichtliche Studien.*, vol. III. Kultur und Zivilisation (Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1967), 31–97; Notker Gloker, "*Civilisation*" und "*culture*" in Frankreich seit 1930: *Ein Beitrag zur Entwicklungsgeschichte beider Begriffe* (Tübingen: Verlag Elly Huth, 1967).

57 Michael Pflaum, "Geschichte Des Wortes Zivilisation" (PhD, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, 1961).

58 Jörg Fisch, "Zivilisation, Kultur," *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992); Barbara Besslich, *Wege in den "Kulturkrieg": Zivilisationskritik in Deutschland 1890-1914* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2000); Georg Bollenbeck, *Bildung und Kultur*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt: Insel Verlag, 1994); Stefan Breuer, "Späte Barbaren. Kultur und Zivilisation im kaiserlichen Deutschland," in *Politik-Verfassung-Gesellschaft: Traditionslinien und Entwicklungsperspektiven. Otwing Massing zum 60. Geburtstag* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft,

In the 1980s, historians investigating the history of the word civilization were joined by those working in international relations. From the early 1980s onwards, members of the so-called English school have started to examine the workings of the nineteenth-century standard of civilization.⁵⁹ It was specifically the publication of Gong's *The Standard of Civilization in International Society* in 1984 that provided new insights into both the workings of the international society, as well as the use of civilization.⁶⁰ Much has since then been written about the standard of civilization in the nineteenth century, as well as on its predecessors and alleged successors in the twentieth and twenty-first century.⁶¹ Most intriguingly for those interested in the concept of civilization itself, international relations scholars have since then focused on the adoption of civilizational language and other tools of the international sphere around the turn of the century.⁶² Specifically the case of Japan and China, their varying adoption of the European ideas of civilization, and of the international order, have been traced in minute historical detail by scholars like Shogo Suzuki.⁶³ This trend of international relations scholarship shows no sign of abating any time soon, as many have now turned to other countries, like Russia, and leading journals in international relations, such

1995), 35–50.

- 59 Barry Buzan, “The ‘Standard of Civilisation’ as an English School Concept,” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 42, no. 3 (2014): 576–94.
- 60 Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of “Civilization” in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).
- 61 Mehdi Mozzafari, “The Transformationalist Perspective and the Rise of a Global Standard of Civilization,” *International Relations of the Asia Pacific* 1, no. 2 (2001): 247–64; Brett Bowden, “In the Name of Progress and Peace: The ‘Standard of Civilization’ and the Universalizing Project,” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 29, no. 1 (2004): 43–68; Fidler, “Return of the Standard of Civilization”; Brett Bowden and Leonard Seabrooke, *Global Standards of Market Civilization* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006); Ann Towns, “The Status of Women as a Standard of ‘Civilization,’” *European Journal of International Relations* 15, no. 4 (2009): 681–706; Edward Keene, *International Political Thought: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Polity, 2005), 160–193; Brett Bowden, “The Colonial Origins of International Law. European Expansion and the Classical Standard of Civilization,” *Journal of the History of International Law* 7, no. 1 (2005): 1–23; Buzan, “The ‘Standard of Civilisation’ as an English School Concept”; Edward Keene, “The Standard of ‘Civilisation’, the Expansion Thesis and the 19th-Century International Social Space,” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 42, no. 3 (2014): 651–73; S. Yamauchi, “Civilization and International Law in Japan during the Meiji Era (1868-1912),” *Hitotsubashi Journal of Law and Politics* 24 (1996): 17–25; Yannis A. Stivachtis, “Civilization and International Society: The Case of European Union Expansion,” *Contemporary Politics* 14, no. 1 (2008): 71–89.
- 62 Rune Svarverud, *International Law as World Order in Late Imperial China: Translation, Reception, and Discourse, 1847-1911* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007); Turan Kayaoglu, *Legal Imperialism: Sovereignty and Extraterritoriality in Japan, the Ottoman Empire, and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Tong Lam, “Policing the Imperial Nation: Sovereignty, International Law, and the Civilizing Mission in Late Qing China,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 52, no. 04 (2010): 881–908; Junnan Lai, “Sovereignty and ‘Civilization’ International Law and East Asia in the Nineteenth Century,” *Modern China* 40, no. 3 (2014): 282–314; Rotem Kowner, “Becoming an Honorary Civilized Nation: Remaking Japan’s Military Image during the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905,” *Historian* 64, no. 1 (2001): 19–38; Yamauchi, “Civilisation and International Law”; Par Kristoffer Cassel, *Grounds of Judgment: Extraterritoriality and Imperial Power in Nineteenth-Century China and Japan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Alexander Bukh, *Japan’s National Identity and Foreign Policy: Russia as Japan’s “Other”* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010).
- 63 Shogo Suzuki, “Japan’s Socialization into Janus-Faced European International Society,” *European Journal of International Relations* 11, no. 1 (2005): 137–64; Shogo Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire: China and Japan’s with European International Society* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009).

as *Millennium*, have published issues exclusively concerned with the standard of civilization and its history.⁶⁴

This frenzied interest in the standard of civilization and the meaning of the word itself have also affected the discipline of international law. While references to civilization in today's legal practice are few and far between, its implication in the international affairs of the late nineteenth century, which Schwarzenberger explored, has been a concern of the historians of international law ever since. Around the time of the millennium and the founding of the *Journal of the History of International Law*, these concerns markedly intensified as the study of the history of international law itself received an enormous boost.⁶⁵ Books and articles have been written not only about the historical use of the term 'civilized state', but also about the generation of lawyers that were involved in the formalization of the vocabulary of civilization.⁶⁶ While some have focused specifically on the development of the terminology of civilized warfare, others have been examining this movement more broadly.⁶⁷ Most important amongst these works is Koskenniemi's magisterial *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations*, which traces the lives and doctrines of the founders of the *Institut de Droit International* and their successors, and which inspired a host of other works dedicated to the question of the relationship between civilization and international law.⁶⁸

Historians, meanwhile, not to be outdone, have produced a staggering amount of literature on the ideological use of civilization in the era of high imperialism in recent years. Not only has the idea of the civilizing mission been analysed in countless publications, but historians of imperialism have done their best to trace the existence of this mission in practically all European states.⁶⁹ But, just as

64 Dimitrios Stoukos, "Introduction: Rethinking the Standard(s) of Civilisation(s) in International Relations," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 42, no. 3 (2014): 546–56.

65 For some examples see E. Myles, "'Humanity', 'Civilization' and 'the International Community' in the Late Imperial Russian Mirror - Three Ideas 'Topical for Our Days,'" *Journal of the History of International Law* 4 (2002): 310–34; Douglas Howland, "Japan's Civilized War: International Law as Diplomacy in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895)," *Journal of the History of International Law* 9, no. 2 (2007): 179–201; Brett Bowden, "The Colonial Origins of International Law. European Expansion and the Classical Standard of Civilization," *Journal of the History of International Law* 7, no. 1 (2005): 1–23.

66 Marc Pauka, *Kultur, Fortschritt und Reziprozität: Die Begriffsgeschichte des zivilisierten Staates im Völkerrecht* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2012).

67 Daniel Marc Segesser, "'Unlawful Warfare Is Uncivilised': The International Debate on the Punishment of War Crimes, 1872–1918," *European Review of History: Revue Européenne D'histoire* 14, no. 2 (2007): 215–34; Jonathan E. Gumz, "Norms of War and the Austro-Hungarian Encounter with Serbia, 1914–1918," *First World War Studies* 4, no. 1 (2013): 97–110; Kinsella, "Discourses of Difference"; Geoffrey Wallace, "Regulating Conflict: Historical Legacies and State Commitment to the Laws of War," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8, no. 2 (2012): 151–72; the locus classicus remains Geoffrey Best, *Humanity in Warfare. The Modern History of the International Law of Armed Conflicts* (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1983).

68 Martti Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law 1870–1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

69 Robin Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism: The Habsburg "Civilizing Mission" in Bosnia 1878-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in*

the scholars of international relations, with whose work theirs often overlaps, they have with time become more interested in the use of civilization in non-European countries. The various instances of what Osterhammel has referred to as 'self-civilization' have been examined more closely, and even attempts to mimic and to adapt European civilizing missions have come under close scrutiny.⁷⁰ Again, Japan and China have attracted the most attention, but we also now know more about Ottoman attempts to justify their empire through a civilizing mission, or the Korean politics of 'internal civilization'.⁷¹

Methodology

While the historiography on civilization is rich and varied, most of it has been dedicated to the exploration of very specific areas of its use and not on a larger picture of its political development, which this thesis seeks to trace. Some have approached civilization as a French expression, others have dedicated their studies to its specific use in international law or how it featured in debates of the Enlightenment, but with few exceptions, the manifold connections between these uses and their change over time have been insufficiently analysed. Yet, in order to understand how the discourse of civilization developed on a larger scale and affected European politics as a whole, our attention needs to be focused on multiple arenas. Approaches to trace such conceptual development over time have been pioneered by the German tradition of *Begriffsgeschichte* on which this thesis relies, but also seeks to develop further.

France and West Africa, 1895-1930 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo, *The "Civilising Mission" of Portuguese Colonialism, 1870-1930* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Esther Möller, *Orte der Zivilisierungsmission: Französische Schulen im Libanon 1909–1943* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013); Osama Abi-Mershed, *Apostles of Modernity: Saint-Simonians and the Civilizing Mission in Algeria* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010); Harald Fischer-Tiné and Michael Mann, *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission: Cultural Ideology in British India* (London: Wimbledon Publishing Company, 2004); Alison Twells, *The Civilizing Mission and the English Middle Class, 1792-1850: The "Heathen" at Home and Overseas* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Deborah Anna Logan, *Harriet Martineau, Victorian Imperialism, and the Civilizing Mission* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2010); Peter J. Cain, "Character, 'Ordered Liberty', and the Mission to Civilise: British Moral Justification of Empire, 1870–1914," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40, no. 4 (2012): 557–78; Andrew Sartori, "The British Empire and Its Liberal Mission," *The Journal of Modern History* 78 (2006): 623–42.

- 70 Jürgen Osterhammel, *Europe, the "West" and the Civilizing Mission* (London: The German Historical Institute London, 2006), 26; Boris Barth and Jürgen Osterhammel, eds., *Zivilisierungsmissionen: Imperiale Weltverbesserung seit dem 18. Jahrhundert* (Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft, 2005); Robert Eskildsen, "Of Civilization and Savages: The Mimetic Imperialism of Japan's 1874 Expedition to Taiwan," *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 2 (2002): 388–418; Urs Matthias Zachmann, *China and Japan in the Late Meiji Period: China Policy and the Japanese Discourse on National Identity, 1895-1904* (London: Routledge, 2010).
- 71 Klaus Dittrich, "Korea's Internal Civilizing Mission: Education in the English Edition of *The Independent*, 1896-1898," *Acta Koreana* 16, no. 2 (2013): 431–72; Selim Deringil, "'They Live in a State of Nomadism': The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 02 (2003): 311–42; Birgit Schäbler, "Globale Moderne und die Geburt der Zivilisationsmission an der kulturellen Binnengrenze: die mission civilisatrice ottomane," in *Westasien und die Moderne*, ed. Birgit Schäbler (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2003), 9–29.

The original intention of the scholars of *Begriffsgeschichte* was to add a layer of intellectual history to the booming discipline of *Sozialgeschichte* and to argue that concepts just like social structures were developing over long time-spans. The project quickly became synonymous with a large dictionary entitled *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe (GG)*, whose originators postulated that the most important shifts in German vocabulary had happened during the so-called *Sattelzeit*. It was during this time, which they defined as lasting from 1750 to 1850, that many German words underwent a process of *Politisierung, Demokratisierung, Verzeitlichung* and increased their *Ideologisierung*.⁷² In other words, they acquired the character of modern, contested, political vocabulary, that the theorists of *Begriffsgeschichte* imagined to be not just a German but a European phenomenon. Investigating a series of such concepts through centuries, a process the makers of the *GG* called 'macro-diachronic analysis', they hoped would demonstrate the validity of their theory, and simultaneously make it possible to trace what they were most interested in: conceptual change.⁷³

Over several years of the dictionaries existence, certain problems started to show. Although some articles in the enormous work, like Jörg Fisch's contribution on *Zivilisation/Kultur*, attempted to integrate other languages and time-periods, the project itself was not internationalized, and remained fixed within a particular historical vision.⁷⁴ This framework, to which Koselleck, its main architect, would later refer as a 'theoretische Zwangsjacke', became more difficult to sustain as the project advanced.⁷⁵ Given the immense variety of terms covered in the dictionary, its contributors were struggling to write their articles in a broadly comparable style, and the ideas of the *Sattelzeit* were harder to prove than its theorists had originally imagined. Especially the universalizing ambition of proving that this process had also happened around the same time in other European countries proved futile, as similar dictionaries in other languages quickly made clear that *Sattelzeit* (at least in the way that the makers of the *GG* imagined) was not a universal phenomenon.⁷⁶

As the program of conceptual study became applied internationally, investigations beyond the strictly national became possible.⁷⁷ Several Dutch studies into the parallel history of Dutch and

72 Mark Bevir, "Begriffsgeschichte," *History and Theory* 39, no. 2 (2000): 273–84.

73 Ibid.; Jan-Werner Müller, "On Conceptual History," in *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History*, ed. Darrin M. McMahon and Samuel Moyn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

74 Willibald Steinmetz, "Vierzig Jahre Begriffsgeschichte – The State of the Art," in *Sprache - Kognition - Kultur. Sprache Zwischen Mentaler Struktur Und Kultureller Prägung*, ed. Heidrun Kämper and Ludwig M. Eichinger (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 182.

75 Reinhart Koselleck, *Begriffsgeschichten* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2006), 86.

76 den Boer, "Towards a Comparative History of Concepts," 214.

77 Specifically important for the history of civilization is the Dutch project about the word *beschaving*, the equivalent of civilization Pim den Boer, *Beschaving. Een Geschiedenis van de Begrippen Hoofsheid, Heus-*

European concepts were undertaken and Jörn Leonard even tried to compare the concept of liberalism in four European countries.⁷⁸ Most of these studies pioneered new ways into conceptual analysis, yet they remained classical in one respect. The nature of conceptual change was grasped through a large socio-historiographical apparatus, itself the heritage of the (originally) close relationship of *Begriffs-* and *Sozialgeschichte*.⁷⁹ From such a socio-historical perspective, concepts changed in long processes of historical change, in which the acts of individual speakers were submerged in a sea of 'general development'. Whether these time-periods were called *Sattelzeit* or *Moderne*, it seemed as if the various individual utterances studied were not connected to the individual speaker/writer originally responsible, but instead to the time-period itself. In other words, in order to establish a historically changing sphere of communication, the individual speech-acts became representations of larger historical processes.

A critique of not considering speech acts as individual utterances was the starting point for the most poignant criticism of *Begriffsgeschichte*, which came from theorists not directly involved in it. It was predominantly members of the so-called Cambridge School, Pocock and Skinner, who argued that the project of *Begriffsgeschichte* had been misconceived from the beginning.⁸⁰ Especially Pocock, who met Koselleck on several occasions, criticized the methodology of *Begriffsgeschichte* as in many ways a-historical. Taking concepts out of the political debates that they formed a part of, and then integrating them into a larger narrative of social history de-contextualized these words, Pocock argued, and thereby obscured the political intention behind their use.⁸¹ Pocock and Skinner advocated a contextualist approach, which as Skinner had paradigmatically outlined in his famous 'Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas' situated particular utterances in specific political debates.⁸² Concepts, Pocock and Skinner asserted, only had meaning in these debates

Heid, *Beschaving En Cultuur*. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2001); for an introduction see den Boer, "Towards a Comparative History of Concepts."

78 Joern Leonard, *Liberalismus – Zur Historischen Semantik Eines Europäischen Deutungsmusters*, Veröffentlichungen Des Deutschen Historischen Instituts London 50 (Munich: Oldenburg Verlag, 2001).

79 Reinhart Koselleck, "Begriffsgeschichte und Sozialgeschichte," in *Soziologie und Sozialgeschichte*, ed. Peter Christian Ludz (VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 1972), 116–31; Reinhart Koselleck, "Begriffsgeschichte and Social History," *Economy and Society* 11, no. 4 (1982): 409–27.

80 Melvin Richter, "Towards a Lexicon of European Political and Legal Concepts: A Comparison of Begriffsgeschichte and the 'Cambridge School,'" *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 6, no. 2 (2003): 91–120; Martin Burke and Melvin Richter, *Why Concepts Matter: Translating Social and Political Thought* (BRILL, 2012); Melvin Richter, *The History of Political and Social Concepts : A Critical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Kari Palonen, "The History of Concepts as a Style of Political Theorizing Quentin Skinner's and Reinhart Koselleck's Subversion of Normative Political Theory," *European Journal of Political Theory* 1, no. 1 (2002): 91–106.

81 J.G.A. Pocock, "Concepts and Discourses: A Difference in Culture? Comment on a Paper by Melvin Richter," in *The Meaning of Historical Terms and Concepts: New Studies on Begriffsgeschichte*, ed. Hartmut Lehmann and Melvin Richter, vol. 15, German Historical Institute Washington, D.C. Occasional Papers (Washington: German Historical Institute, 1996), 47–58.

82 Quentin Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," *History and Theory* 8, no. 1 (1969): 3–

themselves, and could not be generalized onto a higher level.

This critique of the large project of *Begriffsgeschichte* is a powerful one, but an insistence on contextualism should not discourage us from undertaking larger studies. As Koselleck has put it in answer to such criticism, it is important to remain 'sensibel fuer solche Problemstellungen', but this does not necessarily mean that one has to give up trying to understand larger conceptual developments.⁸³ As long as the main problem Skinner and Pocock identified in *Begriffsgeschichte*, that utterances could and were taken out of context to fit a larger narrative, can be sidestepped, nothing speaks against histories of concepts and their development. As Skinner himself has admitted 'as long as this danger can be avoided, then I see every reason to welcome the attempt to write histories of concepts – or rather, as I strongly prefer to put it, to write histories of the uses of concepts in argument.'⁸⁴

To write such a history of 'the use of concepts in argument' means to find a compromise between the strict contextualist approach of Skinner and the long-term focus of the original *Begriffsgeschichte*, to balance an insistence on the individual value of speech acts with an analysis of their development on a larger scale. The only sensible approach appears to be to focus on a number of debates spread evenly over a certain time-period, and to draw them together for analysis. It is clear that any of these smaller cases that make up a narrative of the *longue durée* could be treated in more detail. But what is lost in depth is gained in breath. While a more detailed study of a particular debate might be able to describe it with more nuance, it would be less capable of understanding its relationship and dependence on other, similar debates.

The debates that I have chosen, and will discuss in more detail in the last section of this chapter, are Europe-wide discussions about political or military conflicts in which the word civilization was invoked. Some of them are covered in more depth, whereas others serve as auxiliary tools to explore the specific meanings of civilization in connected conflicts. I am aware that the multitude of discussions covered chronologically might leave an impression of superficial treatment, as several books could be written about each one of them. But I want to stress what the aim of this thesis is, namely to explore the development of the political rhetoric of civilization in the nineteenth century. The main improvement on a classical *Begriffsgeschichte* approach is that the word civilization is

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83 Koselleck, *Begriffsgeschichten*, 88. 'sensitive to such problems'.

84 Petri Koikkalainen and Sami Syrjaemaeki, "On Encountering the Past - Interview with Quentin Skinner," [Http://www.concepta-net.org/files/Image/Skinner_Interview.pdf](http://www.concepta-net.org/files/Image/Skinner_Interview.pdf), n.d., 30, accessed June 21, 2015.

only treated in its political variety, and directly integrated into the debates in which it is used. Without having to rely on a large a-priori model of historical development, the various instances of civilizational language can be treated as individual acts and their uses fused into a more genealogical story. But this raises the question in which framework these debates are to be analysed, a topic I deal with in the next section.

Case Selection and Sources

Traditionally, French debates have been seen as the most historically fruitful acre of understanding ideas of civilization and even civilization itself, as France has been used both to exemplify the rise of civilization as well as the use of the word. When Guizot addressed his students in 1828 on the subject of civilization, he argued that its historical development could be traced in several ways. One could focus on the rise of civilization in its entirety jumping from one country to another and examining events in a multitude of contexts, or one could focus on one country, one that would exemplify the rise of civilization in its entirety.⁸⁵ Guizot chose the second option and used France as an example of civilization. This close association of France and civilization has, as I have shown, later inspired several studies on the use of the concept of civilization, and although the association of France and civilization has weakened in recent decades, it is still described as an essentially French concept. As Alice Conklin has argued in a recent book on the French civilising mission: 'Civilization is a particularly French concept; the French invented the term in the eighteenth century and have celebrated the achievements of their own ever since.'⁸⁶

The questions of method and case selection Guizot discussed with his students in the early nineteenth century have continued to plague historians, but they no longer share his robust trust in a study focusing on a single nation or state. Historians of the nineteenth century helped to constitute the nation-state through their writings, but their profession's enthusiasm for such enterprises has since waned.⁸⁷ While the method of comparative history was pioneered in the early twentieth century to go beyond a single nation-state perspective, if one were to sum up the major trend in history writing over recent decades, it is a collection of attempts to move beyond the European nation-state altogether.⁸⁸ While a first wave of discussions of globalization in the 1990s led to new developments in the fields of global or world history, the previously self-evident character of the

85 François Pierre Guillaume Guizot, *Histoire de la civilisation en France depuis la chute de l'empire romain jusqu'en 1789* (Paris: Pichon et Didier, 1829), 4–6.

86 Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize*, 1.

87 Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz, eds., *Nationalizing the Past: Historians as Nation Builders in Modern Europe* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

88 see Deborah Cohen, "Comparative History: Buyer Beware," *GHI Bulletin* 29 (2001): 23–33.

European nation-states has also come under close scrutiny.⁸⁹ Their past has been described as a long history of a multitude of transfers in which the idea of certain clearly identifiable national aspects has all but evaporated.⁹⁰ Especially in Franco-German traditions of history-writing a number of new approaches seeking to go beyond previous comparative studies have been advanced in recent decades.⁹¹

The idea of transfers and connections going beyond the previously known has not stopped with bordering countries, but has by now taken on global dimensions in which not only the history of former colonies and colonizers has become entangled, but a renewed focus has been put on imperial and transnational elites.⁹² Historians of imperialism have described the intellectual arena created by empires as the origin of modern international thought, and exciting new works have been written on imperial and national elites mixed in these new spaces created by empire.⁹³ These elites also acted as carriers of ideas, and a new field of global concept history tracing the dissemination of concepts along these lines has been the home of a growing number of historians.⁹⁴ But the spread of global networks has not exclusively been the purview of imperial historians. Indeed, it has opened a space for an examination of transnational networks, which have featured in multiple studies on various communities.⁹⁵

This larger transnational shift of the historical profession is a fascinating and enriching historiographical development, but the question is whether this new perspective is best applied to a study seeking to explore the rise of civilization as a concept of international politics. The word civilization was never the exclusive domain of particular international networks, although some like the *Institut de Droit International* exercised a major influence over its development.⁹⁶ There could

89 Bruce Mazlish, "Comparing Global History to World History," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 28, no. 3 (1998): 385–95.

90 For a good overview see Michael Werner and Benedicte Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity," *History and Theory* 45 (2006): 30–50.

91 Hartmut Kaelble, "Die Debatte über Vergleich und Transfer und was jetzt?," <http://www.hsozkult.de/debate/id/diskussionen-574?language=en>, *H/SOZ/KULT*, (n.d.), accessed November 17, 2015.

92 For an overview of developments situating the Enlightenment in a global context see Sebastian Conrad, "Enlightenment in Global History: A Historiographical Critique," *The American Historical Review* 117, no. 4 (2012): 999–1027.

93 David Armitage, *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Kris Manjappa, *Age of Entanglement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014).

94 Andrew Sartori, "The Resonance of Culture: Framing a Problem in Global Concept-History," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 47, no. 04 (2005): 676–99; Andrew Sartori, *Bengal in Global Concept History: Culturalism in the Age of Capital* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori, eds., *Global Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

95 See, for example, Davide Rodogno, Bernhard Struck, and Jakob Vogel, *Shaping the Transnational Sphere: Experts, Networks and Issues from the 1840s to the 1930s* (Oxford ; New York: Berghahn Books, 2014).

96 see Martti Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law 1870–1960*

be many studies on the use of civilization in these circles as well as on the multitude of transfers of civilizational ideology and vocabulary, but they would be limited in scope and it is doubtful whether the rise and continued importance of civilization would be explicable through them. Yet, neither does it seem feasible to go back to a study focused on just one state or to explore the history of civilization through a classical comparison, as this general phenomenon cannot be grasped by focusing purely on clearly defined units.

In order to solve this problem, I have chosen to write what Miller has called a 'cross-national history' and has defined as 'the pursuit of a historical story across several national experiences without the impulse to make comparative evaluations'.⁹⁷ Such an approach may develop comparative attributes, but it is not originally set out to compare or to specifically trace entanglements. In contrast, it is meant to trace a general development through the use of sources and material from several national settings. At first glance, such a methodology would seem to sit uneasy with a contextualist approach to intellectual history, as it could potentially be focused on too many different contexts to allow for proper historical engagement. In order to minimize the risk of chasing a multitude of stories in incomparable contexts, I have kept the number of countries whose debates I will trace at two. It is however important to stress that I do not understand these cases as hermetically sealed containers. Rather, I use them to reflect general aspects of European debates in an increasingly international era. In the late nineteenth century, most larger debates have to be seen as common European ones. Newspapers were sharing information, new books on controversial topics were quickly translated, and parliamentarians in various European countries referred to debates in other national legislatures. While I have attempted to situate debates in specific countries, the transnational nature of these discussions has sometimes made it necessary to refer to literature or events outside of their national borders.

With many civilizational studies already existing on France, I will focus on its European neighbours, Germany and Britain, whose debates not only helped to spread the word civilization and influence its developments, as I will explore in the next section, but which as centres of debate also reveal different aspects of the political use of civilization. As I will demonstrate, the major social and ideological developments to which the word civilization was connected affected the frameworks of British and German debates in often very different ways. While the rise of liberalism

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

97 Michael Miller, "Comparative and Cross-National History: Approaches, Differences, Problems," in *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective*, ed. Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), 116.

and civilization as a political ideology ultimately moved the former enemies Britain and France closer together, Prussia (on which this study will focus before German unification) was torn between a predominantly conservative elite and an often liberal populace advocating rather different international policies. The question of nationalism, intimately connected to these debates never saw the territorial integrity of Great Britain seriously in doubt, whereas the German question continued to dominate European politics for decades. A similar situation can be observed in the years in which European politics turned to imperialism. Whereas Britain was the leading global imperial power, Germany had not acquired a single overseas possession before 1884, a fact naturally reflected in these often civilizational debates. While the political make-up of Germany and Britain can naturally not reflect all major international developments, they form two very heterogeneous frameworks in which to examine the various uses of civilization, and are therefore ideal for a study of its larger development.

In order to trace the various civilizational debates in these countries, I have relied on a large number of published sources. As the original scholars of *Begriffsgeschichte*, I have started out by not actively excluding any source mentioning the term civilization, but in contrast to them, I have taken great care to connect each mention of civilization to a specific public debate. In this thesis, I have used parliamentary protocols, pamphlets, books, essays, articles in newspapers and journals, treaties in international law, and papal encyclicals. I have also used private letters between members of the British government and Portuguese, German, and French diplomatic documents in order to highlight aspects of publicly debated treaties. Yet, for the most part, I have focused my attention on published documents, in order to trace the larger picture of the rhetoric of civilization. When using books or other sources, whose content was debated in British and German discussions but originated in other countries, I have attempted to use it in the versions translated into German or English.

Conflicts and Outline

As I will argue in the first chapter, which serves as a historical introduction, while the language of civilization was undoubtedly born in France, it not only relied on Ancient Greek and Roman tropes, but spread through the intervention of British and German philosophers. It might have been the Marquis de Mirabeau who first used the term civilization in 1756, however the philosophers who perfected the study of the levels of development it was soon associated with were Scottish, and the idea of civilization itself was probed as far away as Königsberg. The French Revolution, in whose

wake, I argue, the term civilization took on a pronounced political meaning, was certainly justified in France with reference to civilization, but in the international debate that followed, it was chastised through the same vocabulary. Edmund Burke demonstrated civilization's contested nature when he argued that 'our civilization, and all the good things which are connected with manners and with civilization' were not connected to the idea of progress and the 'barbarous metaphysics' of the revolution, but to the 'spirit of religion'. It was, as I will show, a distinction between two definitions of civilization that would influence European thinking for almost a hundred years. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, a time-period Moras has rightly identified as a period of vulgarization, French liberals, like Constant and Guizot, can most clearly be identified with the language of civilization. Yet their thought and ideas about it only spread through the intervention of men like John Stuart Mill and German nationalists, who adopted the language of civilization as their own.

It was through its association with nationalism, I argue in chapters two and three, now focused on entirely on German and British debates, that the concept of civilization reached truly international prominence. A discourse that associated the claims of nationalism with the idea of modern civilization, and identified Russia as the opponent of both, had grown in Europe in the aftermath of the 1830 and 1848 revolutions, which Russia had helped to suppress. When the Tsar, after a series of diplomatic misunderstandings, attacked the Ottoman Empire, which had previously given shelter to the refugees of 1848, British and French politicians could count on the support of those who had harboured positive feelings towards the revolutions to support them in their intervention against the Russian Empire. It was clear that Napoleon III should justify French intervention on the side of Turkey as being in support of civilization, but as I show tracing British debates surrounding the war, the concept of civilization also took centre-stage in the arguments of those who wanted to see the United Kingdom at war with Russia. The irony that (what I argue was) the first official war for civilization fought by Western powers, was undertaken in defence of the Ottoman Empire should not be lost on those who continue to argue that all expressions of civilization fit neatly into an orientalist paradigm.

In the German-speaking countries, the rhetoric of civilization surrounding the war was also heavily discussed in debates that continued almost seamlessly during the 1860s, and that are the subject of the third chapter. During the 1860s, the high-point of the Western European wars of nationalism, civilization became even more closely associated with national claims. In the discussions surrounding the Second Italian War of Independence and the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, which I

examine in detail, the ideas of modern civilization associated with nationalism and liberalism collided with the ideas of those, like the Catholic Church, who sought to defend the old order with similar vocabulary. The Vatican itself not only published a journal dedicated to Catholic Civilization, but also expressly denounced the calls for a reconciliation of the Pope with modern civilization and liberalism in the *Syllabus of Errors* of 1864, an event that, as I will show, reverberated throughout Europe, specifically in Britain and Germany.

As the problematic of Western European nationalism started to subside in the early 1870s, a period I analyse in the fourth chapter, German and British politicians started to apply the ideas of civilization further afield. The 1870s can be seen as a shift of European civilizational preoccupations from internal and European-wide discussions, related to the Catholic Church and nationalism, to truly global debates. Whereas the early years of the decade were still dominated by discussions about how the freshly proclaimed infallibility of the Pope was related to civilization, the latter years saw civilization applied further afield. It is no coincidence, as I show tracing several discussions about international politics from 1875 to 1878, that the language of civilization was suddenly simultaneously used to argue for British intervention against the Ottoman Empire, to justify the Russian war effort in the same conflict, and in calls for the geographical exploration of the Congo. These debates also prove that the language of civilization was, by the late 1870s, no more purely French, but international.

Its truly international character quickly showed at the Berlin Conference of 1885, in which the spread of civilization, argued for on an international basis since the 1870s, was formally inscribed into international law. Exploring the debates surrounding the Conference, but also the conference protocols themselves, a task to which the fifth chapter is dedicated, I argue that we should read the obvious success of civilizational language against the criticism of civilization which became more pronounced around the same time. Especially in German debates, but as I show also in Britain, liberal ideas of the continuous rise of civilization were heavily criticized. While such criticism had previously come from the likes of the Catholic Church, it had spread further afield, and changed in character. The 'original' critique of modern civilization had been based on an opposition to nationalism, its newer variety opposed increasing industrialization, the character of the modern economy, and the inability of the state to solve larger social issues.

Similar debates continued in the 1890s, and chapter six focuses on two European-wide discussions, which were concerned not with spreading, but with preserving civilization. In the climate

dominating the last decade of the century, which many have already described as being a period of civilizational crisis, a new international debate developed about what Gladstone, British Prime Minister at the time, called a 'scourge to civilization': the increasing militarization of European society. In a large conflict, which soon developed between various Peace Movements and those who argued that the prospect of war was saving Europe from an effeminate and materialist future, the concept of civilization was used on all sides. These debates, not coincidentally, were contemporaneous with major shifts in the power-structure of the international sphere, as Japan, in what it unsurprisingly claimed was a display of civilized warfare, defeated China in the war of 1894/1895. In Europe, especially in a circle surrounding the German emperor Wilhelm II, these developments were interpreted as a new threat to European civilization, that needed to be stopped.

This anti-Asian civilizational rhetoric built up during that conflict later dominated the discussions surrounding Boxer rebellion, to which half of the last chapter of this thesis is dedicated. The attempts of the Kaiser and others to describe the intervention in China as one for civilization were heavily criticized by those, predominantly on the left, who had started to interpret the continuous use of civilization as a cover-up for imperialism. Such ideas also dominated the other conflict, which shook the world around the same time, and which is the other subject of this final chapter: the Boer War. German, but also British critics of the official depiction of the war as one between civilization and backwardness, started to chastise such use of civilizational language. In the writings of German journalists, and future British prime ministers, the language of civilization was actively criticized, and it is a rhetoric, that, although in some sense changed, continues until today. It was around the turn of the century, I argue, that the negative association of the term civilization with empire, which has dominated recent literature, began in earnest. As I will show in this thesis, it is a mistake to assume that this type of civilizational rhetoric showed the true character of the concept of civilization, as the word itself formed the basis of many, very different, international debates.

Chapter 1. Civilization: from the Greeks to Guizot and Mill

Introduction

Although the word civilization (with a sense resembling contemporary usage) was only coined in the 1750s, its intellectual roots stretch back much further. In this chapter, I investigate the etymological and intellectual origins of the concept of civilization. I argue that while the term itself is modern, some of its contents are based on the philosophies of Ancient Greece and Rome. I then move on to a personality of the sixteenth century, often associated with an international concept of civilization: Francisco de Vitoria. While this attribution is historically false, I examine how, why, and with which arguments, Vitoria has come to be associated with a contemporary concept of civilization, and where the roots of this intellectual appropriation lie. In a third part, I examine the real origins of the concept of civilization in mid-eighteenth century Europe, and make the argument that while civilization is most often associated with a relatively homogeneous liberal and colonialist ideology, it was from the beginning a deeply contested concept in European affairs. Already at its inception in the 1750s, civilization was claimed both by conservative and progressive thinkers. I show that these different interpretations have endured throughout the nineteenth century. The fourth and final part focuses on the French liberal politician and historian Francois Guizot, and the impact of his works on civilization of the late 1820, not just in France but in Europe. I explore how the inevitable rise of the rhetoric of civilization in the first half of the nineteenth century made it possible for this language to enter into the vocabulary of international politics and to become one of its most defining terms.

The Etymological Roots of Civilization and the Problems of Philosophy

The word civilization has held sway over intellectual minds for centuries. Yet, attempts to extract its actual meaning have been a sure source of frustration for a long line of philosophers and others engaged in similar exercises.¹ As John Armstrong confessed in the most recent attempt:

With the possible exception of God, civilization is the grandest, most ambitious idea that humanity has devised. If we could get to the heart of civilization and uncover its secret meaning, we would understand something deep and important about ourselves and the human condition and of urgent present relevance. But the question: 'What is civilization?' is

¹ Kenneth Clark asked the same question in his highly successful TV Series and gave the, deliberately haphazard, answer: 'I don't know. I can't define it in abstract terms yet, but I think I can recognize it when I see it. "Civilisation - A Personal View by Kenneth Clark," <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ElcYjCzj8oA> (London: BBC, 1969), 3:35.

bewildering. When we try to spell out the idea the word points to we find ourselves at a loss.²

Civilization is a difficult word for those trying to fix its meaning, as they have very little to hold on to. The classic philosophical method of understanding through etymology, trying to locate the core meaning of a word through a study of its ancestry, seems to draw a spectacular blank.³ As R.G. Collingwood, who started out on the same quest as Armstrong more than sixty years earlier, noted: 'Etymology by itself tells us very little about a word like "civilization", and what it tells us is not trustworthy'.⁴ Etymology itself is not treacherous, as Collingwood rightly understood, but the hope to establish the current (or any historic) meaning of the term purely through an examination of its linguistic roots is. Intellectual historians are undoubtedly in a more comfortable position, as the 'secret meaning of civilization', should such a thing exist, is really none of their concern. Their question is not: 'what is civilization?', but what did civilization mean at a given point in time, and why?

The historical interest in etymological questions is thereby also of a different nature than the philosophical one, as are the conclusions drawn there-from. The reason Collingwood found the etymological investigation of civilization so hopeless was that he realized that to establish a universal definition of civilization, it was inadequate to merely know

that civilization should mean the process of rendering something civil, or the process of becoming civil; or alternatively the state of being civil which is the result of either process. And civil should mean of or belonging to a townsman so that the process should be one of conversion into, or becoming, a townsman or like a townsman.⁵

For historians, this is the wrong way of going about etymological research. Instead of trying to understand what the history of civilization can tell us about its present meaning, we should investigate why, what Armstrong calls, 'the grandest, most ambitious idea humanity has devised' should have the townsman as its root. In other words, a true meaning of civilization does not exist for historians, and their aim can only be to reconstruct the different meanings given to the word civilization at various points in time.

2 John Armstrong, *In Search of Civilization: Remaking a Tarnished Idea* (London: Penguin UK, 2009), 2.

3 For philosophers and etymology see Martin Jay, *Songs of Experience: Modern American and European Variations on a Universal Theme* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 9–11.

4 R.G. Collingwood, *The New Leviathan: Or Man, Society, Civilization, and Barbarism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), 281.

5 Ibid.

The word civilization is indeed derived from the Latin word *civis*, the citizen, or townsman, yet like most Roman words denoting abstract philosophical concepts, it has its origins in Ancient Greece.⁶ The word *civitas* has its equivalent in *polis*, the central component of Ancient Greece's economic, political, and intellectual life. So fundamental was this concept that the Ancient Greeks considered the ability to form a *polis* a sign of humanity and proof of reason.⁷ Consequently, the only way to be truly human was to live and participate in the activities of the *polis*. The foreigners outside of this realm, structured by what the Greeks called *logos*, simultaneously meaning reason or (the Greek) language, were simply babblers, or as they became known as: *barbaroi*.⁸ While a relatively neutral word at first, *barbaros* had become, once Greek political theory hardened into its most definitive form in the fourth century: 'a word which was used only for cultural and mental inferiors.'⁹

Similarly, the Greeks classed those as inferior whose political systems could not afford their members the same fulfilment as the *polis*, as they assumed that the type of political association revealed something about the 'human status' of their inhabitants. In his taxonomical investigations, Aristotle found Greece's eastern neighbours particularly lacking. Their conditions of government, he alleged, were not like tyranny, an acceptable, circumstantial form of governance, but a systematic state of oppression: despotism.¹⁰ The reasons for the success of despotism in the East lay, he hypothesized, with the nature of Asians, who were more servile than Europeans, and would therefore not rebel against treatment considered undignified by the Greeks.¹¹ Needless to say, the words barbarism and despotism derived from these considerations, have their own conceptual history worthy of investigation, and their precise relationship to words like civilization has varied over time, and with the linguistic context they were deployed in.¹² Nonetheless, it is not at all surprising that the mental map the Ancient Greeks supplied later generations with should have the independent city dweller at its centre, and barbarians and those living in despotic conditions defined in inferior positions to it. Although the Greeks neither possessed words in any way comparable to modern conceptualizations of culture and civilization, their ideas of the superiority of the politically

6 Jörg Fisch, "Zivilisation, Kultur," *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992), 682–683.

7 Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 16.

8 Fisch, "Zivilisation, Kultur," 683; Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*, 16.

9 Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*, 16.

10 Joan-Pau Rubies, "Oriental Despotism and European Orientalism: Botero to Montesquieu," *Journal of Early Modern History* 9, no. 1–2 (2005): 115–116.

11 Ibid.

12 Rubies, "Oriental Despotism"; Franco Venturi, "Oriental Despotism," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 24, no. 1 (1963): 133–42; W. R. Jones, "The Image of the Barbarian in Medieval Europe," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 13, no. 04 (1971): 376–407.

active 'townsman' has remained a trope in European political thought.¹³

The peculiar Greek obsession with cities and their inhabitants, which owed much to the geographical character of their land, could not be replicated in the republic and later empire of Rome.¹⁴ Nonetheless, the Romans did accord the concept of citizenship special importance, particularly the citizenship of Rome itself. In his speeches against Verres, the corrupt governor of Sicily, Cicero coldly recounts one of his most atrocious deeds: to have tried, beaten, and later crucified one of his opponents.¹⁵ The heinous nature of the crime lay not in the fact that such behaviour was generally considered to be unethical; it mattered because the man had been a Roman citizen. As such, he had the right to be tried in the capital itself and, even if found guilty, was always to be spared the cross.¹⁶ Cicero dramatically expressed the enormous discrepancy between the brutality of the treatment and the status of the victim:

Then he [Verres] orders the man to be most violently scourged on all sides. In the middle of the forum of Messana a Roman citizen, O judges, was beaten with rods; while in the meantime no groan was heard, no other expression was heard from that wretched man, amid all his pain, and between the sound of the blows, except these words, "I am a citizen of Rome."¹⁷

Much like the inhabitant of the Greek *polis*, the citizen of Rome was thought to be an elevated being, who solely by membership of this city could hope to avoid the treatment reserved for those living outside. With time, the special consideration paid to those living inside the city would make the word *civilis* take on the meaning of refined, and consequently well-mannered and affable.¹⁸ Its opposite meanwhile, the word describing wildness and ferocity, *silvaticus*, had its roots in *silva* (or: *sylva*), the woods and is the etymological ancestor of the modern 'savage'.¹⁹ In much the same way, the modern 'villain' owes its existence to the peasant: *villanus*, and the slightly antiquated 'urbane' has its roots in *urbs*, the city. While the Greeks arguably invented such dichotomous

13 Fisch, "Zivilisation, Kultur."

14 Ibid., 683–689; Michael Pflaum, "Geschichte Des Wortes Zivilisation" (PhD diss., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, 1961), 1–4.

15 Marcus Tullius Cicero, "In Verrem," <http://perseus.uchicago.edu/perseus-cgi/citequery3.pl?dbname=PerseusLatinTexts&query=Cic.%20Ver.&getid=0>, *Perseus: Latin Text and Translations*, (n.d.), accessed August 25, 2014.

16 Jane F. Gardner, *Being a Roman Citizen* (London: Routledge, 1993).

17 Marcus Tullius Cicero, "Cicero in Verrem," <http://perseus.uchicago.edu/perseus-cgi/citequery3.pl?dbname=PerseusLatinTexts&getid=1&query=Cic.%20Ver.%202.5.160>, *Perseus: Latin Text and Translations*, (n.d.), 2.5.162.

18 Pflaum, "Zivilisation," 1.

19 George Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: The Free Press, 1987), 10.

conceptualizations of the town and the outside, these deepened and augmented in Ancient Rome, and created a pool of words and ideas that deeply influenced later European thought.

As the empire slowly crumbled, these connotations of civility similarly diminished and virtually disappeared until they were resuscitated in fourteenth century Humanism and the later Renaissance.²⁰ In the sixth century, the historian Cassiodorus, writing under Ostrogoth rule, would still fondly remember Rome as 'this seat of civility' (*ipsam civilitatis sedem*).²¹ By then, the insecurity precipitated by the downfall of the empire had driven many to seek refuge in new metaphysical realms, and the idea of a more ordered and secure life was similarly expressed in religious language. The *civitate dei*, about which Augustine preached to his followers, replaced previous ideas of civility, merely bound up with the city, and instead connected them to God, a heritage that dominated the rest of the Middle Ages. It was only through the curious restoration of latinized Aristotelian vocabulary and ideas in the thirteenth century that Thomas Aquinas could utter the argument that it was in fact 'the political that renders man civil' (*politicus enim facit hominem civilem*), as he recognized that 'the political is itself the civil' (*politicum idem est quod civile*).²²

This Aristotelian reception, combined with the economic and political rise of Italian and later northern European towns, re-established the close implicit connections between the political unit and an idea of manners and elegant behaviour. As the city grew in economic importance, its citizens sought to distinguish themselves through the consumption of ever more elaborate goods, as well as through personal refinement. Particularly important in this context was Erasmus' book of manners for young boys, whose title clearly explained its contents: *De civilitate morum puerilium*, and which is the early cornerstones of Elias' theory of the civilizing process.²³ By the early sixteenth century, a notion of civility associated with good manners and behaviour had become firmly established both in Latin and in the ever more popular *vulgate*, and these ideas came to describe individuals and whole societies.²⁴ It is tempting to see the success of these words in the sixteenth century as an early stage of, what might be described as 'theories of civilization'. This would be a crude anachronism.

20 For a powerful critique of this, generally accepted, interpretation see John Gillingham, "Civilizing the English? The English Histories of William of Malmesbury and David Hume," *Historical Research* 74, no. 183 (2001): 17–43.

21 Fisch, "Zivilisation, Kultur," 688.

22 Ibid., 694.

23 Pim den Boer, "Towards a Comparative History of Concepts: Civilisation and Beschaving," *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 3 (2007): 216–218; This book plays a major role in Norbert Elias theories, see Norbert Elias, *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation: soziogenetische und psychogenetische Untersuchungen*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1981). 'A Handbook on the Good Manners for Children'

24 Fisch, "Zivilisation, Kultur."

Despite the fact that it slowly became possible to speak of civilised and barbarian nations, there was no theory to sustain these assertions; neither the word nor the idea of a 'process/progress of civilization' existed.²⁵ The idea of civility or a civilized character was not embedded into a 'ladder of civilization', an invention of the eighteenth century.²⁶

Civilization and the Manipulations of Francisco de Vitoria

Even so, such a concept of civilization has often come to be associated with Francisco de Vitoria, a Dominican monk of the early sixteenth century. Historically speaking, the attribution is fundamentally mistaken, and the debates about it of only minimal interest. What these discussions do reveal is the political nature of attempts to ground the concept of civilization in history, and the extent to which historical figures have been co-opted to serve the aims of those seeking to use historical arguments to justify their reading of a contemporary concept of civilization. It is therefore not primarily the historical figure of Vitoria that is of interest for an investigation of the concept of civilization, but those who have tried to attribute the concept to him, and the question of why they have done so. Until the inter-war period of the twentieth century, Vitoria was on the margins of academic discourse, known amongst early modernists as the author of *De Jure Belli Hispanorum in Barbaros* and *De Indis*.²⁷ Although such an attribution is slightly problematic, given the fluid boundaries of medieval curricula, one might term *De Indis* a legal document, as it was written to justify Spanish claims over the new world and its inhabitants.²⁸ The remarkable nature of this book consisted in the fact that it questioned many previous arguments proposed to justify this process of colonization, such as the idea, based on Aristotle, that the Indians were slaves by nature (a theory advanced by the likes of Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda). Similarly, the more classically medieval assertion that 'universal monarchy', at the time exercised by Charles V, stretched over the whole world, was also dismissed.²⁹ Nonetheless, Vitoria reached the conclusion that the Spanish incursions on Indian territory were admissible in a number of cases, which Vitoria called 'just'. Among them: if the Indians voluntarily agreed to be ruled by a Christian Prince, if they could be proven mad or

25 Marc Pauka, *Kultur, Fortschritt und Reziprozität: Die Begriffsgeschichte des zivilisierten Staates im Völkerrecht* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2012), 69–83.

26 Despite the fact that some have been using misleading language suggesting that it was indeed used, see D. Alan Orr, "Inventing the British Republic: Richard Beacon's 'Solon His Follie' (1594) and the Rhetoric of Civilization," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 38, no. 4 (2007): 975–94; George Huppert, "The Idea of Civilization in the Sixteenth Century," in *Renaissance: Studies in Honour of Hans Baron* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1971), 757–70.

27 Francisco de Vitoria, *Vitoria: Political Writings*, ed. Anthony Pagden and Jeremy Lawrance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). 'About the American Indians'

28 As a separate legal sphere, detached from general theological considerations, had not been created it is difficult to argue that *De Indis* is indeed a purely a legal document.

29 Peter Fibiger Bang and Dariusz Kolodziejczyk, eds., "'Elephant of India': Universal Monarchy Through Time and Across Cultures," in *Universal Empire: A Comparative Approach to Imperial Culture and Representation in Eurasian History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1–42.

insane, should they violently obstruct missionary activity, or should there be danger of innocents living under tyranny.³⁰ The last of these has come into sharper academic and political focus in recent years, as Vitoria's status within the realm of 'humanitarian intervention' and 'responsibility to protect' has been investigated more thoroughly.³¹ Earlier in the twentieth century, when Vitoria saw his first renaissance, it was another article in his treatise that was heavily debated, an article of which Vitoria himself was not particularly sure, and styled a 'possible' not a 'just' title. Spanish incursions could potentially be just, he argued, if 'these barbarians, though not totally mad, as explained before, are nevertheless so close to being mad that, *they are unsuited to setting up or administering a commonwealth both legitimate and ordered in human and civil terms.*'³²

During the inter-war period, Vitoria's work more broadly, and specifically this article, was rediscovered in a number of circles, most importantly by the American internationalist lawyer James Brown Scott, who used Vitoria as a justification for the newly inaugurated mandate system. As the secretary of the Carnegie foundation, Scott had been instrumental in pushing the agenda of international law even before the First World War, and as a US envoy to the Paris Peace Conference he had helped to negotiate the Covenant of the League of Nations, containing the notorious 22nd article, specifying that the mandate system was: 'a sacred trust of civilization'.³³ In numerous lectures and in print, Scott did not just preach the virtues of international law, he also sought to establish the roots of its illustrious history. Vitoria, he argued, was the first to establish a universal secularized realm of law for all of humanity to have a part in, a concept on which the League of Nations heavily relied. In order to make this argument, Scott carefully overlooked the final conclusions Vitoria had drawn, and focused instead on the arguments he had rejected, namely that the Indians were slaves by nature, and the rights of universal monarchy.³⁴ Scott took Vitoria's reluctance to accept these arguments and his potential willingness to argue that Spanish rule was just, if these barbarians were unable to set up their own commonwealth, as evidence that he was not the medieval thinker many took him to be, but the first apostle of modern liberal international law.

30 Vitoria, *Vitoria*, 288.

31 William Bain, "Saving the Innocent, Then and Now: Vitoria, Dominion and World Order," *History of Political Thought* 34, no. 4 (2013): 588–613; Pekka Niemelae, "A Cosmopolitan World Order? Perspectives on Francisco de Vitoria and the United Nations," *Max Planck Yearbook of United Nations Law* 12 (2008): 301–44; Beate Jahn, "Humanitarian Intervention – What's in a Name?," *International Politics* 49, no. 1 (2012): 36–58; James Muldoon, "Francisco De Vitoria and Humanitarian Intervention," *Journal of Military Ethics* 5, no. 2 (2006): 128–43; Mona Fixdal and Dan Smith, "Humanitarian Intervention and Just War," *Mershon International Studies Review* 42, no. 2 (1998): 283–312; Anne Orford, *International Authority and the Responsibility to Protect* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

32 Vitoria, *Vitoria*, 290.

33 For James Brown Scott's biography see George Augustus Finch, *Adventures in Internationalism: A Biography of James Brown Scott* (London: Lawbook Exchange, Limited, 2012).

34 James Brown Scott, *The Spanish Origins of International Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), 116–137.

He drew a clear connection between his own work and Vitoria's:

Victoria (sic!) recognized that there were peoples in an imperfect state of civilization; but that they were human beings, and human beings, to his way of thinking, should not be subject to exploitation [...] Therefore it was proper – and indeed praiseworthy – for a state in the plenitude of civilization to take, as it were, these children of nature in hand in order to educate them in their rights and in their duties, that their principalities might be admitted to the international community. The action however of the enlightened nation was not to smack of self-interest, much less exploitation; it was to be on behalf of the laggards in the march of civilization. This was a nameless principle in Victoria's system – a principle thought some four centuries later to have been newly created by the Covenant of the League of Nations, and as such christened with the dignified name of mandate.³⁵

It should perhaps have been obvious to Scott that to draw a connection between the 'nearly mad barbarians' of Vitoria's account and the mandate system was a risky move, and he was duly ridiculed by many of his colleagues in the discipline. Arthur Nussbaum, professor at Columbia and the author of one of the earliest general histories of international law, judged Scott's attempts to link Vitoria and the mandate system of the United Nations 'disarmingly naïve'.³⁶ Scott's idea of Vitoria as a (proto)-liberal, Nussbaum argued, was fundamentally mistaken: 'Vitoria has been emphatically praised as a liberal. No tribute to him could be more inappropriate.'³⁷ He was, Nussbaum claimed, despite rejecting certain claims over the newly discovered lands, 'a staunch, if not extreme, advocate of ecclesiastical and papal authority'.³⁸ The problem with Scott's interpretation was not that he had merely misinterpreted Vitoria's political intentions, he had failed to grasp, as Nussbaum added gleefully, that the arguments Vitoria advanced were not part of a secular and liberal universe at all. Instead, they 'derived from holy scripture, from natural law, and from *ius gentium*'.³⁹ The most fundamental distinction between the legal bases of Vitoria's argument and those sustaining the mandate system was the idea of progress. Whereas the 'nearly mad barbarians' of Vitoria's imagination were condemned to remain 'nearly mad' until the end of their unfortunate lives, the inhabitants of Syria, the Marshall Islands, and other mandates in the twentieth century were explicitly promised progress. The whole point of the mandate system, one might argue, was that it was, at least theoretically, defined through its eventual termination.

35 Ibid., 287.

36 Arthur Nussbaum, *A Concise History of the Law of Nations* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1954), 143.

37 Ibid., 83.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid., 82.

Carl Schmitt, far from sharing any political allegiance with Nussbaum who had to leave Nazi-Germany just as Schmitt advanced to its crown-jurist, saw the same deficiencies in Scott's account, and he was particularly irritated by the use of the word civilization.⁴⁰ To make an argument based on civilization, Schmitt claimed, one needed to have a philosophy of history that included civilization as a specific process. The fact that Vitoria based his argumentation solely on natural law and holy scripture made it impossible for him to imagine such a process. As Schmitt put it:

Aber was werden die Vertreter moderner Zivilisation dazu sagen, daß Vitoria überhaupt nicht von dem Recht einer überlegenen Zivilisation oder Kultur spricht; nicht von einem Herrschaftsrecht der Zivilisierten gegenüber Halbzivilisierten oder Unzivilisierten; überhaupt nicht von "Zivilisation", einem Begriff, der doch vom 18. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert eine ganze Epoche des europäischen Völkerrechts beherrscht? Hier zeigt sich der tiefe Gegensatz, der sowohl eine geschichtliche Denkweise überhaupt, wie insbesondere auch die humanitäre Geschichtsphilosophie des 19. Jahrhunderts von der ungeschichtlichen Argumentation des Scholastikers trennt.⁴¹

Unlike Nussbaum, Schmitt never thought Scott 'disarmingly naïve'. He suspected a more nefarious act of what he called 'politische Mythenbildung'.⁴² In other words, Schmitt argued that these interpretations of medieval thinkers were politically motivated.⁴³ Scott's reading of Vitoria, as if he had been a contemporary thinker, was a thinly veiled attempt to re-integrate long-forgotten arguments of morality and ideas of 'just war' into international politics.⁴⁴ As such ideas could not be expressed in the 'immoral' and secularized language of contemporary European public law, those seeking to make such a case reverted back to medieval thinkers. In this process, Vitoria became a 'Fundgrube von Argumenten', even though these had to be violated in order to fit 'ein ihm fremdes Gedankensystem'.⁴⁵ The arguments of Vitoria were mixed together with a philosophy of history they

40 Carl Schmitt, *Der Nomos Der Erde Im Völkerrecht Des Jus Publicum Europaeum*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1974); Wilhelm Georg Grewe, *Epochen Der Völkerrechtsgeschichte* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1984), 222–223.

41 Schmitt, *Nomos*, 76; Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum* (New York: Telos Press Publishing, 2003), 107–108. 'But what would the representatives of modern civilization say about the fact that Vitoria says nothing about the right of a superior civilization or culture, the right of civilized peoples to rule over half-civilized or uncivilized peoples, or about "civilization", which has been a decisive concept in European international law since the 18th century.'

42 Schmitt, *Nomos*, 119. 'act of political mythmaking'.

43 *Ibid.*, 89.

44 *Ibid.*; for Schmitt's general theory see William Hooker, *Carl Schmitt's International Thought: Order and Orientation* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

45 Schmitt, *Nomos*, 87–89. 'A treasure trove of arguments', 'a system of thought alien to him'.

did not fit, so that they could provide the starting point for a further moralistic infringement of the international sphere. To Scott, Vitoria was no historical thinker, merely a suitable basis for his own arguments. The attribution of a concept of civilization to Vitoria, an intrinsic part of this process, was, as Schmitt put it in characteristic fashion: 'tragische Möglichkeit heterogener Verwertung'.⁴⁶ It is hardly a coincidence that Schmitt, as his protocols at the Nuremberg trials amply demonstrate, saw himself as the victim of just such an interpretation of international law. This does not take away from the fact that his reading of Scott's misunderstanding is correct.⁴⁷ Historically speaking, there is no connection between Vitoria and the idea of civilization, and it does not take a malign interpretation of Scott's work to see the political manipulation behind the historical account.

Ironically, Scott would soon suffer a similar fate, as his own arguments were, as Ian Hunter has sarcastically put it, 'revived for post-colonial use', and the connections he had drawn between Vitoria and the mandate system not just criticized, but reversed.⁴⁸ Around the turn of the millennium, Schmitt and Scott would again both be swept to the intellectual surface. While Schmitt was revived by thinkers on the right and left seeking to question the political consensus of the 1990s, and later the moralistic language of the 'war on terror', Scott's work was given the subaltern treatment.⁴⁹ First in a 1996 article, and later in a much expanded book, Anthony Anghie affirmed Scott's position that Vitoria should indeed be seen as the originator of international law.⁵⁰ Yet, Anghie fundamentally disagreed that international law had been the blessing for humanity Scott had presented it as. What Vitoria had created, Anghie claimed, were the legal tools of imperialism. Where Scott had seen Vitoria endorsing benevolent action 'on behalf of the laggards of civilization', Anghie suspected more sinister imperial motives. Vitoria's arguments, he claimed, were 'insidious' in that they presumed the human nature of the Indians to set them up for exploitation.⁵¹ By identifying the Indians as fellow humans in need of care and development and not sovereign rulers, Anghie argued, the Spanish were free to infringe on their territory. Because the Indians were defined purely through their lack (of development) vis-a-vis the Spanish, who themselves defined

46 Ibid., 96. 'tragic possibility of heterogeneous use'.

47 Joseph W. Bendersky, "Carl Schmitt's Path to Nuremberg: A Sixty-Year Reassessment," *Telos* 2007, no. 139 (2007): 6–34; Christiane Wilke, "Reconsecrating the Temple of Justice: Invocations of Civilization and Humanity in the Nuremberg Justice Case," *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* 24, no. 2 (2009): 181–201.

48 Ian Hunter, "Global Justice and Regional Metaphysics: On the Critical History of the Law of Nature and Nations," in *Law and Politics in British Colonial Thought*, ed. Ian Hunter and Shaunnagh Dorsett (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 26.

49 For Schmitt's later reception see Louiza Odysseos and Fabio Petito, *The International Political Thought of Carl Schmitt: Terror, Liberal War and the Crisis of Global Order* (Routledge, 2007).

50 Antony Anghie, "Francisco De Vitoria and the Colonial Origins of International Law," *Social Legal Studies* 5 (1996): 321–36; Antony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Pauka, *Begriffsgeschichte des zivilisierten Staats*, 25–60.

51 Anghie, "Vitoria and the Colonial Origins of International Law," 332.

the parameters of such development, they could never hope to emancipate themselves from this system. Through this argument, the Spanish incursion became permanent, and the inhabitants of the Americas could always be ruled over.⁵² It is this concept of 'unequal sovereignty', that, according to Anghie, continued and continues to dominate the theory and practice of international law. The language of justification changed, Anghie argued, but Vitoria's arguments were the basis of the 'civilizing mission' and the 'sacred trust', in which the ideas of Vitoria would be reflected several hundred years later.⁵³

The connections Anghie and Scott drew between Vitoria and the development of international law are essentially the same, except with reversed political aims. Whereas Scott tried to justify the mandate system and the civilizational claims of the League of Nations through a political reading of Vitoria, Anghie inverted this reading, seeking to prove that the (now considered) imperialist idea of the 'sacred trust' had its roots with the alleged founder of international law. The real historical problems with this argument remained untouched, and both cases are, in Schmitt's language, 'tragische Möglichkeit heterogener Verwertung'.⁵⁴ To read Vitoria as the predecessor of the 'sacred trust', as Schmitt and Nussbaum rightly recognized in the 1950s, it was necessary to attribute to Vitoria a philosophy of history he could not possibly have understood. The historical connections between Vitoria's concepts and those employed in nineteenth and early twentieth century international law are close to non-existent, and have consequently to be, as Georg Cavallar has argued: 'suggested rather than demonstrated'.⁵⁵

Unfortunately, Anghie's historical interpretation has been immensely successful, especially with those seeking to ground the concept of civilization in a long imperial history, supplying them with an incredibly potent starting point. This project is most pronounced in the work of Brett Bowden, whose many articles and book *The Empire of Civilization* explicitly rely on Anghie's argument.⁵⁶ Bowden seeks to use Anghie's work to argue that something like a concept of civilization had already been formulated by Francisco de Vitoria. Carefully avoiding Scott's direct attribution of the idea of civilization to Vitoria, Bowden has merely suggests that Vitoria had a concept of civilization without saying that he did. Consequently, he variously speaks of 'earliest expressions of the idea of

52 Ibid., 330–331.

53 Ibid., 331–333.

54 'tragic possibility of heterogeneous use'

55 Georg Cavallar, "Vitoria, Grotius, Pufendorf, Wolff and Vattel: Accomplices of European Colonialism and Exploitation or True Cosmopolitans?," *Journal of the History of International Law* 10 (2008): 183.

56 Brett Bowden, *The Empire of Civilization: The Evolution of an Imperial Idea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

the “burden of civilization”, a 'reference to something akin to a standard of civilization', and perhaps most remarkably, about the fact that Vitoria 'has a major impact in shaping the soon-to-be legally entrenched, European “standard of civilization”'.⁵⁷ It might be possible to call a vague connection a 'major impact', but that the word 'soon' should come to represent 350 years is astonishing. As in Scott's case, these formulations raise the question of ulterior motive, and why Bowden is so intent on proving a connection when there seemingly is none. It is indeed plausible that what Bowden is producing is what Schmitt would have called an 'Akt politischer Mythenbildung'.⁵⁸ To prove that the concept civilization is an imperial one, and is embedded in the history of international law, Bowden (relying on Anghie's work) manipulates the historical figure of Vitoria to serve particular political aims. Such assertions do not just misrepresent Vitoria's arguments, they also obscure the history of the concept of civilization that, in the form Bowden imagines, only starts in the mid-eighteenth century.⁵⁹

The Invention of Civilization in the Eighteenth Century

A recognizably modern meaning only came to be attributed to the term civilization in the mid-eighteenth century. When exactly, why, where, and by whom, is still a matter of discussion. In most European countries, the word civilization had a juridical meaning before it started to be used as a sociological term.⁶⁰ Within a legal context, it simply meant turning a procedure of criminal law into a civil one. Around 1750, a new meaning, describing social development through time, was added to the word, but the historical circumstances under which this happened are not entirely clear. In *Les transformations de la langue française de 1710 à 1789*, Gohin argued that the word had first been used by Turgot in the early 1750s.⁶¹ Judging from Turgot's interests and ideas, it was an plausible explanation, and it was fitting that such a famed word should have its origins with him. Yet, this illustrious patronage was soon disputed by Lucien Febvre in his 1930 *Civilisation. l'évolution d'un mot et d'un groupe d'idées*, in which the latter argued that Turgot's text, where Gohin had suspected the first use of civilization, had been tampered with posthumously, and that Turgot himself had never used the word.⁶² Instead, he thought it plausible that Boulanger, and more

57 Ibid., 115; Brett Bowden, “The Colonial Origins of International Law. European Expansion and the Classical Standard of Civilization,” *Journal of the History of International Law* 7 7, no. 1 (2005): 9.

58 'act of political myth making'.

59 For a slightly different argument, reaching the same conclusions, see Pauka, *Begriffsgeschichte des zivilisierten Staats*, 25–48.

60 Jean Starobinski, “The Word Civilization,” in *Blessings in Disguise; Or, the Morality of Evil* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 1.

61 Lucien Febvre, “Civilisation: l'évolution d'un mot et d'un groupe d'idées,” in *Civilisation. Le mot et l'idée*, ed. Lucien Febvre et al. (Paris: La Renaissance du livre, 1930), 13. Ibid.

62 Febvre, “Civilisation,” 14; Joachim Moras, *Ursprung und Entwicklung des Begriffs der Zivilisation in Frankreich (1756-1830)* (Hamburg: Seminar für romanische Sprachen und Kultur, 1930), 1–4. 'Febvre, “Civilisation,” 14; Moras, *Zivilisation*, 1–4.

specifically his *L'Antiquité dévoilée de ses usages*, were the origin of the first printed instance.⁶³ Nonetheless, he seems not to have been too content with this finding, as he explained: 'je souhaite, naturellement, que d'autres chercheurs, plus heureux, déposèrent Boulanger'.⁶⁴ Febvre's wish was granted merely a year later with Joachim Moras' discovery that the word had previously been used in the *Ami des Hommes: ou Traité de la population* by the elder Marquis de Mirabeau, a whole ten years earlier, in 1756.⁶⁵

This attribution has since gained the greatest following, although it is not undisputed.⁶⁶ What convinced many of Moras' account was that he provided both the evidence and an explanation as to why he thought Mirabeau responsible. As Moras argued, the father of the later revolutionary was famed for having created many new words, and civilization was just one product of his prolific creativity.⁶⁷ Some, such as Fernand Braudel and following him, Niall Ferguson, have nonetheless insisted on previous interpretations, namely that Turgot should be seen as the originator of the concept.⁶⁸ Others have wrongly claimed that earlier works by Rousseau already contain the word civilization.⁶⁹ More recently, some authors have again tried to re-attribute the word. Jan Ifversen, in an article seeking to establish the usefulness of electronic databases for conceptual research, argued that these could prove that civilization was first used by Montesquieu in 1721.⁷⁰ Ironically, this assertion ended up demonstrating that electronic databases should be treated with caution, as the instance Ifversen 'found' was most likely a footnote from a much later edition of Montesquieu's text added to the original.⁷¹

Most remarkably in recent years, Javier Fernandez Sebastian has argued that the word civilization was in fact first used in Spanish and not in French, a whole two years before the Marquis de Mirabeau, in 1754.⁷² These findings raise new questions about the spread of the word civilization.

63 Febvre, "Civilisation," 15.

64 Ibid., 16. 'I naturally hope that other, luckier researchers dispossess Boulanger'

65 Moras, *Zivilisation*, 5.

66 Bruce Mazlish, *Civilization and Its Contents* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004); Starobinski, "The Word Civilization"; Émile Benveniste, "Civilisation. Contribution à l'histoire du mot," in *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, vol. 1 (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), 336–45.

67 Moras, *Zivilisation*, 30–49.

68 Fernand Braudel, *Grammaire des Civilisations* (Paris: Arthaud, 1987); Niall Ferguson, *Civilization: The West and the Rest* (London: Penguin, 2011).

69 Levin, *Mill on Civilization and Barbarism*, 10; for a refutation of such arguments already in 1941 see Beard and Beard, *The American Spirit*, 71.

70 Jan Ifversen, "About Key Concepts and How to Study Them," *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 6, no. 1 (2011): 84.

71 This edition, for example, contains the word civilization in an explanatory footnote, but not in the original Montesquieu, *Considerations Sur Les Causes de La Grandeur Des Romains et de Leur Decadence* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1968).

72 Javier Fernández Sebastián, "The Concept of Civilization in Spain, 1754-2005: From Progress to Identity,"

Until then, it had widely been assumed that the word civilization first emerged simultaneously in Britain and France, in a case of parallel evolution, but spread from France to the rest of Europe, as Emile Benveniste first argued.⁷³ At least one of these assertions has been made unlikely by Sebastian's recent arguments. Either we are looking at a peculiar case of parallel evolution in three separate countries, or the idea that the word spread from France to the rest of Europe is untenable. Sebastian's assertion that the word spread within Spain not as a 'homegrown product', but as a French concept, makes the first possibility more likely, but the idea that the word should have been invented separately in three different instances is still rather mysterious and certainly worthy of more thorough investigation.⁷⁴

Whether coined in Spain, France, or Britain, the usefulness of the term civilization to describe sociological developments and their outcome was obvious to most, and the concept of civilization became embedded in various theories of progress.⁷⁵ Throughout the eighteenth century, Aristotelian models of the world slowly lost their significance, and more contemporary means of explanation started to gain ground, amongst them the idea of the gradual progress of humanity.⁷⁶ Some, like the renowned historian of historiography, Mamigliano, have even gone so far as to assert that with the rise of theories of progress, 'the idea of civilization became the main theme of history'.⁷⁷ Itself a highly controversial concept, theories of progress took a number of different forms.⁷⁸ Most important amongst them was the idea that throughout its history, humanity had proceeded through more or less clearly defined stages.⁷⁹ In France, Turgot has once again been associated with this process, but the philosophers who, arguably, perfected it were Scottish.⁸⁰

The stages of development the philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment outlined corresponded to the means of subsistence of different societies. To arrive at the most refined type of society the Scots identified, their own commercial society, humanity had had to go through stages of hunting, pastoralism, and agriculture. It was the word civilization that connected these various stages and,

Contributions to the History of Concepts 4, no. 1 (2008): 84.

73 Benveniste, "Civilisation," 345.

74 Fernández Sebastián, "The Concept of Civilization in Spain, 1754-2005," 84–85.

75 Pflaum, "Zivilisation"; Fisch, "Zivilisation, Kultur"; Starobinski, "The Word Civilization."

76 Anthony Pagden, "The 'Defence of Civilization' in Eighteenth-Century Social Theory," *History of the Human Sciences* 1, no. 1 (1988): 35–36.

77 A.D. Momigliano, *Studies in Historiography*, 2nd ed. (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), 21.

78 John Bagnell Bury, *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry Into Its Origin and Growth* (New York: Macmillan, 1987); Robert A. Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1980); David Spadafora, *The Idea of Progress in Eighteenth Century Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

79 H.M. Hopfl, "From Savage to Scotsman: Conjectural History in the Scottish Enlightenment," *Journal of British Studies* 17, no. 2 (1978): 19–40.

80 Michael Heffernan, "On Geography and Progress: Turgot's Plan D'un Ouvrage Sur La Géographie Politique (1751) and the Origins of Modern Progressive Thought," *Political Geography* 13, no. 4 (1994): 328–43.

broadly speaking, fulfilled two functions within these models: it was both the process itself as well as its final result.⁸¹ Adam Ferguson, for example, frequently used it in his *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, sometimes to denote a stage: 'This progress in the case of man is continued to a greater extent than in any other animal. Not only the individual advances from infancy to manhood, but the species itself from rudeness to civilization', but equally often to describe the process itself, 'the progress of civilization' as a whole.⁸² The rhetoric of civilization became the staple of those who sought to criticize Rousseau's negative interpretations of contemporary civil society, and the results of such civilizational theorizing were seen as proof of his mistakes, and as a defence of the current – last – stage of civilization more broadly.⁸³ Despite the fact that many of these theories are often associated with a purely naïve and idealist description of the progress of the world, many of the Enlightenment philosophers who used the concept were ultimately aware of its limitations.⁸⁴ As Ferguson himself put it:

Our method, notwithstanding, too frequently, is to rest the whole on conjecture; to impute every advantage of our nature to those arts which we ourselves possess; and to imagine; that a mere negation of all our virtues is a sufficient description of man in his original state. We are ourselves the supposed standard of politeness and civilization; and where our own features do not appear, we apprehend, that there is nothing that deserves to be known.⁸⁵

Despite such cautious argument, civilization soon became the centre of one of the largest philosophical debates of the late eighteenth century, which revolved around whether, and how, Russia could advance to that last stage of civilization philosophers had outlined as the most desirable.⁸⁶ Following the agenda of Peter I to turn Russia into a more European country, Catherine II heavily relied on Enlightenment philosophers to supply her with the basis for such an undertaking. What these debates ultimately revealed was the immense divergence of opinions

81 see Starobinski, "The Word Civilization."

82 Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 1767, 2, 63.

83 see Pagden, "The Defence of Civilization."

84 Ryu Susato, "Hume's Oscillating Civilization Theory," *History of European Ideas* 32, no. 3 (2006): 263–77.

85 Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 111.

86 Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994); Reto Peter Speck, "The History and Politics of Civilisation: The Debate about Russia in French and German Historical Scholarship from Voltaire to Herder" (PhD diss., Queen Mary, University of London, 2010); Inna Gorbatov, *Catherine the Great and the French Philosophers of the Enlightenment: Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot and Grimm* (Bethesda: Academica Press, LLC, 2006); Georges Dulac, "Quelques Exemples de Transferts Europeens Du Concept de 'Civilisation,'" in *Les Equivocques de La Civilisation* (Seyssel: Editions Champ Vallon, 2007), 106–35; Starobinski, "The Word Civilization."

amongst them.⁸⁷ Catherine's hopes that her plans to civilize Russia would find a large European following were disappointed. Almost everyone was sceptical, apart from Voltaire, who argued that while Europe had gone through the history of civilization very slowly, Russia could achieve the same results much sooner.⁸⁸ Some remained on the fence about their final judgement on Russia's reforms, whereas others, like Diderot, who had been invited to Russia by Catherine herself, started out as supporters of her political agenda, but ended up disappointedly rejecting the reforms themselves, and finally even their underlying ideas.⁸⁹ Diderot thereby joined those, who, like Rousseau, had from the outset been downright hostile to the idea of Russian civilization.⁹⁰ Already in the year 1762, when Catherine ascended to the throne, Rousseau had argued in the *Contrat Social* that any project of civilization in Russia had to fail, because it would be an attempt to turn Russians into something they were not. Instead of imitating the English or the Germans and their civilization, Russia's leaders should instead focus on 'making Russians', whose development would not necessarily follow prescribed philosophical stages.⁹¹

It is not in the debates about Russia, but about Western European political development that we should look for the first properly political use of civilization. Already in the first mention of civilization in France, the word was attributed at least two meanings. In his *Ami des Hommes*, the Marquis de Mirabeau had spoken not only about civilization as such, but also about false civilization, directly connecting his positive idea of civilization to religion.⁹² Mirabeau was one of the few physiocrats with a positive stance towards religion and the church, something that also separated him from the more radically anti-religious *Encyclopédistes* to whom they were intellectually close.⁹³ As Moras and Binoche have argued, Mirabeau's use of civilization immediately became part of a larger ideological battle.⁹⁴ The first dictionary to take note of Mirabeau's specific use of the word civilization was a Jesuit publication, the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* which explained: 'L'ami des hommes a employé ce mot pour *sociabilité*. Voyez ce mot. La religion est sans contredit le premier et le plus utile frein de l'humanité; c'est le premier ressort de la civilisation. Elle nous prêche, et nous rappelle sans cesse la confraternité, adoucit notre coeur'.⁹⁵

87 Dieter Groh, *Russland und Europa: Ein Beitrag zur europäischen Geistesgeschichte*, vol. 3, POLITICA (Neuwied: Hermann Luchterhand Verlag, 1961), 17–65.

88 Speck, "The History and Politics of Civilisation," 21–45; Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 195–234.

89 Speck, "The History and Politics of Civilisation," 64–110; G. Goggi, "Diderot et le concept de civilisation," *Dix-huitième siècle*, no. 29 (1997): 353–73.

90 see Goggi, "Diderot et le concept de civilisation."

91 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Du contrat social* (Paris: Mouton et Pinpare, 1797), 102. 'Social Contract'

92 Moras, *Zivilisation*, 30–49; Catherine Larrere, "Mirabeau et les physiocrates: l'origine agrarienne de la civilisation," in *Les Equivoques de la civilisation* (Seysssel: Editions Champ Vallon, 2007), 83–104.

93 Moras, *Zivilisation*, 5; Ronald L. Meek, *Economics of Physiocracy* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2003), 33.

94 Moras, *Zivilisation*.

95 Bertrand Binoche, "Introduction," in *Les Equivoques de La Civilisation* (Seysssel: Éditions Champ Vallon,

To understand the polemical direction of this entry, it is important to know that the popular concept of *sociabilité* had been defined without reference to religion by the *Encyclopédistes*. The Jesuit dictionary entry set out to prove was that one of the most influential philosophers of the time agreed with their positions.⁹⁶

Through its connection to these underlying political battles between religious conservatives and those seeking to explain historical developments without reference to religion, civilization automatically became an object of ideological dispute that intensified with the outbreak of the French Revolution. Although opinions differed about the exact status of the term civilization during the revolutionary period, there is no dispute that it was used on both sides of the argument: in support of the *ancien régime*, like the Jesuits, as well as by those who advocated a new revolutionary program many associated with some of the *Encyclopédistes*.⁹⁷ While the supporters of the revolution claimed that it was another stage in the development of civilization, its opponents, like Edmund Burke, used the concept of civilization to defend the existing order. They similarly perceived it as having been the product of civilizational development, albeit an organic instead of a philosophical one. In his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Burke blamed the 'barbarous metaphysics', which had replaced Christianity in the minds of the revolutionaries – who he compared to savages – for what he saw as excess and a danger to civilization.⁹⁸ As he put it:

Nothing is more certain, than that our manners, our civilization, and all the good things which are connected with manners and with civilization have, in this European world of ours, depended for ages upon two principles and were, indeed, the result of both combined: I mean the spirit of a gentleman and the spirit of religion.⁹⁹

In a debate that quickly gained international dimensions, Burke had to defend his conservative viewpoints on several fronts. Primarily against the propagandists of the revolution in France, like Garat, the minister for justice in the early 1790s who argued that the results of the revolution were 'dernier fruit de la nature humaine et de la civilisation perfectionnée', but in this international debate

2007), 12. 'Trevoux Dictionary'. The "ami des hommes" has used this word for sociability. See that word. Religion is undoubtedly the first and most useful brake of humanity; this is the first spring of civilization. It preaches to us and constantly reminds us of our brotherhood and softens our heart.'

96 Moras, *Zivilisation*, 5; Binoche, "Introduction," 12.

97 Moras, *Zivilisation*; Starobinski, "The Word Civilization."

98 Luke Gibbons, "'Subtilized into Savages': Edmund Burke, Progress, and Primitivism," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 100, no. 1 (2001): 83–109.

99 Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France: And on the Proceedings in Certain Societies in London Relative to That Event. In a Letter Intended to Have Been Sent to a Gentleman in Paris. By the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, 5th ed. (London: J. Dodsley, 1790), 117; Starobinski, "The Word Civilization."

Burke was also attacked on the other side of the Atlantic.¹⁰⁰ As Thomas Paine asserted: 'All the European governments (France now excepted) are constructed not on the principles of universal civilization, but on the reverse of it', and that civilisation could only ever be accomplished by 'a revolution in the system of government'.¹⁰¹ The repercussions of this discussion could be felt all over Europe, even in provincial Thuringia, where Paine's book was reviewed by the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* which argued that, rigorously interpreted, Paine's argument would question civilization in its entirety.¹⁰² The editors of the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* were undoubtedly aware that they were participating in a larger, almost world-wide struggle about the meaning of civilization. It was an argument often repeated by those treating the subject around the same time, like the royalist Jacques Mallet du Pan who argued in his *Considérations sur la nature de la révolution de France et sur les causes qui en prolongent leur durée*: 'Chaque Européen est aujourd'hui partie dans ce dernier combat de la civilisation.'¹⁰³

The constant use of civilization on all sides of the political spectrum continued, and possibly even increased as the dust settled after the initial phases of the French Revolution, slowly spreading amongst both conservative and more progressive elements of the population. No matter on which side one stood at the cusp of the nineteenth century, one had to defend civilization. As Fourier noted in 1808, civilization had become: 'l'idole de tous les partis philosophiques et dans laquelle on croit voir le terme de la perfection.'¹⁰⁴ The popularity of the concept amongst the Saint-Simonians, Comte and other progressive parties has been amply described.¹⁰⁵ But in the continuation of a battle that had already been drawn up before the Revolution, conservatives used it equally heavily and even integrated ideas such as the natural progress of society into their arguments. The famed conservative Bonald worried in his *Théorie du pouvoir politique et religieux*, published in 1796, that the revolution could be the first step of de-generation, after a long process of civilization. Naturally, he suspected that France, previously leading in civilization, would be the first victim of this historic reversal: 'La France [...] est l'ainée des sociétés de l'Europe. Ce souvenir arrache une réflexion

100 Dominique-Joseph Garat, *Considérations sur la révolution française et sur la conjuration des puissances de l'Europe contre la liberté & contre les droits des hommes ou eamen de la proclamation des gouverneurs des pays-bas* (Paris: Buisson, 1792). 'the last fruit of human nature and of perfected civilization'

101 Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man, Being an Answer to Mr. Burke's Attack on the French Revolution*, vol. 1 (London: J. Parsons, 1792), 7, 39.

102 *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, October 18, 1792, 274 edition, sec. Staatswissenschaften, 122.

103 Jacques Mallet du Pan, *Considerations sur la nature de la révolution de France et sur les causes qui en prolongent leur durée* (London: Emm. Flon, 1793), v. 'Considerations on the nature of the Revolution in France and the causes that prolong it'. 'Every European is today party to this last battle of civilization.'

104 Moras, *Zivilisation*, 62.

105 Walter M. Simon, "History for Utopia: Saint-Simon and the Idea of Progress," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 17, no. 3 (1956): 311–31; Keith Taylor, *Political Ideas of the Utopian Socialists* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013); Osama Abi-Mershed, *Apostles of Modernity: Saint-Simonians and the Civilizing Mission in Algeria* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010).

douloureuse: le retour à la barbarie suivrait-il le même ordre que la civilisation a suivi, et la société qui s'est formée la première, serait-elle la première à se dissoudre?¹⁰⁶ Jacques Necker, Louis XIV last finance minister, argued that this had already taken place:

Il semble en y pensant que la Révolution Française ait parcouru dans son rapide cours le cercle entier du Monde moral car ayant eu pour point de départ l'état de civilisation dans tous ses raffinements et dans tous ses abus ayant ensuite traversé sous l'Assemblée Constituante le pays des chimères et des abstractions elle est arrivée, sous les Tyrans de la Convention Nationale, à l'extrême au dernier période des idées brutales et des conceptions féroces.¹⁰⁷

Similarly, de Maistre argued that through the revolution, France had rid itself of the civilizing aspects of previous centuries and, under the banners of freedom and equality, the beastly side of humanity, and its barbarism had once again been revealed.¹⁰⁸ Logically, he placed his hopes for the return of true civilization in the Pope, who he described as 'le chef naturel, le promoteur le plus puissant, le grand Démiurge de la civilisation', and hoped would once again repress the animalistic forces of revolution.¹⁰⁹ This distinction between two types of civilizational propaganda, one supporting the traditional (religious) order and the other supporting the ideas of civilization associated with the revolution existed, as McMahon has pointed out, not just throughout the nineteenth, but even longer. Conservative thinkers in the twentieth century, like Gustave Gautherot, still identified the Revolution as the main crack in European history.¹¹⁰ A crack that had inaugurated, as he put it, the: 'gigantic drama that continues in the world between Christian civilization and the counter-civilization issued from *Encyclopédisme*.¹¹¹ As I will argue, over the late nineteenth

106 Louis-Auguste Bonald, *Théorie Du Pouvoir Politique et Religieux Dans La Société Civile Démontrée par le raisonnement et par l'histoire suivie du divorce, Considéré Au XIX Siècle Relativement a L'état Domestique et a L'état Public de Société* (Paris: Union Generale D'editions, 1965), 47. 'Theory of Religious and Political Power'. 'France is the eldest of the societies of Europe. Yet, to remind oneself of this evokes a painful thought: could the return to barbarism follow the same order as the rise of civilization and would the society that formed first also be the first to dissolve?'

107 Jacques Necker, *De la revolution francaise.*, vol. 2 (Paris: J. Drissonnier, 1797), 237. 'Thinking about it, it seems as if the French revolution has in its rapid course covered the whole circle of the moral world; it had as a starting point the state of civilization with its refinements and its downsides but then after crossing, under the national assembly, the land of fantasy and abstractions, it arrived, under the tyrants of the National Convention at a final episode of brutal ideas and savage conceptions.'

108 Graeme Garrard, "Joseph de Maistre's Civilization and Its Discontents," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 47, no. 3 (1996): 429–46.

109 Joseph de Maistre, *Du pape*, vol. 2 (Lyon: Rusand, 1819), 425; Groh, *Russland und Europa: Ein Beitrag zur europaischen Geistesgeschichte*, 3:101–113. 'The natural leader, the great advocate, the demiurge of civilization'.

110 Darrin M. McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 192–203.

111 *Ibid.*, 194.

century, many more debates about civilization would develop, but it is important to remember that all of them, in one way or another, have their origins in the propaganda wars surrounding the French Revolution.

The Nineteenth Century, Vulgarisation, Guizot, and Mill

While civilization had been a philosophical concept in use for almost half a century by 1800, its deployment in public discourse increased dramatically over the next few decades. This spike in civilizational language after the revolution, already suspected by scholars like Moras, has become traceable through modern means. The statistics supplied by *googlebooks' ngramviewer* make it possible to graph the development of the use of certain words in books and other published sources. In French, German, and English, the use of civilization spread widely over the first third of the nineteenth century, as the following graphs demonstrate. Using the same criteria, the spike is most pronounced in English, and most even in French, but all three languages were clearly seeing the same phenomenon.

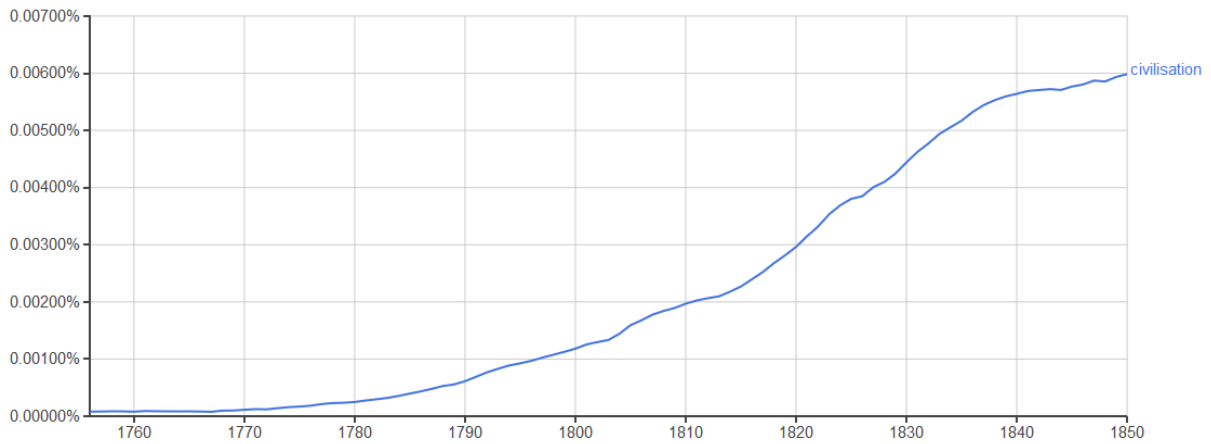
1. Civilisation – English, from 1756 to 1850¹¹²



2. Civilisation – French, from 1756 to 1850¹¹³

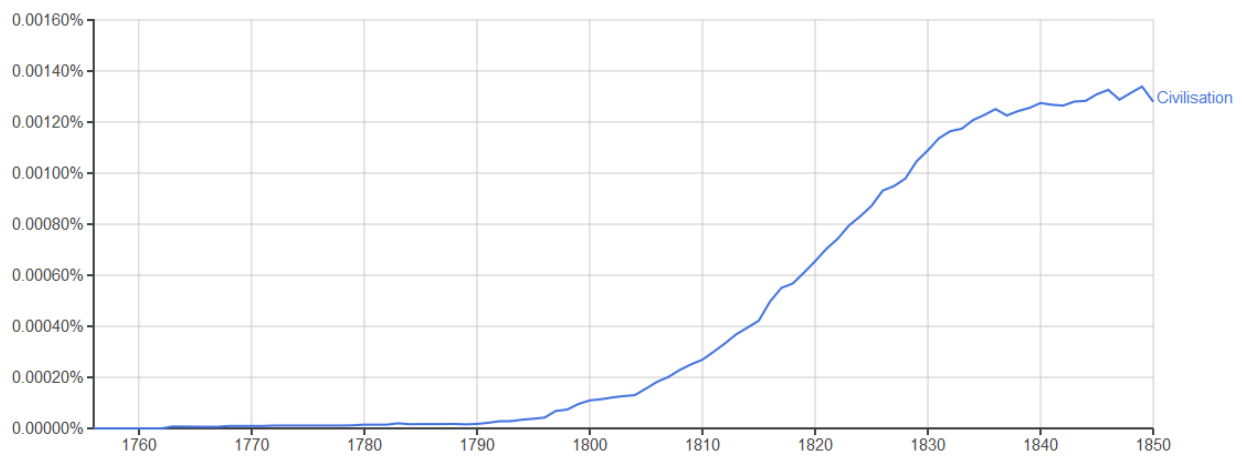
- 112 “Civilization - English,” *Ngram Viewer*, June 6, 2015, https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=civilisation&year_start=1756&year_end=1850&corpus=15&smoothing=10&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2Ccivilisation%3B%2Cc0.
- 113 “Civilization - French,” *Ngram Viewer*, June 6, 2015, https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=civilisation&year_start=1756&year_end=1850&corpus=19&smoothing=10&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2Ccivilisation%3B%2Cc0.

Graph these comma-separated phrases: case-insensitive
 between and from the corpus with smoothing of



3. Civilisation – German, from 1756 to 1850¹¹⁴

Graph these comma-separated phrases: case-insensitive
 between and from the corpus with smoothing of



115

This popular explosion of civilizational language has often been associated with Napoleon. Some, like Osterhammel, have described his military actions as an almost paradigmatic civilizing mission

114 “Civilization - German,” *Ngram Viewer*, June 6, 2015, https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=Civilisation&year_start=1756&year_end=1850&corpus=20&smoothing=10&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2CCivilisation%3B%2Cc0.

115 “Civilization - German,” *Ngram Viewer*, June 6, 2015, https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=Civilisation&year_start=1756&year_end=1850&corpus=20&smoothing=10&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2CCivilisation%3B%2Cc0.

and such an attribution does appear logical given the preceding history of the word civilization.¹¹⁶ It was, in fact, with Napoleon's opponents that civilization entered the politics of the nineteenth century.¹¹⁷ In 1814, the famed liberal Benjamin Constant noted that the 'esprit de conquête et l'usurpation' that had reigned in France during Napoleon's time in power was not compatible with 'la civilisation actuelle'.¹¹⁸ The rising tide of nineteenth century liberalism that Constant anticipated was also felt by those not classically associated with it, and many started to refer to the inevitability of further civilizational development. Just a year after Constant's publication, a subcommittee (containing amongst others Wellington and Humboldt) of the Congress of Vienna, declared the slave trade 'as repugnant to the principles of humanity and universal morality'.¹¹⁹ While, as the document's English version asserted, the slave trade's character had been known through all ages by 'just and enlightened men', it was now 'the public voice, in all civilized countries' that 'calls aloud for its prompt suppression'.¹²⁰ Given the later history of the restoration, this declaration is a remarkable document, as it not only justified political action through popular appeal, but also used the expression 'civilized state' for the first time.¹²¹ By the second decade of the nineteenth century, therefore, the idea of the civilized state, yielding to the demands of its increasingly liberal population, was for the first time formally enshrined in an international treaty. As I will show in the next chapter, this trend continued and the concept of civilization owes a large part of its success to its connection with the burgeoning politics of liberalism.

While the use of civilization had undoubtedly already been popularized in the early years of the nineteenth century, it was the curious character of French liberalism in the 1820s and 1830s that gave it political and intellectual clout on a more international level. Throughout the early nineteenth century, liberals had had to wrestle with the difficult inheritance of the French Revolution.¹²² On the one hand, they were supportive of its early principles and on the other, repelled by its later excesses.

116 Jürgen Osterhammel, *Europe, the "West" and the Civilizing Mission* (London: The German Historical Institute London, 2006), 15.

117 Stuart Woolf, "French Civilization and Ethnicity in the Napoleonic Empire," *Past & Present* 124 (1989): 96–120.

118 Benjamin de Constant de Rebecque, *De l'esprit de conquête et de l'usurpation, dans leurs rapports avec la civilisation européenne. - Londres, J. Murray 1814* (London: J. Murray, 1814); For Constant's liberalism see Helena Rosenblatt, *Liberal Values. Benjamin Constant and Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). 'the spirit of conquest and usurpation'. 'Current civilization'.

119 Thomas Curson Hansard, ed., *The Parliamentary Debates from the Year 1803 to the Present Time*, vol. 23 (London: T.C. Hansard, 1816), 200.

120 *Ibid.*, 23:199.

121 Pauka, *Begriffsgeschichte des zivilisierten Staats*, 104.

122 Laurence Jacobs, "'Le Moment Libéral': The Distinctive Character of Restoration Liberalism," *The Historical Journal* 31, no. 02 (1988): 479–91; Cheryl B. Welch, "Une Société Civilisée et Religieuse: Postrevolutionary French Liberalism and the Character of Europe," *The Tocqueville Review/La Revue Tocqueville* 35, no. 1 (2014): 117–38.

As they slowly pushed the Bourbon restoration out of power, they were in deep need of a clearer definition of the relationship between their movement and the popular concept of civilization.¹²³ The first major electoral victory of 1827 brought their ideological leaders back into the public sphere, and it is no surprise that the most important of them should celebrate his return to the Sorbonne with a series of lectures dedicated to *L'Histoire de Civilisation en Europe*.¹²⁴ Guizot's course, entirely concerned with civilization, would simultaneously be a historical as well as an ideological justification for the *juste milieu* he was propagating. For this reason, he attempted to eliminate any ideological doubt with which the word civilization could still be associated, and to downplay the difficult inheritance of previous civilizational debates associated with the Revolution. As Guizot asserted, civilization was merely a fact: 'Je dis du fait Messieurs et je le dis à dessein: la civilisation est un fait comme un autre, fait susceptible, comme tout autre, d'être étudié, décrit, raconté.'¹²⁵

While the rise of civilization could not be disputed, Guizot argued, it was through the opposition of various forces that it was originally set in motion. Civilization, he asserted, had been created through a clash between two opposing forces that he associated with worldly and spiritual power. In Guizot's description, the English Revolution became 'le premier choc des deux grands faits auxquels est venue aboutir, dans le cours du seizième siècle, toute la civilisation de l'Europe primitive, la monarchie pure d'un côté et le libre examen de l'autre'.¹²⁶ The rest of Europe, as Guizot painstakingly described it, would have to wait two centuries for a similar event that would come in the form of the French Revolution. In it, the spirit of free enquiry and the spirit of absolute monarchy would once again clash. Both were responsible for the advance of civilization and both had its excesses. Guizot brilliantly summed up his simultaneous admiration and disdain for the type of thinking he thought responsible for the French Revolution and its conception of civilization:

je me hâterais de dire que le dix-huitième siècle me paraît un des plus grands siècles de l'histoire, celui peut être, qui a rendu à l'humanité les plus grands services qui lui a fait faire le plus de progrès et les progrès les plus généraux; appelé à prononcer dans sa cause comme

123 Constant de Rebecque, *De l'esprit de conquête et de l'usurpation, dans leurs rapports avec la civilisation européenne*. - Londres, J. Murray 1814.

124 François Guizot, *Cours d'histoire moderne: histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe depuis la chute de l'empire romain jusqu'à la révolution française* (Paris: Pichon et Didier, 1828). 'The History of Civilization in Europe'.

125 François Guizot, *Cours d'histoire moderne: histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe depuis la chute de l'empire romain jusqu'à la révolution française* (Paris: Pichon et Didier, 1828), 6–8. 'The happy medium'. 'I speak of a fact, Gentlemen, and I say it on purpose, civilization is a fact like any others, a delicate fact, to be studied, described, and to be narrated.'

126 François Pierre Guillaume Guizot, *Histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe* (Bruxelles: Langlet et Comp., 1838), 357. 'the first great crash of the two principles towards which, in the course of the sixteenth century, the civilization of primitive Europe tended. On the one side pure monarchy and on the other free inquiry'.

ministère public, si je puis me servir de cette expression, c'est en sa faveur que je donnerais mes conclusions. Il n'en est pas moins vrai que le pouvoir absolu, que l'esprit humain a exercé, à cette époque, l'a corrompu, qu'il a pris les faits contemporains, les opinions différentes, de celles qui dominaient, dans un dédain, dans une aversion illégitime; aversion qui l'a conduit à l'erreur et à la tyrannie.¹²⁷

In this rhetoric of reconciliation Guizot both defended the civilization of the *ancien régime* – and its religious grounding – as well as the ideas of the Enlightenment. He thereby attempted to fuse the two different conceptions of civilization into one, the civilization that was no more disputed, and was simply a fact.¹²⁸

One should be careful neither to overstate the novelty of Guizot's claims and to underestimate the criticism made of his work, nor to assume that his explanation of civilization completely superseded all previous discourse. Nevertheless, Guizot's writings had an enormous impact on liberal European political and social thought. R.A. Lochore has referred to a time 'before and after Guizot' and noted that during the mid-nineteenth century 'whenever a writer asks, what civilization is, his first care is to make a judgement, usually respectful, of Guizot's conception of it.'¹²⁹ Apart from France, where other books on civilization took their cues from Guizot, his influence in the latter parts of the nineteenth century stretched not only all over Europe, but even into Japan, where his work would form one of the bases of Fukuzawa Yukichi's *Outline of a Theory of Civilization*.¹³⁰ European writers and thinkers relied most heavily on Guizot. While some dedicated their works directly to him, others, like John Stuart Mill, were brought to the subject of civilization through Guizot, an influence they readily acknowledged.¹³¹ Over the next decades, in Britain as well as in the German-speaking countries, Guizot's lectures on civilization became an important ideological basis for liberal arguments, and his thoughts and ideas were extended by other political thinkers.

127 François Pierre Guillaume Guizot, *Histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe* (Bruxelles: Langlet et Comp., 1838), 385. 'I would hasten to say that the eighteenth century seems to me one of the greatest centuries of history, the one that, maybe, has rendered it the greatest services and has made it progress furthest and in the most general way. If I were called to pass judgement upon its ministry (if I may use such an expression), it would be in its favour. It is nonetheless also true that the absolute power of the human spirit expressed in this era was what corrupted it, and that it held an illegitimate aversion to the existing order of things, and to all opinions other than the dominating ones - an aversion that led to terror and tyranny.'

128 Cheryl B. Welch, "Une Société Civilisée et Religieuse: Postrevolutionary French Liberalism and the Character of Europe," *The Tocqueville Review/La Revue Tocqueville* 35, no. 1 (2014): 117–38.

129 R.A. Lochore, *History of the Idea of Civilization in France (1830-1870)* (Bonn: Roehrscheid, 1935), 9.

130 Eusèbe Salverte, *De la civilisation: Venise, Raguse* (Paris: Louis Rosier, 1835); see Albert M. Craig, *Civilization and Enlightenment: The Early Thought of Fukuzawa Yukichi* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

131 Louis Raymond Véricour, *Historical Analysis of Christian Civilisation* (London: John Chapman, 1850), VII; for Guizot's influence on Mill see Varouxakis G., "Guizot's Historical Works and J.S. Mill's Reception of Tocqueville," *History of Political Thought* 20, no. 2 (1999): 292–312.

In the case of Mill, the result of a close reading of Guizot's writings was a short essay entitled simply: 'Civilization'.¹³² Mill relied directly on Guizot's thinking on civilizational development, but he added his own, slightly sceptical touch. In political terms, Mill and Guizot broadly agreed. A new era of liberal civilization had started and its analysis, Mill (in rhetoric very similar to the one used by the new 'sociology of civilization' in the early 2000s) argued would have to rely on new political language. Civilization, for Mill as for Guizot, was a fact which called for a renewed conception of politics, no longer based on old distinctions. More conservative thinkers and politicians in England, Mill argued, had not understood the changes in society associated with liberalism and this new type of politics, and were stuck with old categories and prejudices:

'Il faut', as M. de Tocqueville has said, 'une science politique nouvelle à un monde tout nouveau.' The whole face of society is reversed---all the natural elements of power have definitively changed places and there are people who talk of standing up for ancient institutions, and the duty of sticking to the British Constitution settled in 1688! What is still more extraordinary, these are the people who accuse others of disregarding variety of circumstances, and imposing their abstract theories upon all states of society without discrimination.¹³³

Similar arguments could be found in the German-speaking countries, where the language of civilization had also become closely associated with ideas of liberalism and, importantly for German debates: nationalism. Where Guizot and Mill saw a new era of civilization developing, German-speakers with national ambitions interpreted the rise of civilization to mean the fulfilment of their national desires. Some, in the style of Guizot, attempted to understand the whole history of civilizational development, whereas others like the liberal educator Adolph Diesterweg published series of pamphlets with titles like *Beiträge zur Lösung der Lebensfrage der Civilisation, einer Aufgabe dieser Zeit*.¹³⁴ At the *Hambacher Fest*, where German nationalists met in 1832, similar slogans could be heard from several speakers who argued that the ruling classes had to give in to the 'Forderungen der Vernunft und Civilisation', which they saw as national politics.¹³⁵ Such voices

132 John Stuart Mill, "Civilization," *The London and Westminster Review* 5, no. 48 (1836): 1–16; Levin, *Mill on Civilization and Barbarism*.

133 Mill, "Civilization," 5. 'We need, as Mister Tocqueville has said, a new political science for a new world'.

134 Johann Schön, *Allgemeine Geschichte und Statistik der Europäischen Civilisation* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichssche Buchhandlung, 1833); Adolph Diesterweg, *Beiträge zur Lösung der Lebensfrage der Civilisation, einer Aufgabe dieser Zeit* (Essen: G.D.Bädeker, 1837). 'Contributions to a solution of the "life-question" of civilization, a task of our time'.

135 Johann Georg August Wirth, *Das Nationalfest der Deutschen zu Hambach* (Neustadt: In Commission bei Philipp

were also prominent amongst the new radicals of German literature at the time, as pamphleteers influenced by the *Jeune Allemagne* were drawing links between the rise of the 'deutsche Nationalität' with the 'Befestigung der Civilisation'.¹³⁶ Civilization to them was a natural process that would include the establishment of Germany as an independent state and the end of dynasticism and the *ancien regime*.

Yet, in German debates too, the conservatives that Mill had criticized existed. They were sceptical about these new civilizational claims, still identified with the French Revolution. Men like Oswaldsohn von der Schley, who in his *Die Civilisation der Gegenwart* drew a clear distinction between on the one hand new ideas of civilization, associated with the revolutionary and nationalist sympathies of 'Germany's youth' and the correct ideas of civilization which could only be found in religion.¹³⁷ As a conservative journal summarized his ideas:

Nachdem der Verfasser nachzuweisen versucht hat, wie wenig seit dem Mittelalter für die wahre Civilisation gewonnen worden, wie nachtheilig auf dieselbe die französische Frivolität, die Revolution und die Herrschaft Napoleons gewirkt habe, stellt er das Zeitbedürfniss auf die niedere, sinnliche Civilisation, und die höhere, sittliche, welche letztere er auch nennt die Theorie und Praxis des Christenthums.¹³⁸

In many ways, the debates about German nationalism and civilization were a reincarnation of the discussions that had surrounded the French Revolution. Liberal nationalists and their ideas of a new civilization opposed older and more conservative notions of civilization. As I will show in the next chapter these debates would continue over the next decades, where ideas of nationalism and civilization started to dominate international discourse.

Christmann, 1832), 69. 'The demands of reason and civilization'.

136 *Die Jeune Allemagne in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Verlag von C.G.Liesching, 1836), 8. 'German nationality'. 'The construction of civilization'.

137 F.W. Oswaldsohn von der Schley, *Die Civilisation der Gegenwart. Eine Ansicht von F.W.Oswaldsohn von der Schley* (Erfurt: Hennings und Hopf, 1839).

138 Johann Friedrich Roehr, ed., "Die Civilisation der Gegenwart. Eine Ansicht von F.W. Oswaldsohn v.d. Schley, Erfurt bei Hennings und Hopf, 1839," in *Kritische Prediger=Bibliothek*, vol. 21 (Neustadt a.d.Orla und Schleiz: Johann Karl Gottfried Wagner, 1840), 87. 'After the author has tried to prove how little has been done for the true civilization since the middle ages, how negative the influence of French frivolity, the Revolution, and the rule of Napoleon has been, he analyses the current time as one of a low and material civilization, which he contrasts with a higher, elevated one, which he identifies as the theory and practice of Christianity.'

Chapter 2. The First War for Civilization

Introduction

At the same time as the use of the word civilization increased in popularity in all quarters, the landscape of international politics changed fundamentally, and slowly allowed for the application of civilization as a justification for intervention and war. In this chapter, I trace the development of the rhetoric of international politics in the run-up to what I will argue was the first official 'war for civilization': the Crimean War. I will show that over the 1830s and 1840s, western European support for Russia, especially amongst liberals, declined – a process that indirectly correlated with an increase in support for Turkey. Slowly but surely, many in Europe, particularly those with sympathies for the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, started to argue against Russia in civilizational terms, namely that Russia was a danger to what they defined as European and even global civilization. Needless to say, others disagreed, the developments leading up to the Crimean War reveal a fascinating landscape of civilizational debate, with individuals and groups taking different positions on Russia, Turkey, and the rise of civilization more broadly. Despite the fact that the increase of the use of the word civilization proved to be a pan-European occurrence, I will demonstrate that the debates within Britain and Prussia differed fundamentally from each other, and that the positions various political commentators took vis-a-vis the word civilization depended largely on their place within the domestic political sphere, and on how they imagined the future of international developments.

As war between Britain, France and Russia became more likely, civilizational debates similarly intensified. While the word civilization was used by almost all participants in these debates, especially in Britain, I argue that those who expressed support for the Muslim Ottoman Empire relied on it to a far greater degree, as it allowed them to sidestep the awkward issue of religion. When war did break out, it was largely justified in the name of civilization, as I show tracing British parliamentary debates. In Prussia, where the war split the political establishment in two, those who supported the Western powers similarly argued for liberal civilization, and even claimed that if Prussia did support the war the old liberal promise of German unification was an actual possibility. Prussian conservatives, meanwhile, were sceptical and argued that the new political rhetoric of civilization was reminiscent of the revolution, and therefore dangerous. Yet some of them, as I will demonstrate, offered surprisingly prophetic interpretations of the changing political landscape, and rightly argued that with the Treaty of Paris, which concluded the hostilities, a new era of civilizational rhetoric had started to dominate the international sphere.

Debating Russian Civilization

The geopolitical origins of the first war fought for civilization lie with the campaign for independence that constituted modern Greece. It was not, as one might think, the admiration for ancient civilizations, driving thousands of western European philhellenes into battle, that inspired the new language of civilization, but instead new, modern ideas associated with the same word.¹ Greek separatists and their western European supporters had been fighting for an independent Greek state for the better part of the 1820s, but this independence could only be secured after the Russian Empire joined the fight.² At exactly the same time as Guizot started his lectures on the history of European civilization, in April 1828, Russian troops, under the command of Peter Wittgenstein, moved into the Ottoman-controlled Danubian principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, officially to protect their Christian populations.³ Despite the fact that the word civilization was not mentioned in the campaign itself, to many the subject Guizot was addressing and these international events were intimately connected.⁴ In all European states, including the German ones, international appeals for Greece in the name of civilization were well received and the outcome of the Greek struggle for independence was widely depicted as an effect of increasing civilization.⁵ As the historian and diplomat Dufour de Pradt paradigmatically argued, in the case of Greece, the rise of civilization became visible: 'unabwendbar ist das Bedürfniss der Civilisation, sie ist die Universalnothwendigkeit'.⁶

The question of how the matter of civilization related to the recent military clashes was discussed as far away as the Grand Duchy of Hesse, where D.A. Lips, professor at the local University of Marburg, dedicated a whole book to the subject: *Der Krieg in Osten, aus dem Gesichtspunkt des Rechts, der Civilisation, und der Politik betrachtet*.⁷ Much like Guizot, Lips thought of civilization

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- 1 Margarita Miliore, "Ambiguous Partisanship. Philhellenism, Turkophilia and Balkanology in 19th Century Britain," *Balkanologie. Revue D'études Pluridisciplinaires* VI, no. 1–2 (2002): 127–53; William St. Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free: The Philhellenes in the War of Independence* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2008); Res, at Kasaba, "The Enlightenment, Greek Civilization and the Ottoman Empire: Reflections on Thomas Hope's Anastasius," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 16, no. 1 (2003): 1–21; Joseph Peysson, *Barbarie et civilisation ou plaidoyer pour les Grecs* (Paris: Librairie Universelle, 1827); Georg Friedrich Kramer, *Griechenland unter der Tyrannei der Türken* (Augsburg: Hamm'sche Buchdruckerei, 1821).
 - 2 Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 7–45.
 - 3 François Guizot, *Cours d'histoire moderne: histoire générale de la civilisation en Europe depuis la chute de l'empire romain jusqu'à la révolution française* (Paris: Pichon et Didier, 1828); Barbara Jelavich, *Russia and the Formation of the Romanian National State, 1821-1878* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 28–29.
 - 4 See for example Leopold Krug, ed., *Porträt von Europa: Gezeichnet von einem alten Staatsmann ausser Diensten und in Druck gegeben* (Leipzig: Verlag von Ch.E. Kollmann, 1831).
 - 5 See specifically Oliver Schulz, *Ein Sieg der zivilisierten Welt? Die Intervention der europäischen Grossmächte im griechischen Unabhängigkeitskrieg (1826-1832)* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2011).
 - 6 Dominique Georges Frédéric de R. de Pradt, *Europa in seinen Verhältnissen zu Griechenland und zu den Stats-Veränderungen in der Türkei. Aus dem französischen* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichssche Buchhandlung, 1827), 50. 'the needs of civilization are irrepressible, it is a universal necessity.'
 - 7 D.A. Lips, *Der Krieg in Osten, aus dem Gesichtspunct des Rechts, der Civilisation und der Politik betrachtet*:

as a progressive force, driven at different points by different states. This time, he argued, it was Russia's turn. A victory over the Ottomans, a fact Lips did not doubt for a moment, would be a victory for civilization, and the end of the Ottoman Empire the beginning of a new duty for civilization and humanity:

Wird es nicht Pflicht werden, auf die Ruinen dieser Barbarei die Fundamente einer neuen durchgebildeten Cultur und Civilisation zu legen und die Herrschaft über diese einem erbärmlichen Despotismus unterliegenden Länder auf Staaten von Cultur und Civilisation zu übertragen, um auch hier den Saamen der Humanität auszustreuen, und um die unglücklichen Bewohner jener Erdstriche von einer absoluten Tyrannei zu befreien?⁸

Russia, Lips argued, was fulfilling the duty of civilization, which liberals like him saw as anti-ottoman national politics and it was doing so not for its own good, but for the progress of humanity as a whole.

Yet, while Lips was certainly not alone with the idea that Russia's intervention was a benevolent one to benefit the Christian inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire, his claims for Russian civilization were questioned by those who doubted Russia's altruistic actions.⁹ Lips' hopes for new national Christian states in the Balkans were indeed soon dashed. The Ottoman Empire did not crumble, the sultan sued for peace, and the Treaty of Adrianople, concluding the Russo-Turkish war, gave the Tsar vast new possessions on the Black Sea.¹⁰ While Greece was founded as an independent state, Russia itself arguably profited most, and certainly more than the Christian minorities Lips and others had backed. For those who had doubted what Russia's supporters called its 'mission', the Treaty of Adrianople was proof that Russia's intentions were not benevolent, but based on more selfish motives. Already over the previous decade, French and British liberals and conservatives alike, had started regard Russia in a more anxious fashion.¹¹ Especially the British elite, always concerned

ein Versuch die verschiedenen Interessen der Kabinette Europas hierbei zu vereinigen (Nuremberg: Riegel und Wießner, 1828). 'The war in the east, from the point of view of law, of civilization, and of politics.'

8 Ibid., 11. 'Will it not be a duty, to build the bases of a new sophisticated culture and civilization on the ruins of this barbarism, and to transfer dominion over these lands, suffering from despotism, to states of culture and civilization, so as to spread the seeds of humanity and to free the unfortunate inhabitants of this part of the world from absolute tyranny.'

9 "The Military Power of Turkey," *The Oriental Herald* 56 (1828): 268; Rudolf Stadelmann, *Moltke und der Staat* (Kreveland: Scherpe-Verlag, 1950), 85–86.

10 Erik Goldstein, *Wars and Peace Treaties: 1816 to 1991* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 23.

11 Raymond T. McNally, "The Origins of Russophobia in France: 1812-1830," *American Slavic and East European Review* 17, no. 2 (April 1958): 173; Paul Ducret Passenans, *La Russie et l'esclavage, dans leur rapports avec la civilisation européenne: ou: De l'influence de la servitude sur la vie domestique des russes, sur leur existence civile, morale et politique, et sur les destinees de l'Europe* (Paris: Pierre Blanchard, 1822).

about a balance of power (not limited to Christian countries) in Europe, had, as it would later be put: 'stopped fearing Turkey and started to fear for it.' The designs of Russia, many in Westminster argued, were unclear; and its enormous expansion over the last decade and the alleged threat this posed to British possessions in India were a matter of continuous discussion in London's corridors of power.¹²

These voices of caution would soon be proved right, as the authoritarian tendencies of the Tsar started to show with the brutal suppression of the 1830 uprisings, and a first wave of Russophobia started to spread through Britain. In Poland, whose ancient liberties were revoked after the revolutions had been brutally crushed, the opponents of Russia thought to glimpse the true face of Russian foreign policy.¹³ Throughout the early 1830s, Russophobia in Britain increased dramatically, a process driven partly by the publication of apocryphal documents detailing Russia's plans to conquer Constantinople, partly by a deliberate political campaign of 'ardent Russophobes', intent on turning England against Russia.¹⁴ Outside and inside Parliament, serious questions were raised about the Tsar's empire, its expansion, and what had often been referred to as its 'civilising activity'. *The British and Foreign Review* mocked those who saw Russia as bringing civilization to Turkey, presenting their arguments as ridiculous: 'The government of Russia *promote* civilization! – and with the Russian army as its instrument of improvement!'¹⁵ The liberal MP Lord Dudley Stuart similarly addressed the House in 1836:

They used to hear of Russia civilising the barbarians of the earth: the time when such language could be used was gone for ever. He believed that those who had once used it were now conscious of their folly and their ignorance, and cared little to be reminded of their former sentiments. If they wanted to know the character of Russia, they had only to inquire into the history of her late conduct towards Poland and towards her unhappy people.¹⁶

Such sentiments were shared by many, and curiously Russophobia had started to spread even in the quarters of the former philhellenes. Most prominently, the writer, political agitator, and later MP,

12 See for example M. A. Yapp, "British Perceptions of the Russian Threat to India," *Modern Asian Studies* 21, no. 04 (1987): 647–65.

13 Oscar J. Hammen, "Free Europe versus Russia, 1830-1854," *American Slavic and East European Review* 11, no. 1 (1952): 27.

14 Albert Resis, "Russophobia and the 'Testament' of Peter the Great, 1812-1980," *Slavic Review* 44, no. 4 (1985): 681–93; Margaret Lamb, "Writing up the Eastern Question in 1835-1836," *The International History Review* 15, no. 2 (1993): 239–68.

15 de Lacy Evans, "The Designs of Russia," *The British and Foreign Review* 35 (1835): 280.

16 HC Deb 19 February 1836 vol. 31 col. 632

David Urquhardt, who had joined the fight for Greece's independence in 1827, had become convinced that the Ottoman Empire was less decrepit than he and his comrades had previously argued, and that British attention should instead now be focused on Russia.¹⁷ Whereas Turkey could now be seen as reliable partner of British diplomacy and trade, Russia was a perpetual danger to civilization, as Urquhart claimed in several best-selling publications. The fate of Poland and the Ottoman Empire were intrinsically connected as: 'one hand of iron is laid on both'.¹⁸ With Russia's continuous expansion, a fact to which Urquhart had alerted his readers, Europe was no longer safe.¹⁹ Should Russia manage to reach Constantinople 'the possibility of all useful union against her on the part of England and France vanishes; and civilisation itself is threatened with a more dangerous eclipse than it suffered from the overflow of barbarians in 604.'²⁰ Urquhart's rhetoric might have been a curious reversal of philhellenic claims from less than a decade earlier, when many of them had seen Russia as the bearer of civilization, but in the ever more fearful climate of the mid-1830s, Urquhart was successfully riding a wave of anti-Russianism that had gripped large parts of Europe.

Others, some of them liberals, still supported Russia and even its alleged plans to conquer Constantinople, and they too continued to employ the language of civilization. As the Silesia-born liberal writer and poet Wolfgang Menzel would put it, the Russian government had to be interested in the 'Ausbildung [...] aller Elemente fortschreitender Civilisation' and would certainly receive a boost in these undertakings should it succeed to conquer Constantinople.²¹ Similar positions were held even amongst certain sections of British liberalism not traditionally associated with support for Russia. The free-trade liberal Richard Cobden, who signed his pamphlets 'A Manchester manufacturer', had a clear opinion on the subject of Russia and civilization more broadly:

The annals of the world do not exhibit an example of a great nation [...] united, well governed, rising in intelligence, morals, and religion, and advancing in wealth and civilization — falling beneath the destroying hand of a conqueror. Such a catastrophe is

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- 17 Gertrude Robinson, *David Urquhart: Some Chapters in the Life of a Victorian Knight-Errant of Justice and Liberty* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, Co., 1920); Margaret Lamb, "The Making of a Russophobe: David Urquhart - The Formative Years, 1825–1835," *The International History Review* 3, no. 3 (1981): 330–57; G.H. Bolsover, "David Urquhart and the Eastern Question, 1833-37: A Study in Publicity and Diplomacy," *The Journal of Modern History* 8, no. 4 (1936): 444–67; Dieter Groh, *Russland und Europa: Ein Beitrag zur europäischen Geistesgeschichte*, vol. 3, POLITICA (Neuwied: Hermann Luchterhand Verlag, 1961), 162–163.
- 18 David Urquhart, *England and Russia: Being a Fifth Edition of England, France, Russia, Turkey* (London: James Ridgway and Sons, 1835), 4.
- 19 David Urquhart, *Turkey and Its Resources: Its Municipal Organisation and Free Trade; the State and Prospect of English Commerce in the East, the New Administration of Greece, Its Revenue and National Possessions* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1833).
- 20 Urquhart, *England and Russia: Being a Fifth Edition of England, France, Russia, Turkey*, 139.
- 21 Wolfgang Menzel, *Europa im Jahr 1840* (Stuttgart: Sonnewald'sche Buchhandlung, 1839), 42–43. 'the cultivation of all elements of advancing civilization'.

reserved for the chastisement of the self-abandoned, depraved, disorganized, ignorant, and irreligious communities, and their anarchical governments — for Babylon and Persepolis — for Poland and Turkey!²²

The argument the manufacturer from Manchester made throughout his pamphlets was largely predictable.²³ Britain should continue to pursue a policy of free-trade and non-intervention, and the slow and progressive development of civilization would do the rest. Poland's downfall, Cobden argued, was not primarily the result of Russian despotism and aggression, but an indirect consequence of Poland's corrupt internal politics, which had weakened it morally and politically.²⁴ Russia, Cobden argued in rhetoric more popular a decade earlier, was merely fulfilling its part of a larger international development towards a more positive future. Contrary to what Urquhart and his associates argued, England had no business to stand in her way and the development of civilization more broadly.

The Rise of Turcophilism and the Revolutions of 1848

This first great wave of anti-Russianism that swept through Britain in the 1830s was partly sustained by a simultaneous increase in turcophilism in most western European states, again expressed in the language of civilization. While anti-Russianism was largely based on the foreign policy of Russia, the debates regarding Turkey focused on (intimately connected) domestic issues. As the political pressure increased from Russia on the outside, but also from internal rivals like Mehmet Ali over the early nineteenth century, Sultan Mahmud II had decided in favour of large-scale reforms, aiming to turn the Ottoman Empire into a more European country. It was a reform movement grounded in the new rhetoric of civilization, which had become so popular in western Europe. Indeed, Mustafa Reshid Pasha, Mahmud's vizier, who drew up the original documents for the reform, saw Turkey's salvation only in 'the way of civilization', a word he transliterated into Ottoman Turkish for official use.²⁵ These liberal reforms served partly to strengthen the sultan's position vis-a-vis his external and internal enemies, but also to curry favour with the European powers.²⁶ In Europe, these attempts were well received, and specifically in Britain saw a positive resonance in journals and newspapers, which interpreted them as a step of the Ottoman Empire to

22 Richard Cobden, *Russia: By a Manchester Manufacturer* (London: William Tait, 1836), 18; Groh, *Russland und Europa: Ein Beitrag zur europäischen Geistesgeschichte*, 3:164–165.

23 Richard Cobden, *England, Ireland, and America. By a Manchester Manufacturer* (London: William Tait, 1836).

24 Cain helpfully points out that Cobden's position regarding Russia's domination of Poland ran counter to his ideas of English non-intervention see Peter Cain, "Capitalism, War and Internationalism in the Thought of Richard Cobden," *British Journal of International Studies* 5, no. 3 (1979): 236.

25 Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 116.

26 Frederick F. Anscombe, "Islam and the Age of Ottoman Reform," *Past & Present* 208, no. 1 (2010): 159–89.

become a civilized and western state.²⁷

More surprisingly, even in the German-speaking countries, with arguably less geopolitical interest in Turkey's internal developments, the sultan's reforms were widely discussed from varying political points of view. As the *Allgemeine Zeitung* attested in 1839, these debates were rather confused: 'Hier bietet sich eine hohe Frage. Welches ist die richtige Bedeutung, der Umfang der Worte 'Reform und Civilisation' in Beziehung auf das ottomanische Reich. Die Meinungen Europas hierüber erscheinen uns sehr vage und verwirrt.'²⁸ Many kept insisting that true civilization was not in the reach of Turkey, because of its religion, and warned those 'die sich den Täuschungen über die vielgerühmte Civilisation hingeben' that Turkey would never become a 'normal' European country.²⁹ In fact, and this was a common argument, the reforms might bring the Ottoman Empire to a premature end, as the principles of its ancient organization could not be combined with the European reforms the Sultan was trying to push through.³⁰ Others, like the more idiosyncratic Austrian diplomat Anton von Prokesch-Osten, questioned whether these European notions of civilization should be applied to the Ottoman Empire at all:

Civilisation? – Was heisst das? – Es gibt keine oder sie ist in der geregelten, dem Lande, den Sitten, den Gebräuchen, und der Religion angepassten Entwicklung des Volkes zu suchen. Was über die Verhältniss hinausgeht, ist Verzerrung und Missgriff, ist Kampf anmassenden Schwindels gegen die Stützen des Lebens.³¹

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- 27 see Dogan Guerpinar, "The Rise and Fall of Turcophilism in Nineteenth-Century British Discourses: Visions of the Turk, 'Young' and 'Old,'" *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 39, no. 3 (2012): 346–71.
- 28 "Mahmud Und Mehemet Ali," *Allgemeine Zeitung*, May 26, 1839, 146 edition, sec. Beilage zur Allgemeinen Zeitung, 1130; "Ueber die Reformen in der Türkei," *Das Ausland: Eine Wochenschrift für Kunde des geistigen und sittlichen Lebens der Völker*, August 16, 1839, 228 edition. 'Here we have an important question. What is the real meaning and scope of the words 'reform and civilization' with respect to the Ottoman Empire. The European opinions about it seem to us very vague and confused.'
- 29 "Voyage de M. Le Marechal Duc de Raguse En Hongrie, En Transylvanie Dans La Russe Meridionale En Crimee et Sur Les Bords de La Mer D'azoff. Vier Bände," *Blätter Für Litterarische Unterhaltung*, April 14, 1838, 104 edition, 421–422; "Die Türkei Seit Dem Frieden von Andrianopel," *Conversations-Lexicon Der Neuesten Zeit Und Literatur* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1834); *Serbien, Russland und die Türkei* (Berlin: G. H. Schröder, 1843); "Mahmud und die Reform in der Türkei," *Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes*, 1841, 19 edition, sec. Türkei. 'who are falling for the chimeras of the much-praised civilization.'
- 30 Friedrich Haupt, *Mustersammlung der Beredsamkeit: Für die Schule und das Leben* (Aarau: H.R. Sauerländer, 1838), 260; "Politische Lage der Türkei, insbesondere der Kampf Mehemet Ali's, Vicekönigs von Aegypten mit dem Sultan Mahmud und dessen muthmassliche Folgen," *Bayerisches Volksblatt: Eine constitutionelle Wochenschrift*, November 17, 1832, 16 edition; Gottlieb August Wimmer, *Neuestes Gemälde der europäischen Türkei und Griechenlands*, vol. 29, Schuetz's allgemeine Erdkunde, oder Beschreibung aller Länder der fuenf Welttheile. (Vienna: In Kommission bei A. Doll, 1833).
- 31 Daniel Bertsch, *Anton Prokesch von Osten (1795-1876): ein Diplomat Österreichs in Athen und an der Hohen Pforte: Beiträge zur Wahrnehmung des Orients im Europa des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2005), 277. 'Civilization? What does that mean? There is none, or she is to be found in the development of a people adapted to its customs, its traditions, and its religion. Anything beyond this, is a misrepresentation and an error, is a fig of fraud against the bases of life.'

Meanwhile, the sections of the German-speaking public, which defined themselves as progressive, lauded the positive changes the reform had brought for women and religious minorities.³² Especially the inauguration of the Tanzimat in 1839, which promised equality before the law to all the subjects of the sultan, whether Christian or Muslim, was seen as a dramatic change in German as well as European debates.³³ As Friedrich Schott argued in his *Die orientalische Frage und ihre Lösung aus dem Gesichtspunkte der Civilisation*, which directly compared the programs of the Sultan with his opponent Mehmed Ali:

In fast gleich innigem Verhältnisse zu den europäischen Nationen befindet sich auch heute die Türkei; weil sie Mahmud II. der Civilisation näher gebracht hat und Europa nicht mehr erlauben kann, dass sie in die alte Barbarei zurücksinke, deren Princip der Fanatismus und der damit verbundene Fatalismus ist.³⁴

The concept of civilization fulfilled a curious function in this argument. Internal reforms and the development of civilization brought the Muslim Ottoman Empire and the Christian states of Europe closer. While Europe was obviously still predominantly defined through its Christianity, its relationship to the Ottoman Empire could now also be grasped through the similarity of their reforms. The fact that those were liberal reforms, concerned with religious freedom and equality before the law is not insignificant, as it is certainly possible that many liberals in the German-speaking states would see the attempts at Ottoman reform as paralleling their own demands and aims.³⁵

It was not only liberals who employed the language of civilization in the late 1830s and early 1840s. Amongst those who hoped for more than just liberal reforms, a complete change in European

32 “Der Harem des Paschas von Widdin,” *Das Pfennig-Magazin zur Verbreitung der Gesellschaft zur Verbreitung gemeinnütziger Kenntnisse*, June 29, 1839, 326 edition.

33 Selim Deringil, “‘There Is No Compulsion in Religion’: On Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire: 1839–1856,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42, no. 3 (2000): 556.

34 Fr Schott, *Die orientalische Frage und ihre Lösung aus dem Gesichtspunkte der Civilisation* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1839), 4. ‘The Oriental Question and its Solution from the Perspective of Civilization’. ‘Turkey is in nearly as a close a relationship to the European nations today, because Mahmud has brought her closer to civilization, and Europe can no longer let her fall back into the old barbarism, whose principle is fanaticism and its closely connected fatalism!’

35 Ingrid Lohmann et al., “Wie die Türken in unsere Köpfe kamen. Das Türkei-Bild in der deutschen Pädagogik zwischen 1820 und 1930,” *Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft* 16, no. 4 (2013): 757; Johann Georg August Wirth, *Die politische Reform Deutschlands: Noch ein dringendes Wort an die deutschen Volksfreunde* (Strasburg, 1832).

affairs, support for Russia was still strong, and they too used the concept of civilization as an explanatory tool. As liberal dissatisfaction with the political arrangements on the continent increased, more radical and utopian projects were similarly gaining traction. To many further on the left, Russia was not the brutal, barbarian, and authoritarian state the liberals described, but a potential harbinger of a completely new political era. This argument has been most forcefully made by Adamovsky for the case of France after 1848, but such a position had arguably already been outlined before, and enjoyed pan-European success.³⁶ Adam Gurowski's 1840 work *La Russie et la civilisation*, for example, was translated into German a year later as *Russland und die Civilisation*.³⁷ To the chagrin of liberals like the Austrian politician Schuselka, who admitted to having read Gurowski's work 'mit einem Gefühle von Ekel', Gurowski argued that the liberal project had failed.³⁸ After the disaster of the Polish revolution of which he had originally been a supporter, Gurowski now saw Russia, and what he described as its panslavic mission, as the next step in civilization, in this quest, he did not just support Russia but the Tsar personally.³⁹

While Gurowski's work should be seen as an indication that civilization could be and was used on all sides of the political spectrum, its most prominent exponents in the 1840s continued to be liberal thinkers, who adopted the word civilization as a short-hand for European-wide liberal reform. The writer and journalist Andre-Luigi Mazzini, whose *Italie et la civilisation moderne* was first published in 1847, argued that the word civilization expressed a more general idea that had started to gain ground in Europe over recent years.⁴⁰ As he explained to his German readers, countries like Italy were behind the times: 'In Italien zum Beispiel ist jenes Wort weder so bekannt, noch so gebräuchlich, wie in Deutschland, in Frankreich, in England, und in allen übrigen Ländern, wo die Civilisation einen zu ihren Entwicklungen, zu ihren Eroberungen geeigneten Boden vorgefunden hat.'⁴¹ Mazzini was right, as in the German-speaking countries whole books were dedicated to the

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- 36 Ezequiel Adamovsky, *Euro-Orientalism: Liberal Ideology and the Image of Russia in France (c. 1740-1880)* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2006), 153–177; Ezequiel Adamovsky, "Russia as a Space of Hope: Nineteenth-Century French Challenges to the Liberal Image of Russia," *European History Quarterly* 33 (2003): 411–49; Ezéquiél Adamovsky, "Russia as the Land of Communism in the Nineteenth Century?," *Cahiers Du Monde Russe* 45, no. 3 (2004): 497–520.
- 37 Adam de Gurowski, *La civilisation et la Russie* (St.Petersburg: J.Haner & Co., 1840); Adam Gurowski, *Rußland und die Civilisation* (Leipzig: Verlag von Heinrich Hunger, 1841); Andrzej Walicki, "Adam Gurowski: Polish Nationalism, Russian Panslavism and American Manifest Destiny," *Russian Review* 38, no. 1 (1979): 1–26.
- 38 Franz Schuselka, *Oesterreich und Russland* (Leipzig: Druck und Verlag von Phillip Reclam jun., 1844), 35. 'with a feeling of disgust'.
- 39 Alexander Maxwell, "Walerian Krasinski's 'Panslavism and Germanism' (1848): Polish Goals in a Pan-Slav Context," *New Zealand Slavonic Journal* 42 (n.d.): 101–20.
- 40 André Luigi Mazzini, *De L'Italie dans ses rapports avec la liberté et la civilisation moderne* (Leipzig: Brockhaus & Avenarius, 1847). 'Italy and Modern Civilization'. 'In Italy, for example, this word is neither as well known, nor as frequently used as in Germany, France, and England, where civilization has found a fruitful acre for its developments and conquests.'
- 41 Andreas Ludwig Mazzini, *Italien in seinen Beziehungen zur Freiheit und modernen Civilisation* (Grimma &

development of civilization. The subject of civilization and liberalism, for example, was treated *en détail* in Hans Christoph Freiherr von Gagern's 1847 book, simply entitled: *Civilisation*.⁴² Gagern was seemingly incapable of defining the term itself: 'Civilisation, hat darum keine gültige allgemeine anerkannte Bedeutung, noch Werth, noch Gränze. Es ist alles mit den griechischen wie mit den deutschen Worten, je nachdem'. Nonetheless he asserted: 'sie ist [...] unstreitig ein Ziel', an opinion most liberal thinkers at the cusp of 1848 would have shared.⁴³

A year after Gagern and Mazzini had published their books, the overheated European political kettle boiled over, a pan-European liberal revolution broke out and the questions of civilization, previously discussed in pamphlets and political speeches, became disturbingly real political concerns.⁴⁴ The language of the nationalist movements all over Europe was one of civilization. The Hungarian declaration of independence, for example, announced that Hungary, after the establishment of a revolutionary government, would be 'at once the main organ of civilization in eastern Europe and the guardian of that civilization when attacked' and referred to Hungary as a bulwark against Russian despotism.⁴⁵ Even those whose claims were not aimed at complete independence, but mere reform, used the language of civilization. If Austria was to give its peoples a constitution, an anonymous pamphleteer explained, it would 'seine Zwecke unbeirrt, von der Welt bewundert, von allen Geistern und Zungen des Fortschrittes, und der Civilisation getragen verfolgen können.'⁴⁶ As in many instances since 1789, the language of civilization could again be used to express the wishes of those Europeans who opposed the revolution. The conservative journalist Hugo Hellmar argued in his 1848 publication *Der Untergang der Civilisation, eine Folge der Revolution* that the demands of the revolutionaries endangered the 'herrlichsten Güter der Menschheit, und damit die Civilisation selbst'.⁴⁷ Similar sentiments were expressed by the conservative economist Lorenz von Stein who argued that contemporary Europe was suffering under a 'fehlerhafte Civilisation' and the German lawyer and writer Ludwig Aegidi who claimed that the revolutionaries would 'für die Freiheit die Civilisation preisgeben'.⁴⁸

Leipzig: Druck und Verlag des Verlags-Comptoirs, 1850), 5.

42 Hans Christoph Freiherr von Gagern, *Civilisation* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1847).

43 Ibid., 7. 'Civilization does therefore not have a clear meaning, value, or border. It is always the same with Greek and German words, it depends. (...) It is, however, undoubtedly an aim.'

44 For the revolutions see Jonathan Sperber, *The European Revolutions, 1848-1851* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

45 Phineas Camp Headley, *The Life of Louis Kossuth* (Auburn: Derby & Miller, 1852), 162.

46 *Des Oesterreichers richtiger Standpunkt* (Cologne: Peter Hammer, 1848), 9. 'follow its ends, uninhibited, admired by the world, and carried by the spirits and tongues of civilization and progress'.

47 Hugo Hellmar, *Der Untergang der Civilisation, eine Folge der Revolution* (Halle: Verlag und Druck von H.W. Schmidt, 1848), 1. 'The downfall of civilization, a consequence of the revolution'. 'the most magnificent goods of humanity, and thereby civilization itself.'

48 Lorenz von Stein, *Die socialistischen und communistischen Bewegungen seit der dritten französischen Revolution: Anhang zu Steins Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs* (Leipzig und Wien: Otto

On an international level, the prejudices against Russia harboured by many of Europe's liberals would be confirmed through the revolutions and the discourses of liberalism and anti-Russianism fused into a more coherent whole. As Austria and some of the German states had great trouble to suppress the uprisings, the Tsar intervened to save the conservative European order, not even asking for financial or territorial compensation.⁴⁹ Although not a surprise to many of England's liberals, the tone of those who had, secretly or openly, supported the uprisings changed dramatically. Russia's intervention could no more be interpreted as a minor stain on its civilizing vest. Instead, as the liberal MP for Bath, John Arthur Roebuck explained: 'the uncalled for interference on the part of Russia' was a danger to 'the civilisation of the world'.⁵⁰ To most English liberals, the revolutions and their suppression had even more clearly drawn the lines between civilization and barbarism on the continent, and raised the question whether England should become more actively involved. As Russia was simultaneously putting down rebellions in Eastern Europe, and again moved into Wallachia and Moldavia, many would have agreed with Colonel Thomson, who took the floor in the House of Commons with an impassioned speech to announce that England: 'ought, therefore, to contrive to make friends somewhere or of somebody, and to place herself at the head of the great struggle which was going on between civilisation and freedom on one side, and barbarity and despotism on the other.'⁵¹ While Russia's international interventions in the late 1820s had been seen as positive by many, by 1848 a majority of the European, and specifically the British, public regarded Russia with deep suspicion.

Yet despite the wide-spread support for liberal civilization on the continent, the friends Colonel Thomson had proposed England should make were rather difficult to find, until Turkey unexpectedly joined this new coalition for liberal civilization. With the governments of Prussia, Austria, and Russia arguably engaged on the side of despotism and France in turmoil, English liberals were feverishly looking for allies on the continent. After the last Hungarian revolutionaries had been defeated, the English public had to watch from afar as an Austro-Russian coalition chased their remaining leaders through Europe.⁵² It was a surprise to them when the Hungarian revolutionary leader, Kossuth, and many others were given asylum by none other than the Sultan, who, for perhaps not completely unselfish reasons, positioned himself clearly in the camp of liberal revolution and civilization. As the Ottoman Empire was pressured by Austria and Russia to give up

Wigand, 1848), 63. 'flawed civilization'.to give up freedom for civilization'.

49 Sperber, *The European Revolutions, 1848-1851*, 244.

50 HC Deb 21 July 1849 vol. 107 col. 801

51 HC Deb 22 March 1849 vol 103 col. 1143

52 Headley, *The Life of Louis Kossuth*, 162.

the revolutionaries, John Stuart Mill, in uncharacteristically frantic language, announced that:

Many thousands in England, and millions, I will venture to say, in Europe, are waiting anxiously to see whether the noble conduct of the Sultan in refusing to deliver up the defenders of Hungarian liberty to the crowned employers of the scourgers of women, the butchers of Warsaw and Pesth, is to have the support of England or not.⁵³

While the English government shied away from too outright a support for the Sultan, its international friends had arguably been found. As more conservative European commentators did not seize to point out, it was no surprise that Kossuth, after having left Turkey for a tour of the United States, would come to settle in London, which became the home of the majority of the refugees from the continent.⁵⁴ Although the European order was still intact, a clear rift had developed between those governments sympathetic to the revolution, and a liberal conception of civilization, and those who still supported the old European order.

The Debates Preceding the Crimean War

While 1848 can be seen as redrawing the political lines on the continent, it was events in France that further advanced Europe on its way to war. International events were quickly pushed forward by Napoleon III's coup d'état in 1851, and the ensuing foreign policy that most likely had domestic origins.⁵⁵ While Napoleon III's pamphleteers and supporters were already hailing him as the saviour of civilization, the emperor himself perceived his main domestic problem to be a lack of Catholic support and quickly identified foreign policy, and specifically the difficult situation of the Holy Places in the Ottoman Empire, as the best field to (re)-gain it.⁵⁶ For a long time, the dispute over the religious control of the Holy Places had been one of the most delicate areas in the relationship between the major European powers and the Ottoman Empire. Orthodox and Latin churches alike were vying for control and could be certain of more worldly support from various governments. After a show of military strength, deploying the newly-built *Charlemagne*, Napoleon III gained the keys to the Church of the Nativity, and the guarantee of supreme Christian authority over the Holy Places, for the Catholic Church. It was from this point on that the situation spiralled out of control.

53 Quoted in Benjamin Day, "Mill's Liberty, the Ribald Press, and the Politics of War," *Canadian Journal of History* 40, no. 2 (2005): 237.

54 Sabine Freitag, ed., *Exiles from European Revolutions: Refugees in Mid-Victorian England* (London: Berghahn Books, 2003).

55 J. P. Parry, "The Impact of Napoleon III on British Politics, 1851–1880," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (Sixth Series)* 11 (2001): 147–75.

56 Arthur Dubreuil-Héliou de La Guéronnière, *Portraits Politiques Contemporains: Napoléon III* (Paris: Amyot, 1853).

The Tsar, presumably misunderstanding the various stances of other European powers, again moved into the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia under the pretext of protecting the Orthodox Christians of the area and thereby started a series of conflicts that would mark the beginning of the Crimean War, in which Britain and France would protect the Ottoman Empire against these incursions.⁵⁷

The British debates in the run-up to the war have recently become the subject of academic inquiry, most importantly in the books of Markovits and Dereli, which have both focus on the literature surrounding the conflict. Little has been written about the use of civilization in these debates.⁵⁸ Dereli has only argued that there was a conscious effort on the part of certain magazines, mostly liberal ones, to build 'up a new public image of the Turks as reasonable, civilised, hospitable, and generally acceptable allies, deserving of protection.' which was easy to sustain given Turkey's recent reforms and benevolence towards revolutionary refugees.⁵⁹ But this debate was a wider one in which the concept of civilization could also be found on the other side, which claimed that potential British support for Turkey was in fact a betrayal of civilization, as the Turks were not truly civilized. As the Russian emigrant and publicist Ivan Golovin put it: 'Byron may prize the Turkish sword; even Turkish tobacco is excellent; but the women enjoy in Turkey only a nominal freedom. The condition of women is always the criterion of the civilization of a nation.'⁶⁰ The British government was equally split into supporters of Turkey and Russia. The leader of the conservative opposition, Disraeli, would eventually refer to the two positions taken by the various members of the government, as manifestations of what he called the 'two theories upon that important subject which, in common phrase, is called 'the Eastern question'.⁶¹ The government, Disraeli argued, was split between those who thought that there was 'vitality in Turkey' and that it 'might form a substantial and a real barrier against Russia' and those who believed it 'decaying and decrepit—that

57 For the Crimean War see Brison D. Gooch, "A Century of Historiography on the Origins of the Crimean War," *The American Historical Review* 62, no. 1 (1956): 33; Candan Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War (1853 - 1856)* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Andrew D. Lambert, *The Crimean War: British Grand Strategy Against Russia, 1853-56*, 2nd ed. (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2011); Orlando Figes, *Crimea* (London: Penguin UK, 2011); Olive Anderson, *A Liberal State at War: English Politics and Economics During the Crimean War* (London: MacMillan, 1967); Georg Maag, Wolfram Pyta, and Martin Windisch, eds., *Der Krimkrieg als erster europäischer Medienkrieg* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2010); Winfried Baumgart, *The Crimean War, 1853-1856* (London: Arnold, 1999).

58 Stefanie Markovits, *The Crimean War in the British Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Cynthia Dereli, *A War Culture in Action: A Study of the Literature of the Crimean War Period* (Oxford et al.: Peter Lang, 2003).

59 Dereli, *A War Culture in Action*, 27.

60 Ivan Golovin, *The Nations of Russia and Turkey and Their Destiny* (London, New York: Trübner & Co., 1854), 33.

61 Quoted in Miloš Ković, *Disraeli and the Eastern Question* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 57.

its resources, always imperfectly developed, perhaps, are now virtually exhausted'.⁶² The main proponents of the first theory, as Disraeli saw it, were Palmerston and Russell and of the second the prime minister, Aberdeen, and Disraeli's favourite enemy, Gladstone, whose russophile politics were widely known.⁶³

What Disraeli did not explicitly state was that the discussions amongst the various ministers about a potential war were essentially debates about Turkey's relationship to civilization. Whereas Aberdeen and Gladstone thought civilization in the modern world intrinsically connected to Christianity and could not imagine supporting a Muslim power, the more realist Palmerston and Russell, also sensing the public mood against Russia, had no qualms about such an undertaking. The exchange of letters between the various members of government during 1853 clearly bears this out. In February 1853, Aberdeen stated his principal position, in a letter to Russell:

These barbarians hate us all, and would be delighted to take their chance at some advantage, by embroiling us with the other powers of Christendom. It may be necessary to give them a moral support, and to endeavour to prolong their existence; but we ought to regard as the greatest misfortune any engagement which compelled us to take up arms for the Turks.⁶⁴

Palmerston, certainly aware of the positions his political nemesis Aberdeen took, indirectly replied to the letter through the First Lord of the Admiralty, Graham:

It has been said, that we should be reproached with supporting a barbarous Mahomedan, against a civilized Christian power [...] But it may well be contended, that in many points of civilisation, Turkey is in advance of Russia. The Turkish Commercial System is far more liberal and enlightened than that of Russia. Justice is quite as well administered in Turkey as in Russia; pecuniary corruption is not a bit more prevalent in Constantinople than at Petersburg: Religious toleration is fully as great in the Southern as in the Northern Empire; all the inhabitants of Turkey, except the few Negroes and Circassians, are free; by far the largest number of the inhabitants of Russia are still slaves. Personal liberty is much more secure and the Press is more free in Turkey than in Russia; and the Sultan has no Siberia, and no Poland, in his dominions. I should be glad if you let Lord Aberdeen see this letter.⁶⁵

62 Ibid.

63 For the whole problematic see Ibid., 55–79.

64 Aberdeen to Russell 18 February 1853 in Winfried Baumgart, ed., *Englische Akten Zur Geschichte Des Krimkriegs: 20. November 1852 Bis 10. Dezemebr 1853*, vol. 1, 3 (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2005), 102.

65 Palmerston to Graham 29 May 1853 in Ibid., 1:237–238.

Although Palmerston had adduced virtually every single argument liberals had produced in Turkey's favour, over the last decade, Aberdeen was unimpressed:

I return Palmerston's letter, which you had the goodness to send me according to his desire; and without entering into any formal discussion, I will make a few remarks on it. [...] In a case, where great national interests are concerned, it is useless to enter into any comparison of the governments of Russia and Turkey. I am no admirer of either of them; but everyone is free to form his own opinion. For my own part, I should as soon think about preferring the Koran to the Bible, as of comparing the Christianity and civilisation of Russia to the fanaticism and immorality of the Turks.⁶⁶

The word civilization had clearly become important in all camps, but it was obvious that those arguing for Turkey had to rely on it to a much greater extent. To Aberdeen's position, civilization was merely an added factor, as the opposition to Turkey was already covered by Christianity; to Russell and Palmerston, civilization itself had to be the core argument.⁶⁷ Support for a Muslim power could only be based on its alleged advance in civilization, and it is for this reason that they used the idea of civilization in their argumentation knowing that a large part of the population would be more positively predisposed towards Turkey than towards Russia.

In the German-speaking countries, the question of how Russia and Turkey stood in relation to civilization was equally heavily discussed. Whereas the main arguments in England revolved around questions of foreign policy, in the German debates, Germany's future was perceived to be at stake. In Prussia, as in most of the German speaking states, 1848 had left a deep mark on civilizational debates, and Russia's intervention had not been forgotten in liberal circles.⁶⁸ As the old 48er Gustav Diezel explained to his readers in *Deutschland und die abendländische Civilisation*, the friends of Russia had abused the language of civilization, which could never be associated with the

66 Aberdeen to Graham 31 May 1853 in *Ibid.*, 1:243.

67 Outside the government the relationship between Turkey and civilization was also frequently discussed, for the most important contribution on 'Aberdeen's side' see John Henry Newman, *Lectures on the History of the Turks in Its Relation to Christianity* (Dublin: James Duffy, 1854); Jay Newman, "Two Theories of Civilization," *Philosophy* 54, no. 210 (1979): 473–83.

68 For these debates see Hans-Christof Kraus, "Wahrnehmung und Deutung des Krimkrieges in Preußen – Zur innenpolitischen Rückwirkung eines internationalen Großkonflikts," *Forschungen zur Brandenburgischen und Preußischen Geschichte* 19, no. 1 (2009): 67–89; Georg Maag, Wolfram Pyta, and Martin Windisch, eds., "Wahrnehmung und Bedeutung des Krimkrieges in Preussen - Zur innenpolitischen Rückwirkung eines internationalen Grosskonflikts," in *Der Krimkrieg als erster europäischer Medienkrieg* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2010), 235–56.

despotism of the Tsar:

Civilisation! Sicherlich hat man zu keiner Zeit mehr von Civilisation gesprochen, als in unsern Tagen, gewiß aber auch ist nie ein Wort vergeblicher und heuchlerischer im Mund geführt worden als dieses. Wir haben gesehen, wie man Tausende ohne Urtheil und Recht, gehängt, erschossen, deportirt, alle Freiheiten confiscirt, ganze Länder unter das Kriegsgesetz gestellt hat, "um die Civilisation zu retten;" [...] dass das Haupt eines asiatischen Barbarenreiches [...] sich öffentlich als den einzigen noch übrigen Beschützer dieser Civilisation proclamiren durfte, und [...] eine unermessliche Zahl von "Besitzenden und Gebildeten" in ganz Europa hat seinen Worten Beifall und Zustimmung gezollt.⁶⁹

The fact that Russia had suppressed the revolutions and national ideas in Europe made it the true enemy of civilization and therefore the enemy of Germany, on whose constitution the future of civilization was to be based. As Diezel, who was later imprisoned for the publication of this pamphlet, explained: 'Die Fortentwicklung der Civilisation, hängt von der Constituirung der deutschen Nation ab.'⁷⁰ But while the chance of a German national revolution had been missed or suppressed in 1848, the new developments and a possible war against Russia made this crisis another possibility at developing the German nation, as Diezel explained in his *Die Bildung einer nationalen Partei in Deutschland. Eine Nothwendigkeit in der jetzigen Crisis Europa's*.⁷¹ A war against Russia and a victory of what Diezel called occidental civilization (in other words: the liberalism of the western powers), would finally bring about Germany's unification, as the anti-national power of Russia was checked by the progressive powers of the west.

Diezel's opinion was not a lonely one as similar slogans were even voiced by a certain section of the Prussian elite, which grouped around a newspaper called *Wochenblatt*, and which was violently opposed by the adherents of the old order, who were similarly associated with a newspaper, the *Kreuzzeitung*.⁷² The leaders of the so-called *Wochenblattpartei*, Bethmann-Holweg and the

69 Gustav Diezel, *Deutschland und die abendländische Civilisation: Zur Läuterung unserer politischen und socialen Begriffe* (Stuttgart: Verlag von Karl Göpel, 1852), 10–11. 'Civilization! One certainly has never spoken as much of civilization as in our days, but the word has certainly also never been used in such a duplicitous and deceitful manner as it is today. We have seen how thousands were hung, shot, and deported, without judgement or law, and how freedoms were curtailed and a state of emergency declared over whole countries to save civilization. We have seen how the head of a barbarian Asiatic state proclaimed himself the last representative of civilization and how an immense number of educated and wealthy people have applauded and cheered'.

70 Ibid., 391. 'The development of civilization depends on the constitution of the German nation.'

71 Gustav Diezel, *Die Bildung einer nationalen Partei in Deutschland. Eine Nothwendigkeit in der jetzigen Crisis Europa's* (Gotha: Verlag von Hugo Scheube, 1855). 'The founding of a national party in Germany. A necessity in the current crisis'.

72 Michael Behnen, *Das Preußische Wochenblatt 1851-1861: Nationalkonservative Publizistik Gegen Ständestaat*

ambassador in London, Bunsen, wanted to persuade the Kaiser, a close friend of them, to join an eventual war against Russia. Through this war, they, like Diezel, hoped their aims of German unification could be achieved. These rather careful liberal nationalists were in their turn violently opposed by a more conservative group, also close to the Kaiser, but split into several sections.⁷³ The hardliners of this conservative grouping called the *Kreuzzeitungspartei*, because of their connection to the *Neue Preussische Zeitung* that carried a huge cross on the cover, were its editors Goedsche and Wagener.⁷⁴ Both of them were rabid conservatives, not only opposed to any sort of western idea to which the *Wochenblattspartei* was drawn, but to western vocabulary *tout court*. Wagener disparagingly referred to the 'Phrasen von dem Kampfe der Civilisation gegen die Barbarei, von dem Siege der Freiheit über den Despotismus und wie alle diese schönen Redensarten klingen' which were used by those who hoped for a more liberal future.⁷⁵ Indeed, he identified the language of civilization entirely with foreign and dangerously French ideas, as he explained in an article in his *Conversationslexikon*, published a few years later: 'Civilisation: der französische Ausdruck für das was die deutschen Geschichtsschreiber Cultur nennen'⁷⁶

But the *Kreuzzeitung* was a broad church movement and contained both more moderate as well as downright opportunistic thinkers. The more moderate wing of the conservatives was dominated by Ludwig von Gerlach and Friedrich Julius Stahl. Although they were not as anti-western as Wagener and Goedsche, both had become, through their theoretical works on the legitimate conservative state, as the contemporary historian Wachsmuth explained, the intellectual descendants of Burke, De Maistre, and Bonald.⁷⁷ This attribution does not appear to be mistaken, if one reads Stahl's eulogy to his King Wilhelm IV in 1861. Wilhelm was, Stahl explained, the representative of truth against the:

”verneinenden Geist der Zeit”. Nenne man diesen Geist Revolution, Civilisation, Rationalismus, “Liberalismus”, Ideen von 1789. Es ist die Denkart wie die philosophischen

Und Polizeistaat, vol. 43, Bausteine Zur Geschichtswissenschaft (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1971); Dagmar Bussiek, “Mit Gott für König und Vaterland!": die Neue Preußische Zeitung (*Kreuzzeitung*) 1848 - 1892 (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2002).

73 For a closer description of this milieu Hans-Joachim Schoeps, *Das andere Preussen: konservative Gestalten und Probleme im Zeitalter Friedrich Wilhelm IV*, vol. 14, Gesammelte Schriften (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2001).

74 Bussiek, *Mit Gott für König und Vaterland!*.

75 *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen der durch die Allerhöchste Verordnung vom 14. November 1854 einberufenen Kammern. Zweite Kammer*, vol. 2 (Berlin: Gedruckt bei W.Moeser, 1855), 595. 'Phrases about a war of civilization against barbarism, of a victory of freedom over despotism, and how all of these lovely fixed expressions go.'

76 Hermann Wagener, ed., “Civilisation,” *Neues Conversationslexicon: Staats= Und Gesellschafts=Lexicon* (Berlin: F.Heinicke, 1861), 369. 'Civilization: The french expression for what German historians call culture'.

77 Wilhelm Wachsmuth, *Allgemeine Culturgeschichte: Die Neuere Zeit* (Leipzig: Fr. Chr. Wilh. Vogel, 1852), 183.

und politischen Lehren des siebzehnten und achtzehnten Jahrhunderts sie erzeugten, es ist die Emanzipation von Gottes Offenbarung und gottgesetzter Ordnung, die Selbstgenügsamkeit und Überhebung des menschlichen Geschlechts, auf seiner Vernunft und seiner Gerechtigkeit zu stehen und seinen Willen zum Herren der gesellschaftlichen Ordnung zu machen.⁷⁸

Meanwhile, the outlier of the conservative camp was a young and charismatic politician who, despite being firmly anchored in this milieu, flirted with the idea of supporting the Western powers in a potential war: Bismarck.⁷⁹ Whereas Goedsche and Wagener were opposed to the concept of civilization as such and Gerlach and Stahl imagined a more conservative one, Bismarck was not only more realistic about foreign policy, but had also started to see the word civilization as a *Redensart*.⁸⁰ It was a political tool used by politicians of the western powers to drum up support for the international wars, and was no more directly connected to the revolution, as so many of his conservative colleagues thought.

The Crimean War and the Concept of Civilization

On 28 March 1854, France, Britain, and the Kingdom of Sardinia, which had joined them, finally declared war on Russia.⁸¹ In England, Aberdeen had been bullied into the conflict by an unholy coalition of the always turcophile Disraeli, Russell and Palmerston. Throughout March and April, Parliament served as a propaganda station for liberal ideas of civilization. Already three weeks before the declaration of war, Napoleon III announced that France was fighting for 'all those who wish the triumph of law, justice and civilization' and in Britain too, civilization, in one way or another, featured in all the arguments for the war, which was widely seen as a necessity.⁸² As John Stuart Mill wrote to his wife: 'There is perfect unanimity among all parties here & the war feeling

78 Friedrich Julius Stahl, "Zum Gedächtnis seiner Majestät des hochadeligen Königs Friedrich Wilhelm IV. und seiner Regierung. Vortrag, gehalten im evangelischen Verein zu Berlin am 18. März 1861," in *Siebzehn parlamentarische Reden und drei Vorträge von Stahl. Nach letztwilliger Bewilligung geordnet und herausgegeben*. (Berlin: Verlag von Wilhelm Hertz, 1862), 264; Friedrich Julius Stahl, *Was ist die Revolution?: Ein Vortrag, auf Veranstaltung des Evangelischen Vereins für kirchliche Zwecke am 8. März 1852 gehalten* (Berlin: Verlag von Wilhelm Schultze, 1852). 'the denying spirit of the time. Call it, revolution, civilization, rationalism, "liberalism", ideas of 1789'. It is a type of thought produced by the philosophical ideas of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, it is an emancipation from god's work and his order, the self-sufficient hybris of the human race, to stand solely on its ability to reason and its justice and to make its wishes the lords of societal order.'

79 Heinrich August Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen 1: Deutsche Geschichte vom Ende des Alten Reiches bis zum Untergang der Weimarer Republik* (Munich: C.H.Beck, 2000), 136.

80 Otto v. Bismarck, *Gedanken und Erinnerungen*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Verlag der J.G.Cotta'schen Buchhandlung, 1898), 110. 'a mere phrase'

81 For Sardinia's participation see Gustav Adolf Rein, *Die Teilnahme Sardiniens am Krimkrieg und die öffentliche Meinung in Italien* (Leipzig: R. Voigtländer, 1910).

82 Gooch, "A Century of Historiography on the Origins of the Crimean War," 34.

seems to pervade everybody in a manner which nobody thought would ever happen again'.⁸³ While the Tsar employed the rhetoric of Christianity in letters to other monarchs, seeking to present Russia as the keeper of the faith against revolutionary Europe, most in Britain had turned away from such rhetoric.⁸⁴ The Earl of Shaftesbury explained to the House of Lords that England was right:

to prefer, as I most heartily do, the Turkish to the Russian autocrat—the autocrat that has granted such great facilities to the advancement of Christianity and civilisation to the autocrat who denies them in his own dominions, and who would deny them still more fiercely, should he ever become, by our neglect, the master of those noble provinces that he so ardently covets.⁸⁵

The Earl Fitzwilliam agreed, arguing that: 'It was not England or France that was siding with the enemies of Christianity, but he said that England and France were cordially uniting together in order to avert a state of things in which barbarism and infidelity might prevail over civilisation and religion.'⁸⁶ It was an opinion shared by the Earl of Clarendon: 'It is not merely the protection of Turkey against the aggressions of Russia that is concerned in the Eastern question, as it is commonly called, but it is the battle of civilisation against barbarism, for the maintenance of the independence of Europe.'⁸⁷ Similar arguments were made in the House of Commons where Sir Robert Peel affirmed that the liberties of Europe were at stake, and that this was a war in 'the interests of civilisation and humanity'. His colleague Monckton Milnes called the war 'an instrument of civilisation', and Austen Henry Layard reminded the House that 'this is a question not only affecting the general civilisation and freedom of Europe, but our own material interests'.⁸⁸ Some remained opposed, like Richard Cobden and John Bright who would later chastise the 'absurd language of the liberties of Europe and the civilization of the world'.⁸⁹ But overall the language of civilization had firmly become associated with those who supported the Ottoman Empire in what was the first war for civilization.

In Prussia, these civilizational arguments were taken up, reverberated, and liberal politicians and

83 John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill – The Later Letters of John Stuart Mill 1849-1873*, ed. Francis E. Mineka and Dwight N. Lindley, vol. XV (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 163–164. Mill softened his approval by arguing that he did not agree with the way this unanimity strengthened Napoleon III.

84 Iver B. Neumann, *Russia and the Idea of Europe: A Study in Identity and International Relations* (London: Routledge, 1996), 46.

85 HL Deb 10 March 1854 vol. 131 col. 593.

86 HL Deb 10 March 1854 vol. 131 col. 615.

87 HL Deb 31 March 1854 vol. 132 col. 749.

88 HC Deb 13 March 1854 vol. 131 col. 710; HC Deb 31 March 1854 vol 132 col. 235.

89 John Bright, *Speeches on Questions of Public Policy* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1869), 495–496.

journalists inside and outside the Prussian parliament chastised the government for the position of neutrality it had taken towards the war. Implicitly referring back to the debates of 1848, the liberal politician Riedel argued that the reforms and liberal spirit of Turkey had made it the target of Russian aggression: 'Reformen im Geiste der Civilisation und der Toleranz, wodurch Mahmud und Abdul Meshid ihr alterndes reich verjüngten, sind es ja auch vorzugsweise gewesen, was jetzt die russischen Waffen gegen Constantinopel in Bewegung gesetzt hat.'⁹⁰ He added that the refusal to participate in this just war against Russia was also a betrayal on the Prussian population which had 'Sympathie für die Civilisation, gegenüber der Barbarei'.⁹¹ Outside of Parliament, liberal publications like the *Grenzboten* supported such sentiments and lamented that the western powers had not succeeded in convincing Prussia to join them: 'Preussen' [...] für ihre Sache, die Sache des Welttheils und der Civilisation zu gewinnen [...] Noch heute, in letzter Stunde, kann man nicht genug die Kurzsichtigkeit des Berliner Cabinets bedauern...'⁹² It was a short-sightedness, they argued, which in the end endangered the future of Germany as a nation state.

Prussian conservatives agreed that the war in Crimea was a momentous occasion, although they naturally supported the Russian cause. Hermann Goedsche, the editor of the *Kreuzzeitung*, travelled to Turkey to report from the Crimean War, and privately published a pamphlet dealing with the larger international situation. In *Die Russen nach Constantinopel!*, as he had called it to court further controversy, he branded the new alliance fighting in the Crimea 'die Allianz der Schutzmächte der europäischen Revolution!'.⁹³ He also went on to explain to his readers what he saw as Russia's historic mission, an idea he expressed with rhetoric more typically associated with the First World War: 'Russlands grosse Mission ist es der rationalistischen englischen Krämerherrschaft in Europa Schranken zu setzen.'⁹⁴ Other anonymous pamphleteers agreed and mocked the slogans of the western powers, which they argued had become simultaneously money-mad and prone to revolutionary tendencies: 'Es handelt sich um einen Kampf der Civilisation gegen die Barbarei, sagen sie. Aber was ist das für eine Civilisation und was ist das für eine Barbarei?'⁹⁵ In

90 Stenographische Protokolle ueber die Verhandlungen der ueber die Allerhechste Verordnung vom 29. Oktober einberufenen Kammer. Zweite Kammer, vol. 2 (Berlin: Druck und Verlag der Decker'schen geheimen Ober-Hofbuchdruckerei, 1854), 833. 'Reforms in the spirit of civilization and tolerance, with which Mahmud and Abdul Meshid were rejuvenating their aging empire, were the reason why Russian arms started to move against Constantinople.'

91 Ibid., 2:834. 'sympathy for civilization against barbarism'.

92 "Ein Blick auf die bevorstehende Campagne," *Die Grenzboten: Zeitschrift fuer Literatur, Politik und Kunst* 14, no. 2 (1855): 178. 'to win Prussia, for their cause, the cause of this part of the world and civilization. Even today, in the last hour, we can still lament the myopia of the Berlin cabinet.'

93 Hermann Goedsche, *Die Russen nach Constantinopel! Ein Beitrag zur orientalischen Frage* (Berlin: Verlag von Hugo Bieler & Comp., 1854), 78. 'The Russians to Constantinople'. The alliance of the protectors of the European revolution.' 'It is Russia's great mission to delimit England's rationalist commercial rule'.

94 Ibid., 74.

95 Preussen in seinem Geiste und seiner Kraft. Ein Wort der Entgeguung auf die Angriffe gegen Preussens Politik

the Prussian parliament, the more reserved Stahl sought to reverse liberal rhetoric by arguing that Russia had previously saved the old European order and therefore civilization. As he put it, in not particularly flattering language for Russia: 'Kosackenhorden haben zweimal die Deutsche, die Europäische Civilisation geschützt, gegen die Barbarei, die von dem gebildeten Westen losbrach'.⁹⁶

In the international debate about the war, Prussia's conservative stance and the various positions concerning civilizational questions were frequently discussed. Some, like the French traveller and journalist Louis Léouzon Le Duc, found Prussia's and specifically Stahl's position admirable. As he put it in his *La Russie et la civilisation européenne*: 'L'Allemand Stahl a, en effet, raison d'appeler le gouvernement russe un gouvernement conservateur, et de nous traiter, nous, hommes de la civilisation occidentale et de la liberté de perturbateurs du genre humain et d'apôtres de la révolution!'⁹⁷ The British press, large sections of which had hoped for Prussian participation in the war, started to portray Wilhelm IV as a swaying and indecisive drunk.⁹⁸ While the government of the king was presented as weak and uncertain, its population, many of whom had signed up to fight in foreign legions active in the Crimean War, were specifically lauded for their efforts for civilization. As John Russell put it in Parliament:

And though some of the Sovereigns of Europe—some of the Sovereigns, I regret to say, of the great States of Europe, and even of the great States of Germany—have each a stake in the momentous question at issue, and have, nevertheless, left to us the brunt of a battle which they ought to fight along with us; still that is no reason why the subjects of these and other princes should not take a part with us, and, entering into the service of Her Majesty, uphold side by side with the English troops what I have termed the general cause of European liberty, but which is not the cause of European liberty alone, but also of European civilisation.⁹⁹

(Berlin: Verlag von Ludwig Rauh, 1855), 9–10. 'It is a fight of civilization against barbarism, they claim, but what sort of civilization is this, and what sort of barbarism.'

- 96 Friedrich Julius Stahl, "Der Orientalische Krieg. (Sitzung Der Ersten Kammer Am 25. April 1854)," in *Siebzehn Parlamentarische Reden Und Drei Vortraege von Stahl. Nach Letztwilliger Bewilligung Geordnet Und Herausgegeben* (Berlin: Verlag von Wilhelm Hertz, 1862), 200–218. 'Hordes of Cossacks have twice saved German, nay, European civilization against that barbarism which emanated from the educated west'.
- 97 Louis Léouzon Le Duc, *La Russie et la civilisation européenne* (Paris: Victor Lecou, 1854), 76. 'The German Stahl is in fact right, to call the Russian government, a conservative government, and to treat us, men of western civilization and liberty, as the disturbers of humanity and the apostles of the revolution!'
- 98 Oliver Stenzel, "The 'Mad Czar' and 'King Cliquot': Russland und Preussen als Feindbilder in den Karikaturen des 'Punch,'" in *Der Krimkrieg als erster europäischer Medienkrieg*, ed. Georg Maag, Wolfram Pyta, and Martin Windisch, vol. 14, *Kultur und Technik* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2010), 139–62.
- 99 HC Deb 19 December 1854 vol. 136 col. 516.

Civilizational discussions continued throughout the war, which, after a victory western powers, was concluded with the Treaty of Paris. It was in its aftermath that many discovered a changed landscape of political debate, and examined the new language of civilization in more detail. The fact that civilization had firmly become established was visible in the way it was used to mock other, even smaller, conflicts. As the *Münchener Punsch* sarcastically explained regarding a smaller altercation between Danes and Germans in Schleswig-Holstein: 'Wenn die Schleswig-Holsteiner Türken wären, dann wäre es freilich was Anderes, dann könnte man sie als Representanten der Civilisation hinstellen, dann wären alle humanen Mächte Europa's bereit, für ihre Integrität und Selbstständigkeit einzustehen'.¹⁰⁰ But more serious questions were asked about where this new language of civilization had emerged. The prominent conservative Austrian politician, Ficquelmont, suggested that the word 'civilization' had been a compromise between English and French policy, because it could mean anything and nothing at the same time.¹⁰¹ The Prussian conservative Wagener later argued that it had been the French 'unter Louis Napoleon die Civilisation im orientalischen Krieg zum Feldgeschrei gegen Russland gemacht'.¹⁰² Bismarck would write in his memoirs that England was responsible for the rhetoric of civilization: 'war uns doch während des Krimkrieges von England aus nicht ohne Wirkung auf die Stimmung gepredigt worden, daß wir "zur Rettung der Civilisation" die Waffen für die Türken ergreifen müßten'.¹⁰³

Wherever this language had started to appear, both in Britain as well as in the German-speaking countries, many started to wonder about the legacy of the use of the word civilization. Two seemingly opposite viewpoints emerged. The first one, that civilization was, and would remain, merely a rhetorical tool of whatever party wanted to use it, the second that the concept of civilization had fundamentally changed the international sphere. David Urquhart, the famous anti-Russian Turcophile had become suspicious of Palmerston's rhetoric and his basis for support. Specifically irritating to Urquhart was Palmerston's use of the word civilization, whose real meaning no one seemed to understand. As Urquhart explained, referring to the debates in Aberdeen's government:

there were the reasonable and political men who cared not a fig about Turkey or civilization

100 "Rundschau," *Münchener Punsch*, July 6, 1856, 210. 'If the inhabitants of Schleswig-Holstein were Turks, then the case would be a different one, then they could be presented as the representatives of civilization, then all the humane powers of Europe would be willing to defend their integrity and independence'.

101 Carl-Ludwig von Ficquelmont, *Zum künftigen Frieden: eine Gewissensfrage* (Vienna: Verlag von Freidrich Manz, 1856), 28–35.

102 Wagener, "Civilisation," 369. 'under Louis Napoleon civilization was made the main slogan against Russia.'

103 Bismarck, *Gedanken Und Erinnerungen*, 2:110.

but who with profound sagacity saw that Russia had to be kept out. This great principle being established, endless contention arose. Are the Turks civilized or not – is the Ottoman empire to be destroyed or preserved – are we fighting for, or against civilisation – for or against ourselves?¹⁰⁴

Civilization, Urquhart like Bismarck argued, was nothing but a rhetorical tool. It could be used for everything because its meaning was so undefined: 'Civilization is, in fine, a monster without a brain or heart, but with a life of mere limb'.¹⁰⁵ While civilization had seemingly become an important factor in international politics, nobody would really profit from it, as its meaning would remain forever undefined.

While this was certainly a heavy charge, more conservative commentators in Prussia suspected that something else was happening. As Leopold von Gerlach explained in his *Rundschau* in the *Neue Preussische Zeitung*, the concept of civilization as political ideology was the heritage of the revolution, anti-religious and, as a term of politics, inherently opposed to the traditional order. The use of civilization was intended purely to de-christianize the European public sphere, to integrate the Ottoman Empire and to fulfil the wishes of revolutionary Europe. With the integration of civilizational language into the realm of European public law, old Europe and its true, and Christian civilization had come to an end:

Die Aufnahme der Türkei in den Bund der Christenstaaten soll das Freiheits und Civilisationswerk vollenden. Es soll also das Bekenntnis zur heiligen Dreieinigkeit aus den grossen Staatsverträgen Europa's verdrängt werden [...]. So verstopft man die allein mögliche und zugleich unerschöpfliche Quelle aller Freiheit und Civilisation.¹⁰⁶

While the concept of civilization was not directly integrated into the 1856 Treaty of Paris, Gerlach was right that the international sphere after the Crimean War had dramatically changed. In 1856, the winners of the Crimean War met Russia in Paris and the resulting treaty changed the face of

104 David Urquhart, *Familiar Words, as Affecting the Conduct of England in 1855* (London: Trübner & Company, 1855), 186.

105 Ibid., 182.

106 Ludwig Gerlach, *Fünf politische Quartal-Rundschau: von Michaelis 1854 bis Neujahr 1855* (Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz, 1856), 53. 'The acceptance of Turkey into the league of Christian nations is meant to finish the great work of freedom and civilization. The allegiance to the trinity will be pushed out of the great treaties of Europe. Like this one blocks, the only possible and simultaneously endless well of all freedom and civilization.'

European politics. Turkey was for the first time formally integrated into the Concert of Europe, as Gerlach had feared. Although the word civilization was not mentioned in the treaty itself, Gerlach was right that the old idea of the European Concert had been destroyed and that civilization was the new principle of politics.¹⁰⁷ If this was not visible in the final treaty itself, the protocols noted that the various parties present understood the Sultan's renewed pledge to protect the Christians in his realm, equally as a sign of increasing civilization: 'Leursdites Majestés acceptent cette communication comme un nouveau gage de l'amélioration du sort des chrétiens d'Orient, en objet commun de leurs vœux dans un intérêt général d'humanité, de civilisation, et de piété'.¹⁰⁸

By the mid-1850s, therefore, civilization had officially become part of the international sphere, and, as I have shown, colonialism should not be blamed for its appearance, but ideas of liberalism and nationalism that had slowly changed the face of Europe over the previous decades. The political language of civilization was at first a national, and perhaps even an anti-imperial one. The origins of civilizational language lie not in later imperial projects, but inner-European conflicts. The word civilization, although used by all sides, was primarily associated with liberal politics and with the western powers, which more broadly stood for these new and progressive ideas. Yet, as I will demonstrate in the next chapter, conservative notions of civilization had not disappeared and would be taken up by the Catholic Church and its supporters during the following decade, which saw the continuation and further proliferation of civilizational language in Europe.

107 Marc Pauka, *Kultur, Fortschritt und Reziprozität: Die Begriffsgeschichte des zivilisierten Staates im Völkerrecht* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2012), 106–107.

108 Quotation in Édouard Gourdon, *Histoire du Congrès de Paris* (Paris: Librairie nouvelle, 1857), 77. 'Their majesties accept this communication as a new pledge for the amelioration of the Christians in the Orient, common object of their wishes in the interest of general humanity, of civilization, and of piety.'

Chapter 3. Civilization, Nationalism, and War

Introduction

Over the 1860s, the language of civilization became even more firmly established in the international sphere. Its continuous rise was again, I argue, sustained by controversy, as a strong nexus emerged between nationalism, ideas of modern civilization, and Protestantism, opposed to Catholicism and the old order. Continuing the rhetoric established during the Crimean War, the first war of the decade, the Second Italian War of Independence, was again fought in the name of civilization. Its supporters abroad, who tended to be Protestants, or at least opposed to the temporal power of the Catholic Church, perceived it to be part of a wider conflict between modern nationalism, and the defenders of the old order, most importantly: the Catholic Church. Such rhetoric was responded to by the Vatican, which not only published a journal dedicated to Catholic civilization, but also formally condemned the idea that the Pope should reconcile himself with the demands of modern civilization, liberalism and nationalism. Needless to say, such statements added fuel to the flames and all over Europe, but specifically in the German-speaking countries, a continuously brewing conflict developed that Wolfram Kaiser has referred to as an inner-European 'clash of civilizations'.¹

In the Austro-Prussian war, a struggle many again portrayed as a battle between old and new principles of rule, these two fronts collided once more, but the war also opened up a new avenue for the concept of civilization to enter international law. Throughout the early 1860s, the glaring discrepancy between the rhetoric of civilization, and the frequency and brutality of nationalist wars had become a poignant issue in European debates. It was liberal supporters of international law, deeply steeped in civilizational rhetoric, who argued that the civilization of warfare equally had to form part of the project of progress they associated with nationalism and liberalism. I argue that throughout the mid-nineteenth century the idea that the progressive national state was defined through its attempts to wage civilized war became a staple of liberal, national thinking. While Russian officials made early attempts of using the regulations of warfare to rehabilitate their country's tarnished reputation, the nexus of civilization and warfare became most prominently visible in the last war of western European nationalism: the Franco-Prussian war. Both sides claimed that their war effort represented civilization, but German liberals specifically accused the French of leading uncivilized and non-national warfare by using non-European troops in battle, a

1 Wolfram Kaiser, "'Clericalism – That Is Our Enemy!': European Anticlericalism and the Culture Wars," in *Culture Wars: Secular Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 47–76.

fact, they argued, which showed that Germany was now the leading civilizational power in Europe, representing truly national principles.

Civilization and Italian Unification

While the Crimean War had come to an end in 1856, the rhetoric of civilization had not, and its application continued seamlessly throughout the next conflicts the war itself had, directly or indirectly, sparked. Throughout the 1850s, and even afterwards, the coalitions the Crimean War had forged remained stable, and kept the language of civilization alive. In many ways, victory in the Crimean War convinced large sections of the British public that they were not only, as has been argued, leading civilization against the despotisms of eastern and southern Europe, but that Britain, like France, had a global mission.² In the Second Opium War, started almost immediately after the Crimean adventure, the new alliance of France and Britain was fighting, as the *Allgemeine Zeitung* in Augsburg sarcastically put it: 'wie einst in der Krim, einen Krieg der Gerechtigkeit und Civilisation'.³ Like the Crimean War, the conflict sparked large public and parliamentary debates in Britain, and here too the concept of civilization fulfilled several different functions. While some argued that the shelling of Canton, which had started the war, could justly be labelled an act of civilization, as it was opening China to trade, others saw the British intervention as barbarian.⁴ In fact, as can be seen in the parliamentary debates that Andrew Phillips has ably traced, the fault-lines in Britain were remarkably similar to the ones of the Crimean War.⁵ While most liberals advocated intervention in the name of civilization, Cobden and a loose coalition of MPs, which also included conservatives, refused British involvement for the same reason. For the time being, at least in global debates, civilization continued its schizophrenic career on various sides of the political spectrum, and was not necessarily associated with any particular ideology.

The third victor of the Crimean war, the rulers of the Kingdom of Sardinia, similarly remained allied with France and they too continued to use the rhetoric of civilization, albeit in a rather different, more domestic, context. Although the Crimean War itself had proved to be a failure for the ambitious politicians of Sardinia, as their demands at the Paris Conference had largely been ignored, the coalition with France, strengthened through the Crimean experience, continued to

2 Jonathan Parry, *The Politics of Patriotism: English Liberalism, National Identity and Europe, 1830-1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 8.

3 "Frankreich," *Allgemeine Zeitung*, June 4, 1860, 156 edition.'just as in Crimea, a war of justice and civilization'

4 Andrew Phillips, "Saving Civilization from Empire: Belligerency, Pacifism and the Two Faces of Civilization during the Second Opium War," *European Journal of International Relations* 18, no. 5 (2011): 5–27; see also Erik Ringmar, "Free Trade by Force: Civilization against Culture in the Great China Debate of 1857," in *Culture and External Relations: Europe and Beyond*, ed. Monika Mokre and Jozef Bátora (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2013), 15–32.

5 Phillips, "Saving Civilization from Empire."

benefit them.⁶ Victories over Austrian troops in Magenta and Solferino, achieved with substantial help from France, gave the kingdom of the young Vittorio Emanuele Lombardy, and over the next year Parma, Modena, and Tuscany were annexed and the first Kingdom of Italy proclaimed.⁷ Although Italy immediately had to yield Nice and Savoy to Napoleon III, as had previously been agreed in a secret treaty, Italian officials did not tire of mentioning the great service to civilization they had achieved together. On the birthday of the emperor in August 1860, the municipality of Milan took the opportunity to thank the French officially for 'la délivrance de l'Italie, pour le généreux allié qui s'est donné la noble mission de marier, sous le sceptre de Victor Emmanuel, des peuples déjà assortis par la nationalité et la civilisation.'⁸ Continuing this rhetoric, the king himself announced in his first parliamentary speech that the foundation of Italy was not only a great feat of civilizational advance and of liberalism, but that Italy would now itself become the instrument of universal, liberal civilization: 'L'opinione delle genti civili ci è propizia; ci sono propizi gli equi e liberali principii che vanno prevalendo nei Consigli d'Europa. L'Italia diventerà per essa una guarentigia di ordine e di pace, e ritornerà efficace stromento della civiltà universale.'⁹

In a European-wide debate that had naturally ensued, Italian nationalism, the language of civilization, and the support of Napoleon III, were heavily discussed. John Stuart Mill, although supportive of Italian unification, could not support the way it came about, mainly because of his opposition to Napoleon III, who he regarded as a despot and danger to humanity.¹⁰ It was a position frequently heard on the continent, but opposed by those who, like Ferdinand Lassalle, argued that the ends justified the means. As he put it in *Der italienische Krieg und die Aufgabe Preussens*: 'Wenn die Aufgabe, Italien vom österreichischen Joche zu befreien, eine grosse und civilisatorische ist, - liegt sie denn darum weniger in den Interessen der Civilisation, weil es Louis Napoleon ist,

6 For the Treaty of Paris see the works of Winfried Baumgart, especially Winfried Baumgart, *Der Friede Von Paris 1856. Studien Zum Verhältnis Von Kriegführung, Politik Und Friedensbewahrung*. (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1972).

7 For a brief introduction see Christopher Duggan, *A Concise History of Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 118–143.

8 Belgioioso, "Le 15 aout a Milan," in *Grand almanach de la France guerrière pour 1861. Proclamations et harangues militaires. Ordres du jour remarquables, etc. (Période de 1830 à 1860.)*, ed. Eugène Pick (Paris: Grande Librairie Napoléonienne, 1860), 131. 'the deliverance of Italy, for the generous ally who has given himself the noble mission to marry under the sceptre of Victor Emmanuel peoples already united in nationality and civilization'.

9 Vittorio Emanuele II, "Discorso Pronunziato Da S.M. Vittorio Emanuele II Nella Sollene Apertura Del Parlamento Italiano Addi 18 Febbraio 1861" (Camera dei Deputati), 2, accessed August 30, 2014, <http://archivio.camera.it/resources/feaCms/percorsi/150/mostra/02-003.pdf>. 'The opinion of the civilized peoples is favourable; favourable to the fair and liberal principles which will prevail in the councils of Europe. Italy will become for them a guarantee of order and peace, and an effective instrument of universal civilization.'

10 Georgios Varouxakis, *Liberty Abroad: J. S. Mill on International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 77–100.

der, obwohl aus den erbärmlichen Motiven, es über sich gewonnen hat, sich ihr zu unterziehen?"¹¹ While the supporters of the new Italy were not entirely clear about the bases and consequences of what had happened, more conservative thinkers understood the Second Italian War of Independence as a natural continuation of the destruction of the old European order that had started with the Crimean War. Austrian publications, for example, argued that 'das ganze Geschrei' about 'Krieg im Namen der europäischen Civilisation' – first used in Crimea and now in the Austrian conflicts – was a 'Komödie' thought up by revolutionaries, intent on breaking the last vestiges of the traditional order.¹²

Many saw the repeated use of civilizational language as a new phase in the break of European traditions. As German readers were told in Carpentier's *Über Civilisation*:

Unserer Zeit, dem modernen Zeitalter der Erfindungen, war es vorbehalten, Worte zu erfinden oder in neuer Weise zu verwenden um unter ihrem blendenden (ach bisweilen sogar unsauberen) Deckmantel beliebige Absichten geltend zu machen und sich einen bequemen Weg über wohlbegründete Rechte hinweg zu bahnen.¹³

The German mathematician and philosopher Constantin Frantz dedicated a whole, and very successful, book, which he called *Untersuchungen über das europäische Gleichgewicht*, to the problem.¹⁴ Frantz, whose writings would later inspire Richard Wagner's anti-French rhetoric, saw the ideas of civilization now proclaimed as directly linked to the historical separation the Revolution had created between the French past and the French present.¹⁵ Because France had lost

11 Ferdinand Lassalle, *Der italienische Krieg und die Aufgabe Preussens* (Berlin: Verlag von Franz Duncker, 1859), 5–6. 'The Italian war and the task of Prussia'. 'If the task of liberating Italy from Austrian domination is truly a great and civilizational one, is it less in the interest of civilization, if it is Louis Napoleon, who, albeit for miserable motives, has decided to pursue it?'

12 *Die Folgen der Verschwörung von Plombiers, oder Enthüllungen der hinterlistigen Anschläge unserer Feinde zum Raubanfall gegen Oesterreich in Italien und Ungarn. Aufdeckung aller geheimen Pläne, welche die Revolution zur Vernichtung Oesterreichs entworfen, und einige sehr interessante Blicke in die Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft für Oesterreiche Völker* (Vienna: In Commission der Mechitaristen=Buchhandlung, 1861), 3; for instances of the use of civilization on the Austrian side see *Geschichte der deutschen Politik unter dem Einfluss des italienischen Kriegs: eine Kritik* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1860), 20; Rudolf Marggraff, *Vor und nach dem Frieden von Villafranca. Studien zur Geschichte und Kritik der politischen Entwicklung des letzten Zeitdrama's* (Leipzig: Adolph Lehmann, 1860), 141–142. 'all this pathos'. 'war in the name of European civilization'. 'comedy'.

13 George Carpentier, *I. Herr Forcade und die römische Frage. II. Über Civilisation* (Dresden: Ch. G. Ernst am Ende, 1862), 13. 'It was the privilege of our time, the modern age of inventions, to invent words or to use old ones in a new way, so as to, under this blinding and often dirty shield, find a new and comfortable way over old and old just rights.'

14 Constantin Frantz, *Untersuchungen über das europäische Gleichgewicht* (Berlin: Ferdinand Schneider, 1859). 'Investigations into the European Balance'.

15 See Richard Wagner, *Deutsche Kunst und deutsche Politik* (Leipzig: Verlagsbuchhandlung von J.J. Weber, 1868), 9.

its connection to the past, Frantz argued, it now had to inspire ideas of nationality in other states to overcome the previously existing equilibrium and destroy the old order, which would have excluded its revolutionary tendencies.¹⁶

Similar ideas were uttered in Italy where civilizational debate had intensified over the last decade. For roughly ten years, preceding the Italian wars of unification, two fundamentally opposed ideas of civilization had been formulated by Italy's intellectual elites. While the liberals and nationalists of 1848 had agitated for what they called 'modern civilization', the Catholic Church and the Pope had drawn the theoretical outlines of a more conservative notion: Catholic civilization.¹⁷ Already in 1850, after the Pope had been exiled to Naples during an earlier episode of liberal uprising, the journal *Civilta Cattolica* had been founded. It was a Jesuit publication intended to, as its contemporary editors remember: 'difendere "la civiltà cattolica", minacciata dai nemici della Chiesa, in particolare dai liberali e dai massoni'.¹⁸ The *Civilta Cattolica*, unusually for a papal publication, was written in Italian, to gather maximum attention, and outlined a clear program defining Catholic civilization.¹⁹ It was opposed to liberalism, to nationalism, to changes of the traditional order, and to freedom of religion, briefly: to everything the new Italian state claimed to stand for. Consequently, the ideologies of the liberal elite and the Papal States (which physically stood in the way of a full Italian unification) were opposing political programs heading for an intellectual and political collision.

Although the discrepancies between these two programs of civilization had been obvious from the beginning, the two ideas first clashed openly in March 1861.²⁰ The government of the Kingdom of Italy claimed Rome as its natural capital and demanded the Pope abdicate his sovereign titles to the city. Prime Minister Cavour added fuel to the flames by explaining to parliament that papal rule was 'incompatable with modern civilization.'²¹ The Pope's predictable answer came in the form of an allocution that directly outlined the positions of the Church and the distinctions between the two

16 Frantz, *Untersuchungen über das europäische Gleichgewicht*, 119–147.

17 André Luigi Mazzini, *De L'Italie dans ses rapports avec la liberté et la civilisation moderne* (Leipzig: Brockhaus & Avenarius, 1847); "Il giornalismo moderna ed il nostro programma," *La Civilta Cattolica: Pubblicazione periodica per tutta l'italia* 1, no. 1 (1850): 5–24.

18 "La nostra storia: l'Idea," <http://www.laciviltacattolica.it/it/storia/storia/lidea/>, *La civiltà cattolica*, (n.d.), accessed August 20, 2014. 'to defend catholic civilization, which was attacked by the enemies of the church, in particular the liberals and the Freemasons'.

19 "Il giornalismo moderna ed il nostro programma."

20 For an introduction to pre-unification anti-catholicism see Manuel Borutta, "Anti-Catholicism and the Culture War in Risorgimento Italy," in *The Risorgimento Revisited: Nationalism and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Italy*, ed. Silvana Patriarca and Lucy Riall (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 191–213.

21 Camillo Benso Cavour, *La question romaine devant le parlement italien: discours et discussion à la chambre des députés* (Paris: Dentu, 1861), 4.

civilizations, as the Vatican saw them:

Jamdudum Cernibus, Venerabiles Fratres quo misero sane conflictu ob invicem pugnancia inter veritatem et errorem, inter virtutem et vitium inter lucem et tenebras principia, hac miserrima nostra praesertim aetate civilis exagitetur societas. Namque alii ex una parte tuentur quaedam moderne, uti appellant, civilitatis placita, alii ex altera iustitiae sanctissimaeque nostrae Religionis iura propugnant. Ac primi postulant, ut Romanus Pontifex cum *Progressu* cum *Liberalismo*, uti vocant, ac recenti civilitate se reconciliet et componat.²²

As Borutta has pointed out, the Italian liberal-nationalists were certainly aware of what they were doing, demanding the vacating of Rome, and were actively risking an international controversy. They certainly achieved what they had bargained for.²³ While some, like the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, had previously written sceptically about the 'Kreuzzug der Civilisation', the Italian government was engaged in, the Allocution itself now rallied the *Times* and other papers around a clear position against the Pope:

In yesterday's consistory the Pope's reaction was most violent and extreme [...] the pontiff spoke out in a manner calculated to satisfy the black party, but which will hardly gratify the more liberal section of his adherents [...]. He declares modern progress and liberalism to be incompatible, and announces his fixed determination to uphold the rights transmitted to him by his predecessors.²⁴

Yet there was a sense that the Pope's message had been as calculated in its clarity than his opponents' and that the lines of a long-standing battle had now been clearly outlined. As the *Edinburgh Review* explained in an article dedicated to the European book scene: 'It is impossible to delude oneself as to the temper of these words. The declaration is in its sense not a whit less explicit than its counterpart by Count Cavour. When Pius IX spoke this allocution, it is plain that he

22 For a long time, venerable brethren, we have seen into which misery of conflict civil society has been plunged. In our unhappy times a war has broken out between truth and error, virtue and vice, light and darkness. Some argue for the maxims of modern, as they call it, civilization; while others advocate the rights of justice and of our sacred religion. The first group claim that the Roman Pontiff should reconcile himself and make peace with progress, with liberalism, as they say, and with today's civilization.

23 Borutta, "Anti-Catholicism and the Culture War in Risorgimento Italy"; C. T. McIntire, *England Against the Papacy 1858-1861: Tories, Liberals and the Overthrow of Papal Temporal Power During the Italian Risorgimento* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

24 "Foreign Intelligence," *The Times*, March 27, 1861; "Berlin," *Allgemeine Zeitung*, April 8, 1860, 99 edition; Frantz, *Untersuchungen über das europäische Gleichgewicht*.

deliberately meant to burn his ships.¹²⁵

The English interest in these questions was not limited to those who cared about foreign policy, as the struggle between the Pope and the Kingdom of Italy heavily overlapped with an already existing debate about the relationship between Catholicism and civilization. The role of Catholicism within English politics had always been a contested one, and had often served as the negative backdrop to the positive stories of the rise of English freedom and prosperity, which allegedly arose first in opposition to the Pope and then to the equally catholic French.²⁶ As William Alexander MacKinnon argued in his famous 1846 publication *History of Civilisation*, the connection between Protestantism and liberalism went back even further than the Glorious Revolution: it had caused it. As MacKinnon explained: 'The civilisation of the people was gradually but decidedly extending itself, and the Protestant faith and desire for a liberal form of government were advancing, hand in hand, to bring about the change in 1688.'²⁷ By the 1860s, this opposition to the Catholic Church was arguably no longer solely based on an affirmation of specific theological differences or the personal beliefs of kings, but on arguments about the relationship between Protestantism, and an idea of progress and civilization more broadly.²⁸ Already in November 1854, the height of the Crimean War, the liberal Catholic periodical *The Rambler* published a long article dedicated to what it called: 'The "Civilization" argument':

Catholics who mix much with the world are often attacked with some such questions as these: If Catholicism is from God and is the only true Gospel, how is it that the political and social condition of Catholic countries is often so degraded. How is it that while freedom, commerce, and national power have attained so glorious a height in Protestant England, Catholic Spain is a prey to factions, revolutions, tyranny, and general decay [...] To put the whole question in a sentence: "If England is wrong and Rome is right, why is the civilisation of the Papal States inferior to that of England?"²⁹

25 "Church Reform in Italy," *The Edinburgh Review* 231 (1861): 267.

26 Walter Ralls, "The Papal Aggression of 1850: A Study in Victorian Anti-Catholicism," *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 43, no. 02 (1974): 242–56; Clement Fatovic, "The Anti-Catholic Roots of Liberal and Republican Conceptions of Freedom in English Political Thought," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 66, no. 1 (2005): 37–58; Yvonne Maria Werner and Jonas Harvard, "European Anti-Catholicism in a Comparative and Transnational Perspective. The Role of a Unifying Other: An Introduction," *European Studies* 31 (2013): 13–22; Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, 2nd ed. (London: Pimlico, 2003), 11–54.

27 William Alexander Mackinnon, *History of Civilisation* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1846), 195.

28 Hugh McLeod, in *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia*, ed. Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), 44–70.

29 "The 'Civilization' Argument," *The Rambler* 2, no. 11 (1854): 365.

In the late 1850s, these debates about the rise of civilization (and its connection to religion) increased in intensity, and reached their pinnacle with the publication of Henry Thomas Buckle's *History of Civilisation in England*, which fused previous arguments into a larger national-civilizational perspective.³⁰ In the two volumes he could complete before his death, Buckle carefully examined and traced the specific conditions that had led to the slow and continuing civilisation of England, and the less successful politics of Catholic countries. Already, the title was an attempt 'to integrate the nation into a civilisational perspective', and as Arnold Ruge, who later translated Buckle's tomes into German, put it, the book 'ist ein Ereignis geworden [...] die Nation hat den Geist adoptirt (sic), der es durchweht'.³¹ The rise and development of the English nation was a lesson on civilizational development more broadly, as it was in the development of English history that the general rise of civilization became visible. Buckle used political, social, and economic examples to show how the development of England correlated with the development of civilization more broadly. Characteristically, he described the Crimean War as a major sign in the advance of civilization, as England and France had started to oppose the despotic and backward Russia, instead of fighting each other.³² The slow rise of civilization was also visible in how the various religions related to each other. As Buckle, who hoped for a non-religious future altogether, explained to his readers in no uncertain terms: 'The Catholic religion bears to the Protestant Religion exactly the same relation as the Dark Ages bear to the sixteenth century.'³³

The fusion of these 'scientific' descriptions of the relationship between liberal values, Protestantism, civilization and history, with debates relating to Italian unification, the Crimean War, and its connection to modern civilization created an awkward position for English Catholics. Since their emancipation in 1829, the politically active members of the Catholic community, predominantly from recusant families, had been Whig MPs; primarily because they were concerned with the protection of their own religious freedoms, a position they felt more safely protected with the liberals.³⁴ As the international discussions on the Italian question and the debates about the relationship between religion and civilization simultaneously intensified, the odd position of the

30 Bernhard Semmel, "H. T. Buckle: The Liberal Faith and the Science of History," *The British Journal of Sociology* 27, no. 3 (1976): 370–86; There were others, not so famous examples like George Harris, *Civilization Considered as a Science* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1861).

31 Peter Mandler, "'Race' and 'Nation' in Mid-Victorian Thought," in *History, Religion, and Culture: British Intellectual History 1750–1950*, ed. Stefan Collini, Richard Whatmore, and Brian Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 224–44; Henry Thomas Buckle and Arnold Ruge, "Vorwort des Übersetzers," in *Geschichte der Civilisation in England*, trans. Arnold Ruge (Leipzig und Heidelberg: C.F. Winter'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1860), V. 'it has become an event, the nation has adopted its spirit'

32 Henry Thomas Buckle, *History of Civilization in England* (London: John W. Parker & Son, 1857), 177.

33 *Ibid.*, 239.

34 Josef L. Altholz, "The Political Behavior of the English Catholics, 1850-1867," *Journal of British Studies* 4, no. 01 (1964): 89–103.

English Catholics became ever clearer. The liberal leadership under the three pro-Italians Gladstone, Russell, and Palmerston, despite remaining ostensibly neutral, was certainly not helping the Catholic cause, and it was obvious that the general liberal position was one of support for Italian nationalism and modern civilisation against the Pope.³⁵ Instead of remaining inconspicuous, some Catholic Papers, like the *Tablet*, did everything to exacerbate the situation further by comparing the threat of the new Italian government with previous dangers of Islamism to civilization. As they put it in April 1860: 'Catholic Christianity is the life of civilization. Europe is threatened by revolution, as it formerly was by Islamism. The cause of the Pope is that of civilization and liberty.'³⁶

Those less keen on antagonizing majority opinion, like the famed liberal Catholic Lord Acton, attempted to reconfigure and disentangle the ideas of liberalism and nationalism, a position that has frequently been misread. As Acton explained in his famous 1862 essay 'On Nationality':

The co-existence of several nations under the same State is a test, as well as the best security of its freedom. It is also one of the chief instruments of civilisation; and, as such, it is in the natural and providential order, and indicates a state of greater advancement than the national unity which is the ideal of modern liberalism.³⁷

Many, like Mandler, have read this utterance as a British 'civilizational' argument against a continental 'nationalist' one, arguing that Acton's position can best be understood with reference to his admiration for the non-national history of Britain and his allegedly typically British disdain for the national politics of the continent.³⁸ This reading completely ignores an important layer of debate, which is that most liberal Protestant politicians in England supported the politics of nationality on the continent. It seems more appropriate therefore to read Acton not primarily as a British thinker, but as a Catholic one, opposing the majority of liberal opinion, not only on the continent but also in Britain. Whether one includes Acton in these debates or not, the discrepancies between the Catholic positions on nationality and the Protestant liberal support for Italian unification drove the coalition of Catholics and liberals ever further apart. Even outside of Parliament, Catholics started to agitate against the government and their MPs, despite not formally

35 Ibid., 99; McIntire, *England Against the Papacy 1858-1861*.

36 Quoted in McIntire, *England Against the Papacy 1858-1861*, 191.

37 John Dalberg Acton, "Nationality," *Home and Foreign Review* 1 (1865): 1–25; see also Timothy Lang, "Lord Acton and 'the Insanity of Nationality,'" *Journal of the History of Ideas* 63, no. 1 (2002): 129–49; Jeremy Black, "Lord Acton's Theory of the Supranational State and Today's Europe: Between the Tradition of the British Empire and of the Holy Roman Empire," *The European Legacy* 3, no. 6 (1998): 76–86.

38 Mandler, "'Race' and 'Nation' in Mid-Victorian Thought," 230.

breaking their alliance started to vote against the government and to leave the House to avoid voting on certain issues.³⁹

In the German-speaking countries, the repercussions of the Italian question, and the debates about civilization and nationalism, were even greater, primarily because Catholics were not a distinct minority, but a substantial part of the population potentially opposed to German unification. It was this confessional divide, as the liberal and Protestant Johann Caspar Bluntschli explained in a pamphlet published shortly before the Papal Allocution, that caused the German nation to be 'weniger als irgendein anderes europäisches Volk in der Lage eine gemeinsame Meinung auszubilden und einen einheitlichen Willen zu äussern.'⁴⁰ Now that the Catholic Church was taking a more pronounced political position against nationalism and liberalism, those invested in a modern state and liberal ideas had to be even more careful. As the example of other continental European countries like Belgium had already showed in the 1850s, the biggest rift in European politics had become one where liberalism and nationalism opposed Catholicism, a position that was now also popularized in the German speaking countries. As an opponent of more extreme political tendencies of Catholicism (generally referred to as ultramontanism) had already explained before the allocution:

Die Zeit wird über ihn hinschreiten, das ist gewiss. Aber mit wie viel Leiden und Unglück, das hängt wesentlich davon ab, in welchem Maasse Diejenigen, die den Beruf und die Pflicht haben, die Civilisation und den modernen Staat zu vertreten, das Wachstum des Ultramontanismus träge oder leichtsinnig gewähren lassen.⁴¹

German Catholics agreed that this was a large-scale international conflict, but they naturally, as Catholics in all other European countries, disagreed on which side civilization was to be found. 'Die Civilisation von Europa ist eine Tochter des Papstthums', as their publications emphasized, and the new principles of nationalism and liberalism, although they were supported by a large international coalition, were a mere chimera.⁴² As the Jesuit theologian Daniel Rattinger would later explain in

39 Altholz, "The Political Behaviour of English Catholics," 99.

40 Johann Caspar Bluntschli, *Das Papstthum vor der Napoleonischen und Deutschen Politik* (Berlin: Verlag von Julius Springer, 1860), 5. 'less than any other European peoples capable of forming a collective opinion and a common will'.

41 *Der Kampf der liberalen und der katholischen Partei in Belgien. Eine Warnung für Deutschland. Briefe eines Belgiers an einen Süddeutschen* (Zurich: Verlag von Meyer und Zeller, 1857), 19. Time will move on beyond it, that is certain. But with how much pain, suffering and misfortune, that depends entirely to what extent, those, who have the calling and duty to represent civilization and the modern state, will let the rise of ultramontanism sluggishly or carelessly happen.'

42 Giacomo Margotti, *Die Siege der Kirche in dem ersten Jahrzehnt des Pontifikates Pius IX aus dem*

the introduction to his pro-papal *Der Papst und der Kirchenstaat*, which sought to order the international sphere for his readers:

Drei Staaten werden vorzugsweise mit in Vergleich zu ziehen sein: Piemont, welches, der Ankläger des Papstes, den Beruf beansprucht, den Kirchenstaat mit seiner Civilisation zu beglücken; sodann Frankreich und England, welche jenes unter ihre schützenden Flügel genommen haben und sich rühmen, an der Spitze der Civilisation einherzuschreiten.⁴³

Nevertheless, as Rattinger added, real civilization could never be found amongst the new liberal states. It was a privilege of Rome, as the Vatican itself had emphasized:

In Rom ist Civilisation eine Wahrheit. Ein unter den Auspicien des Papstes gegründetes, von zehntausend Abonnenten gehaltenes, wohl unter hundertausenden Lesern circulirendes Blatt trägt dieses Wort (Civilta) an der Spitze und richtige Kenntnis der römischen Zustände gibt von ihr Zeugnis, während der ohne die Kirche errungene Fortschritt zwar glänzt, aber, einem übertünchtem Grabe ähnlich, Moder und Fäulniss in sich schliesst.⁴⁴

Given these associations of anti-national ideas of civilization with Catholicism, it was only logical that the project of German unification should be reared in the *Protestantenvereine*, where the liberal elite came together and lambasted the presumed anti-nationalism of the Catholic population.⁴⁵ Already in the early 1860, in Prussia, but also in other German states, this milieu produced the German variety of the nexus between Protestantism, nationalism, and advocacy of modern civilization that many in Britain regarded as an idiosyncratic phenomenon. In several pamphlets, Protestant liberals attacked the Catholic Church, its unnational and backward policies, and were happy to employ, as often as possible, the idea of (modern) civilization that the Pope and his states opposed. The Papal state, as the famous theologian Schenkel argued in a book dedicated to the link between Protestantism and nationalism: 'hat [...] den Beruf, einen permanenten Kampf gegen die

Italienischen von Pius Gams, 2nd ed. (Innsbruck: Verlag der Wagner'schen Buchhandlung, 1860). 'Civilization is the daughter of the Papacy'

43 Daniel Rattinger, *Der Papst und der Kirchenstaat*, 2nd ed. (Freiburg i. Breisgau, 1866), 20–21. 'Three states will have to be compared: Piedmont, which as the prosecutor of the papal state claims the role to bring it civilization, then France and England, which have taken it under its wings and who laud themselves as marching at the head of civilization.'

44 Rattinger, *Der Papst und der Kirchenstaat*, 40–41.

45 See Michael B. Gross, *The War Against Catholicism: Liberalism and the Anti-Catholic Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004); Manuel Borutta, *Antikatholizismus: Deutschland und Italien im Zeitalter der europäischen Kulturkämpfe* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010).

moderne Civilisation und Cultur zu führen'.⁴⁶ It is remarkable that ten years before the outbreak of the *Kulturkampf*, German Protestants and liberals were already arguing in very similar terms against the Catholic Church. Even more remarkable is the extent to which the language of civilization was a shared phenomenon amongst mid-nineteenth century liberals. The vocabulary of a debate that was ostensibly triggered in Italy travelled throughout Europe, and split many countries into strikingly similar camps.

The Syllabus of Errors and the War of 1866

Despite its popularity, the civilizational language of the early 1860s could have slowly died away had events in Italy and the publication of a new Encyclica not again fanned the flames of a European-wide debate. In 1864, the Pope pushed civilizational language onto another level with the publication of a new Encyclica: *Quanta Cura*.⁴⁷ The Encyclica itself, although important, was certainly less controversial than the document that was attached to it: the *Syllabus of Errors*.⁴⁸ The *Syllabus* was dedicated to the condemnation of what the Vatican described as common errors in belief, ranging from pantheism to latitudinarianism. Hidden away at the end was article 80 that word for word integrated the Allocution of 1861 against the Italian government, stating that it was an error to believe that 'The Roman Pontiff can, and ought to, reconcile himself, and come to terms with progress, liberalism and modern civilization.'⁴⁹ In other words, it was a final positioning of the Catholic Church as a clear representative of the opposition to all modern political developments, and it became a reference point for anti-clerical critique over the next decades. As Victor Hugo would put it, almost a decade later:

On pourrait dire que dans notre siècle il y a deux écoles. Ces deux écoles condensent et résument en elles les deux courants contraires qui entraînent la civilisation en sens inverse, l'un vers l'avenir, l'autre vers le passé ; la première de ces deux écoles s'appelle Paris, l'autre s'appelle Rome. Chacune de ces deux écoles a son livre ; le livre de Paris, c'est la Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme ; le livre de Rome, c'est le Syllabus. Ces deux livres donnent la réplique au Progrès. Le premier lui dit Oui ; le second lui dit Non. Le progrès,

46 Daniel Schenkel, *Die kirchliche Frage und ihre protestantische Lösung, im Zusammenhange mit den nationalen Bestrebungen und mit besonderer Beziehung auf die neuesten Schriften I. I. I. von Döllinger's und Bischof von Ketteler's* (Elberfeld: Verlag von R.L. Friderichs, 1862), 121; Gross, *The War Against Catholicism*, 104–109.

'has the calling to lead a permanent struggle against modern civilization and culture.'

47 "Quanta Cura: Condemning Current Errors," *Papal Encyclicals Online*, accessed August 31, 2014, <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9quanta.htm>.

48 "The Syllabus of Errors," *Papal Encyclicals Online*, accessed August 31, 2014, <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius09/p9syll.htm>.

49 Ibid.

c'est le pas de Dieu.⁵⁰

Although universally discussed, European reactions to the *Syllabus of Errors* differed considerably and ranged from derision in England, to rabid and fanatic discussion in the German-speaking countries. The Anglican opposition to the positions of the Catholic Church certainly intensified with the *Syllabus*, but not enough to sway the government away from its course of (ostensible, yet not actual) neutrality.⁵¹ Despite the fact that Catholic Papers like the *Dublin Review* alleged that specifically article 80 had been 'wildly misinterpreted by the anti-Catholic press', it is, as Quinn has rightly pointed out, 'important not to exaggerate Protestant outrage.'⁵² Although some were certainly surprised and the *Syllabus* was quickly used as a political tool, the actual debates remained rather tepid.⁵³ This calm political reaction was possible due to the fact that nobody would have gained from a large public dispute. The Catholics were still in a coalition, though loose and decaying, with the liberals. The conservatives, despite moving closer to the Catholics, could not have been interested in alienating the rest of their electorate by large discussions about their relationship to Catholic principles. Furthermore, the positions of the government and the Catholic Church were not in themselves new, and were continuously discussed amongst the leaders of the various movements, in an almost intimate and amicable atmosphere that softened the sharpness of their arguments. Shortly before the official publication of the *Syllabus*, Henry Edward Manning, the later Archbishop of Westminster, had written to his friend and prime minister, Gladstone: 'I feel a very deep conviction that the Christian civilization of Europe is at this moment threatened by a political movement which has rejected Christianity. And that the influence of England has been of late on the wrong side.'⁵⁴ Despite his indirect accusation that Gladstone was party to the destruction of Christian civilization, Manning ended his letter on a friendly note: 'I hope you are well & enjoying your rest.'

The courtesy of this friendly exchange between leading lights of British society was not replicated

50 also quoted Jean Starobinski, "The Word Civilization," in *Blessings in Disguise; Or, the Morality of Evil* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), 1–35, who gives the following translation 'One can say that in our century there are two schools. These two schools condense and epitomize the two contrary currents that carry civilization in opposite directions, one toward the future, the other toward the past: the first of these two schools is called Paris, the second, Rome. Each of these two schools has its book; the book of Paris is the Declaration of the Rights of Man; the Book of Rome is the Syllabus. These two books answer Progress. The first says yes; the second says no. Progress is God's footstep.'

51 Robert Fitzsimons, "The Church of England and the First Vatican Council," *Journal of Religious History* 27, no. 1 (2003): 29–46.

52 Dermot Quinn, *Patronage and Piety: The Politics of English Roman Catholicism, 1850-1900* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 12–13; "The Encyclical and Syllabus," *The Dublin Review* 4 (1865): 492.

53 Quinn, *Patronage and Piety*, 13.

54 Peter C. Erb, ed., *The Correspondence of Henry Edward Manning and William Ewart Gladstone: Volume III 1861–1875* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 31–32.

in the debates on the continent. After the publication of the *Syllabus of Errors* the climate of opinion had become even more hostile. The exact meaning of the Pope's notion of civilization and the differences between 'modern' and 'Catholic' civilization were heavily debated. It was not just a case, as Christopher Clark has described it, of an ideological fight in which everyone claimed to speak for civilization, these were truly different conceptions of it and in contrast to the British debates it was possible to gain political capital through these discussions.⁵⁵ This was true for both Catholics, as well as their liberal Protestant opponents, all of whom gained through exaggerating the differences between their positions. Bluntschli, who had previously held relatively nuanced opinions, called the *Syllabus* 'a manifesto of war by ecclesiastical absolutism over the modern world and its culture'.⁵⁶ The future MP of the Catholic *Zentrum* Anton Westermayer preached to his congregation that 'modern civilisation', advocated by men like Bluntschli, was not just opposition to the Catholic Church, but possibly a program of annihilation of Christianity as such. Directly referencing article 80 of the *Syllabus* Westermayer explained: 'Da man aber unter dem Namen der Civilisation ein eigens zur Schwächung, vielleicht sogar zur Vernichtung der Kirche Christi gebildetes System verstehen will, können der heilige Stuhl und der römische Papst gewiss nie mit solcher Civilisation übereinkommen'.⁵⁷

The Catholic contribution was by no means limited to Westermayer's ideas as several theologians and laypeople would over the next months offer various opinions.⁵⁸ Although some, who considered themselves Catholic, argued against the *Syllabus*, the general effect was that of an even stricter separation between two camps.⁵⁹ As the *Syllabus* defined true Catholicism in opposition to modernity, the two religions became even more clearly identified as supporting and opposing progress. Throughout the 1860s, long before the later *Kulturkampf*, the positions of Catholics and Protestants in German politics hardened.⁶⁰ In this climate, all attempts of the defenders of the

55 Christopher Clark, "The New Catholicism and the European Culture Wars," in *Culture Wars: Secular Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 41.

56 Quoted in Martti Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law 1870–1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 65.

57 Anton Westermayer, *Der Papst im Kampfe gegen den Fortschritt, den Liberalismus, und die moderne Civilisation* (Regensburg: Verlag von Friedrich Pustet, 1865), 25. 'Because one understands under the name of civilization a system designed to weaken and possibly even to destroy the Church of Christ, the Holy See and the Roman Pope can never reconcile themselves with such a civilization.

58 Florian Riess, *Eine Vorfrage über die Verpflichtung* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1866); *Der Papst und die modernen Ideen. II Heft. Die Encyclica vom 8. Dezember 1864 nebst einem Vorworte von P. Clemens Schrader S.J.* (Vienna: Verlag von Carl Sartori, 1865).

59 For an exception see Jakob Frohschammer, *Beleuchtung der päpstlichen Encyclica vom 8. December 1864 und des Verzeichnisses der modernen Irrthümer: nebst einem Anhang: Kritik der Broschüre des Bischofs von Orleans. An den Klerus und das Volk der katholischen Kirche von einem Katholiken* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1865).

60 Manuel Borutta, "Enemies at the Gate: The Moabit Klostersturm and the Kulturkampf: Germany," in *Culture Wars: Secular Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003),

Catholic church to point out that the war against 'modern civilization' was not a war against the amenities of modern life, but instead against what they saw as a particular interpretation of modernity, were unsuccessful.⁶¹ Whether all Catholics really desired to be portrayed as defenders of a bastion of conservatism and reactionary politics is doubtful, the political circumstances forced most to take a stand for a position that was probably more extreme than they had anticipated. The political worlds outlined by these two segregated blocks were so incoherent that it is not wrong to speak of a 'clash of civilizations' within Europe.⁶²

The opposition between a national, anti-Catholic position and a Catholicism that had come to be associated with everything the old order stood for dominated the next major European conflict: the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. To many liberals the Austro-Prussian war of 1866, joined by Italy on the side of Prussia, was a war of nationalism against the prison-house of nations: modernity, progress, and Protestantism opposing backwardness, dynasticism, and support of the Catholic Church.⁶³ As an anonymous pamphleteer explained shortly after the war, Austria's defeat was clear from the beginning, as it was obvious that 'das entschiedene Zurückbleiben hinter den Entwicklungen Europas, hinter der Culturströmung des Zeitalters, das starre Festhalten an, bereits zu den Todten (sic) gezählten Staatsmaximen und Institutionen das Verderben dieses Staates zur Folge haben musste'.⁶⁴ Similar opinions were expressed by non-German nationalists within Austria, and it was an opinion directly connected to the idea of civilization. As one of them put it:

während die europäische Civilisation eine Solidarität bei den gebildeten Völkern hervorrief blieben wir vereinsamt, vereinzelt in der Welt, ohne volkswirtschaftliche Entwicklung und ohne Verbindungen, als letztes Bollwerk einer dahingeschwundenen Zeit, abgeneigt den Wegen und Zielen denen wir zueilen sollen, und eine Wehre für eine längst von Allen aufgegebenen Sache.⁶⁵

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61 Westermayer, *Civilisation*, 5–11; Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler, *Deutschland nach dem Kriege von 1866*, 3rd ed. (Mainz: Verlag von Franz Kirchheim, 1867), 142–147; Peter Franz Reichensperger, *Kulturkampf: oder, Friede in Staat und Kirche* (Berlin: Verlag von Julius Springer, 1876), 18–20; Clark, "The New Catholicism and the European Culture Wars," 46.

62 Kaiser, "Anticlericalism," 75.

63 Heinrich August Winkler, *Geschichte des Westens: Von den Anfängen in der Antike bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich: C.H.Beck, 2011), 772.

64 *Bruder-Krieg? Nein! Principien-Kampf! Von einem Veteranen aus den Jahren 1813-1815*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Nicolaische Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1866), 1. 'the determined resistance against the developments in Europe, against the movements of culture, and the insistence on maxims and institutions of state already declared dead, would be the downfall of this state.'

65 *Oesterreich und die Völker Oesterreichs nach dem Kriege im Jahre 1866* (Prague: Dr.F. Skřejšovský, 1866), 28. 'while european Civilization, created solidarity amongst the civilized nations, we were left alone, and lonely in the world; without economic development and without connections, a last bastion of a long-gone era, turned

Needless to say, these tendencies were also supported by those German Protestants who had always seen the national cause as the progress of civilization and Austria as a backward and Catholic power. Schenkel, once again, explained: 'Auf dem Schlachtfelde von Königgrätz hat nicht nur der österreichische Staat, sondern das ultramontan-jesuitische System eine schwere Niederlage erlitten [...] Preussen ist und bleibt auf dem europäischen Continent die Burg des protestantischen Geistes.'⁶⁶ Prussia's project, now closely associated with the civilizational rhetoric of nationalism, was not over yet. As the nationalist historian Treitschke prophesized in the language of civilization: 'Ein Zeitalter wahrhafter Civilisation, gesicherten Weltfriedens kann nicht eintreten, so lange der nationale Staat der Deutschen nicht vollendet ist.'⁶⁷ In striking similarity to the ideas uttered just a few years before by the Italian king, the supporters of Prussia now also claimed to be a bulwark of civilization in the world. Arnold Ruge remembered his feelings at the time, merely two years later:

Die Heilige Allianz ist aufgelöst und wir nehmen von nun an die selbstständige Stellung ein, die Mitteleuropa zukommt. Und wenn wir auch allen umliegenden Nationen dieselbe Selbstständigkeit zugestehen, die wir fortan geniessen, so werden wir doch zu denen gehören, die über das Heil der Civilisation, schon aus eigenen Interessen zu wachen haben.⁶⁸

While not all liberals agreed with these descriptions, the conservatives in Prussia were violently split into two camps. Bismarck, un-ideologically, relied on (tacit) liberal support for his policies, against Austria. His original political friends, on the other hand, were still in favour of the old European order, supported dynastic legitimacy, and could not reconcile themselves with the new, ostensibly liberal, course of their government. As Leopold von Gerlach explained in his *Die Annexionen und der Norddeutsche Bund*, Bismarck was now, for selfish reasons, doing the work of Napoleon III. By supporting the cause of nationalism and anti-Catholicism, he was destroying not just the basis for peace in Germany, but European tradition.⁶⁹ It was an opinion voiced by many who

away from the aims which we should have pursued, and a last stronghold of something that had already been given up by everyone.'

- 66 Quoted in Hedda Gramley, *Propheten des deutschen Nationalismus: Theologen, Historiker und Nationalökonomien 1848-1880* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2001), 138. 'On the battlefield of Sadowa, not just the Austrian state has been beaten, but the whole ultramontane-Jesuit system. Prussia is, and stays, on the European continent, a bastion of the Protestant spirit.'
- 67 Heinrich von Treitschke, *Zehn Jahre deutscher Kämpfe*. (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1879), 134. 'An age of true civilization, of assured world peace cannot start, as long as a national German state has not been founded'
- 68 Arnold Ruge, *An's Volk und an Politiker. Zur Förderung des Umschwungs seit 1866* (Berlin: Verlag der Stuhr'schen Buch und Kunsthandlung, 1869), 24. 'The Holy Alliance is dissolved, and we are now taking on our independent role reserved for central Europe. And although we happily grant all the surrounding nations the same independence, which we will from now on enjoy, we will be part of those who have to guard the future of civilization out of their own interests.'
- 69 Ernst Ludwig Gerlach, *Die Annexionen und der Norddeutsche Bund* (Berlin: Verlag von Stilke und van Muylden,

favoured the old German order, and opposed Bismarck's willingness to side with the ideas of modern civilization against tradition. Taking up the criticisms that had been voiced during the Italian war of unification, the philosopher Gustav Ferdinand Thaulow argued that the principles, responsible for the war, were French ones. 'Der *terminus technicus*, welcher seitdem für diesen neuen Zeitgeist gebräuchlich geworden ist und welchen deshalb auch keiner mehr im Munde führt, als Napoleon III, ist der der Civilisation!' ⁷⁰ Hermann von Gauvain sarcastically expressed the same opinion in his clearly entitled *Graf Bismarck und die Legitimität der Dinge; oder, wie Napoleon Deutschland zerstörte*: 'Jene vorwaltende Sache der Frankreich dient, sie ist die Quelle aller legitimen Autorität, sie heißt Civilisation!' ⁷¹

These two ideas of legitimacy, which relied on different definitions of civilization, further articulated the gap that had developed between Catholics and Protestants, as some Prussian conservatives, despite their opposition to the Catholic Church, joined the political party widely associated with it: the *Zentrum*. Dynastically oriented Lutherans, like Gerlach, were so alienated by Bismarck's new political course that, without converting, they became full members of what they perceived to be the new, true force of conservatism in Prussia: the Catholic party, of which Gerlach would remain a member until his death. ⁷² In many ways, this was the final stage of a process of political distancing that had already started during the Crimean War, as I have outlined in the previous chapter, when Gerlach had criticized the idea of modern civilization as the foundation of a new European order he did not want to support. Although Bismarck himself described the loss of Gerlach to his political project as more painful than the assassination attempt he had survived the same day, he made no serious effort to change his political course. ⁷³ In the aftermath of the Austro-Prussian war and especially by the late 1860s, two curious coalitions had started to gather around two differing conceptions of civilization. Bismarck, himself not a liberal, found support amongst those liberally oriented politicians and thinkers who saw the national development of Germany as a step towards higher civilization. His opponents, and former political friends like Gerlach, rallied around the definitions of Catholic civilization, which stood for a defence of the old European order.

1866). 'The annexations and the North-German League'

70 Gustav Ferdinand Thaulow, *Das europäische Gleichgewicht durch den Prager Frieden vom 23. August 1866* (Kiel: Ernst Homann, 1867), 18. 'Count Bismarck and the Question of Legitimacy'. 'The ruling idea, which France serves, it I the well of all legitimate authority, it is called civilization.'

71 Hermann von Gauvain, *Graf Bismarck und die Legitimität der Dinge; oder, Wie Napoleon Deutschland zerstörte* (Leipzig: Rossberg'sche Buchhandlung, 1867), 163. 'The terminus technicus which has come into use to describe this new Zeitgeist and which nobody is therefore using more frequently than Napoleon III is: civilization!'

72 Heinrich August Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen: Deutsche Geschichte vom Ende des Alten Reiches bis zum Untergang der Weimarer Republik* (Munich: C.H.Beck, 2000), 182.

73 Dagmar Bussiek, *"Mit Gott für König und Vaterland!": die Neue Preußische Zeitung (Kreuzzeitung) 1848 - 1892* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2002).

The repercussions of these events could even be felt in Britain. Some, more liberally minded thinkers, argued that this war was more than just a small European conflict and had everything to do with civilization. Despite the fact that many downplayed the significance of the Austro-Prussian conflict for Britain, and within the government and the highest circles, attempts were undertaken to stop the war, allegiances could certainly be felt in the religious camps.⁷⁴ As the most vocal liberal opponent of 'Popery' George Hammond Whalley explained the situation to the House, this was merely another episode in a continuous struggle:

The noble Lord said on Friday night that there never was a European war in which the interests of England were less concerned than in this; but he (Mr. Whalley) ventured to think that there never was a war in which our interests were more concerned. The right of opinion, civil and religious liberty, and what was called the Protestant question, were involved, and it was singular that, however Protestants might happen to be divided in opinion, there was no doubt a remarkable unanimity of Roman Catholic opinion in favour of Austria.⁷⁵

After the war, Whalley would have been relieved, Protestants were much less divided in opinion and the support for Prussia, and its allegedly liberal and civilizational aims, increased enormously. Even if most did not characterize Austria as an enemy of civilization, the relationships of the two states were clear to British periodicals and dailies. As a provincial newspaper put it: 'the Prussians are at the head of German civilization, the Austrians at the tail.'⁷⁶ Because of its similarly oriented principles, Prussia would also be no danger to Britain, as the *British Quarterly Review* explained: 'We have no fears at beholding Prussia take her place in the vanguard of political power, because she is already in the vanguard of civilization'.⁷⁷ In fact, as the *Westminster Review* added

Germany laced in full possession of its just influence should bear its part in promoting the advancement and civilization of the world in the matter of political self government and in questions of international policy as well as in the regions of thought, science, and literature in each of which it holds so leading a position.⁷⁸

74 W.E. Mosse, "The Crown and Foreign Policy. Queen Victoria and the Austro-Prussian Conflict, March-May, 1866," *Cambridge Historical Journal* 10, no. 2 (1951): 205–23.

75 Mr Whalley 'Question' 184 H.C. Deb. 3s, col.1326

76 Edward W. Ellsworth, "The Austro-Prussian War and the British Press," *The Historian* 20, no. 2 (1958): 190.

77 "The New Germanic Empire," *The British Quarterly Review* 14 (1866): 535.

78 "Italy and the War of 1866," *The Westminster Review* 172 (1867): 132.

The Civilization of Warfare

Even in this Prussia-friendly atmosphere, questions would eventually be raised about where this new system of civilization was to lead, and whether the strengths of Prussia's state were not also its greatest weakness. In Prussia itself some had argued before the war that exaggerated ideas of nationalism, of leading civilization, the system of conscription, and the military organization that was necessary to sustain it were creating 'a nation in barracks', as Ute Frevert has recently called it.⁷⁹ Such interventions were shouted down by those who argued that fears of a new era of Prussian 'Eroberungskriege' and the potential 'Ruin des Wohlstandes und aller Errungenschaften der Civilisation' was a 'Pompanze' for 'Ruhe über alles liebende Deutsche Spiessbürger'.⁸⁰ But the seriousness of these questions can be gauged from their international spread, as even in England, where, as outlined before, public opinion tended to be friendly towards Prussian civilization, many started to question its system of military governance. Over the next few years, fears of a future dominated by national European armies based on conscription was gaining ground in England, and was seen as a possible danger to civilization.⁸¹ As the positivist Henry Dix Hutton would later put it:

Regarded as a mere temporary expedient for repelling the First Napoleon, the military system of Prussia was praiseworthy, but when made a permanent institution, it is eminently retrograde, a step back in the direction of barbarism, and only proves that Prussia, in point of real civilisation, has no claim to the leadership of Europe.⁸²

These questions about Prussian militarization were a small aspect of a larger debate about the paradoxical relationship between the rhetoric of civilization (and nationalism) and the immense destruction of war that had come in its wake. Since the proliferation of civilizational language in the mid-1850s, Europe had continuously either been at war, or at the brink of it. Some explained this as a natural phenomenon, as the brutality and impact of the war sometimes correlated with the civilizational and national advance gained from it. As the famous doctor and liberal Robert Bolz explained to an equally liberal audience in Karlsruhe:

79 Ute Frevert, *A Nation in Barracks: Modern Germany, Military Conscription and Civil Society* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2004).

80 Friedrich Walther, *Über den Anschluss Süddeutschlands an den norddeutschen Bund. Betrachtungen eines Süddeutschen im Spätherbste 1866* (Nördlingen: Druck und Verlag der C.H. Beck'schen Buchhandlung, 1867), 41. 'Wars of Conquest'. 'The destruction of wealth, and all accomplishments of civilization'. 'stupid game!' for German petty bourgeois who love their peace and quiet over everything'.

81 See Jörn Leonhard, "Nation-States and Wars," in *What Is a Nation?: Europe 1789-1914*, ed. Mark Hewitson and Timothy Baycroft (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 231–54.

82 Henry Dix Hutton, *Religion of Humanity: Order and Progress: Live for Others. Europe's Need and England's Duty* (London: Edward Truelove, 1870), 48.

Wir verkennen allerdings nicht, dass oft die grössten Fortschritte der Civilisation, zumal die sprungweisen und die lange gewaltsam zurückgehaltenen, durch Kriege eingeleitet wurden, wenn verrottete Einrichtungen niedergeworfen, wenn zurückgebliebene Völker aufgerrüttelt wurden – die Schlacht bei Jena hat einem Volk die Augen geöffnet, die Schlacht bei Königgrätz einem anderen.⁸³

The irony of this correlation of civilization and barbarism was not lost on those who were skeptical about the new ideas of civilization. As August Reichensperger, who was not coincidentally Catholic, would gleefully note in his anti-liberal dictionary *Phrasen und Schlagwörter: ein Noth- und Hilfsbüchlein für Zeitungsleser*: 'Als eine der hervorstechendsten Errungenschaften der modernen Civilisation ist die Kunst, möglichst viele Menschen von Nation zu Nation, möglichst schnell und möglichst sicher zu töten, besonders hervorzuheben. (S[iehe] auch d[as] W[ort] Culturvolk).'⁸⁴ But even those not opposed to liberal ideas, like the Swiss businessman Henry Dunant, recognized the discrepancy between the lofty language of civilization and the barbarity of the wars justified through it. As he told the German readers of his bestseller *Un Souvenir de Solferino*:

Ist es endlich nicht in einer Zeit in welcher man so viel von Fortschritt und Civilisation spricht und in welcher die Kriege einmal nicht immer vermieden werden können ist es da nicht dringend nothwendig, Alles zu thun, um den Schrecken derselben zuvorzukommen oder diese mindestens so viel wie möglich zu mildern?⁸⁵

These questions were even asked across the Atlantic, where a German-American thinker, Francis Lieber, first addressed the problem the same year. A participant of the Greek War of Independence, who, even after his emigration to the United States, remained in close contact with the leading lights of German liberalism, Lieber was, just as much as them, convinced of the close connection between civilization and nationalism. As he would later explain in his *Fragments of Political Science on Nationalism and Internationalism*: 'No groupings of human beings, short of nations, are adequate to

83 Robert Bolz, *Das rothe Kreuz im weissen Felde*, vol. 47, Sammlung gemeinverstaendlicher Vortraege, II (Berlin: Luederitz'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1868), 7. 'We do not deny that often the greatest advances in civilization, especially the sudden and long repressed ones, were started by war, when rotten institutions were destroyed, when backward peoples were shaken up – the battle at Jena opened the eyes of a people, the battle of Sadowa those of another.'

84 August Reichensperger, *Phrasen und Schlagwörter: ein Noth- und Hilfsbüchlein für Zeitungsleser* (Paderborn: Druck und Verlag von Ferdinand Schöningh, 1872). 'Phrases and Catch-words: An Aid for Readers of Newspapers'. 'We have to mention as one of the greatest advances of modern civilization the art of killing as many people as possible in various nations, as fast and as quick as possible. See also: A Cultured People'

85 Jean-Henry Dunant, *Eine Erinnerung an Solferino* (Basel: Verlag von H. Georg, 1863), 115–116. 'Is it not finally in a time when one speaks so often of progress and civilization and in which wars cannot always be avoided necessary to do everything to avert its horrors, or to, at least, alleviate them as far as possible.'

the high demands of modern civilization. Without a national character, States (sic) cannot obtain that longevity and continuity of political society, which is necessary for our progress.⁸⁶ Although Lieber was fully convinced of the inevitable rise of civilization, which would also bring down the ancient institution of slavery, he was equally aware of the pitfalls to civilization presented by modern war.⁸⁷ It was precisely for this reason that Lieber got involved with drafting the legal guidelines for the Union Army during the American Civil War, that would become known as the *Lieber Code*.⁸⁸ It was a remarkable document, partly because many of its assumptions were based on an entity practically unknown in official legal documents: the civilized state. Although the idea of the civilized state had been alluded to in the declaration concerning the abolition of the slave trade in 1815 and had then featured in some legal textbooks, like Wheaton's, it was by no means a term in frequent use. But in the *Lieber Code* the ideas of civilization and the civilized nation were not just decoration, as one might have expected for terms with such little legal pedigree, they were foundational. In the *Lieber Code*, nations were 'law and requisite of civilized existence', legal distinctions had changed 'as civilization has advanced', his definition of military necessity was that 'understood by modern civilized nations', which had a legal character themselves as they could, as one paragraph specifically put it 'look with horror upon offers of rewards for the assassination of enemies as relapses into barbarism'. With this code, Lieber, who admitted some of his legal sources were 'a sincere love of truth, justice, and civilization', defined the civilized state as both basis and recipient of his new rules. It was an ingenious solution to the problems that also plagued the old continent, and it was no surprise that Lieber's code was soon copied to serve as a manual for the wars of nationalism in Europe.

Lieber's ideas would inspire the rather practical Geneva Declaration of 1864, but more importantly, they served as the theoretical framework for the discussions surrounding the Austro-Prussian war of 1866. It was the spectre of war that persuaded the perhaps most famous scholar of international law on the continent, Bluntschli, to publish his *Kriegsrecht der civilisirten Staaten* earlier than he had anticipated. As he explained in the introduction: 'Die drohende Kriegsgefahr für Deutschland hat

86 Francis Lieber, *Fragments of Political Science on Nationalism and Internationalism* (New York: Charles Scribner's & Co., 1868), 8.

87 Francis Lieber, *No Party Now, but All for Our Country* (New York: C.S. Westcott & Co., 1863), 8.

88 For the Lieber Code see Michael Herz, "Rediscovering Francis Lieber: An Afterword and Introduction," *Cardozo Law Review* 16 (1995 1994): 2107–34; Burrus M. Carnahan, "Lincoln, Lieber and the Laws of War: The Origins and Limits of the Principle of Military Necessity," *The American Journal of International Law* 92, no. 2 (April 1, 1998): 213–31, doi:10.2307/2998030; Theodor Meron, "Francis Lieber's Code and Principles of Humanity," *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law* 36 (1998): 269; Jordan J. Paust, "Dr. Francis Lieber and the Lieber Code," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting (American Society of International Law)* 95 (April 4, 2001): 112–15.

den Verfasser bestimmt, das Kriegsrecht ohne Verzug herauszugeben.⁸⁹ Bluntschli acknowledged his debt to Lieber, whose work served as 'Vorbild für diese Arbeit', and stressed the novelty and necessity of such an undertaking, because knowledge about the modern laws of war was not widely spread.⁹⁰ Bluntschli would have been relieved as the war itself was generally celebrated as a rather civilized affair. The short time in which it could be concluded was, as an anonymous pamphleteer put it, a 'riesenhafter Fortschritt der Civilisation und Humanität.'⁹¹ The technical advance of armaments, which led to less severe injuries and fewer deaths similarly made correspondents exclaim: 'das Zündnadelgewehr, ein wirklicher Fortschritt der Civilisation.'⁹² The journal *Die Grenzboten* agreed, adding that it was not just technical means that had improved, but the general level of civilization:

Die Entwicklung des bürgerlichen Wohlstands, der Civilisation und Sittlichkeit hat sehr grosse Fortschritte gemacht. Der deutsche Krieg dieses Jahres ist bis jetzt mit einer Humanität geführt worden, welche neben dem vielen Schrecklichen, welches unvermeidlich durch ihn hervorgebracht wird, doch als ein Glück moderner Cultur erfreuen muss.⁹³

As the language of civilization had become firmly established, insults and denigrations of the opponent were also expressed through such concepts. The war correspondent Adolph Boerstaedt, for example, explained to his readers in some detail how Austria's lower level in civilization was visible as its soldiers saw 'Äusserungen wahrer Humanität und echter Zivilisation als Zeichen der Mattherzigkeit und der Schwäche'.⁹⁴

In the early 1860s, civilizational ideas had mainly been used to judge the reasons for a war, i.e to what extent it was a national one. As the decade drew to a close, it became obvious that the way war was waged had also become a means of categorizing it, a fact that quickly drew the attention of other interested parties, most importantly Russia's. Since the death of his father and the practically

89 Johann Caspar Bluntschli, *Das moderne Kriegsrecht der civilisirten Staaten: als Rechtsbuch dargestellt* (Nördlingen: C.H. Beck, 1866), III. 'The impending danger of war for Germany was persuaded the author to publish his guide to the wars of law without further ado.'

90 Ibid., iii. 'example for this work'

91 Karl Braun, *Vier Briefe eines Süddeutschen an den Verfasser der "Vier Fragen eines Ostpreussen"* (Leipzig: Verlag von G. Hirzel, 1867), xii. 'an enormous progress in civilization and humanity'

92 Gustav Billig, *Deutschlands verhängnisvolles Jahr 1866. Chronik der denkwürdigsten Ereignisse* (Dresden: Verlag von C.G. Lohse, 1867), 322. 'The development of commercial well-being, of civilization, and of manners, has greatly advanced. The German war of this year has so far been conducted with a humanity, which, apart from the horrors that naturally emanated from it, has to be celebrated as fortuitous for modern culture.'

93 "Abseits der Heerstrasse," *Die Grenzboten: Zeitschrift für Literatur, Politik und Kunst* 25, no. 2 (1866): 173.

94 A. Borbstaedt, *Preussens Feldzüge gegen Oesterreich und dessen Verbündete im Jahre 1866*. (Berlin: Druck und Verlag E.G. Mittler und Sohn, 1866), 21–22. 'expressions of true humanity and true civilization as signs of timidity and weakness'

simultaneous end of the Crimean War, the young Tsar Alexander II had tried to innovate his country, following the examples of Peter I and Catherine II.⁹⁵ In 1861, he abolished serfdom. In 1864, a new judicial administration and penal code, based on French models, were introduced, and, shortly after, the Russian elite turned its attention to the new area of international law. As Myles and Holquist have argued, the period after the Crimean War, and specifically the late 1860s can be seen as a new era of Russian engagement with the civilizational rhetoric of international law.⁹⁶ On this subject the Tsar would later heavily rely on the work and advice of Fyodor Martens, who as a Baltic German could claim knowledge of Western European thought closed to many of his colleagues.⁹⁷ But Martens was certainly not alone and the increasing westernization of Russian policies also swept others, familiar and interested in Western concepts, into the highest echelons of power.⁹⁸ These were soon to called to convene an international conference, dedicated to the laws of war so often discussed in Europe in recent years, and to show that Russia too was party to the civilizational advance in Europe.

In December 1868, several delegates from European countries, including Bluntschli, came together in St. Petersburg to discuss a ban on new ammunition developed in previous years. The language in which they formulated their suggestions was that of civilization. The Declaration of St. Petersburg, which continued a long debate on the civilization of warfare, was the first European document that not only integrated the idea of a civilized state, but directly referred to civilization itself:

On the proposition of the Imperial Cabinet of Russia, an International Military Commission having assembled at St. Petersburg in order to examine the expediency of forbidding the use of certain projectiles in time of war between civilized nations [...] is authorized [...] to declare as follows: [...] That the progress of civilization should have the effect of alleviating

95 Filippo Costa Buranelli, “Knockin’ on Heaven’s Door: Russia, Central Asia and the Mediated Expansion of International Society,” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 42, no. 3 (2014): 823–828.

96 E. Myles, “‘Humanity’, ‘Civilization’ and ‘the International Community’ in the Late Imperial Russian Mirror - Three Ideas ‘Topical for Our Days,’” *Journal of the History of International Law* 4 (2002): 310–34; Peter Holquist, “The Russian Empire as a ‘Civilized State’: International Law as Principle and Practice in Imperial Russia, 1874-1878,” Title VIII Program (Washington D.C.: The National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, 2004).

97 Lauri Mälksoo, “The History of International Legal Theory in Russia: A Civilizational Dialogue with Europe,” *European Journal of International Law* 19, no. 1 (2008): 220; Lauri Mälksoo, “The Liberal Imperialism of Friedrich (Fyodor) Martens (1845-1909),” in *Select Proceedings of the European Society of International Law*, ed. Héléne Ruiz Fabri, Vincent Tomkiewicz, and Emmanuelle Jouannet, vol. 1 (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2006), 173–80.

98 Myles, “Civilization in Late Imperial Russia,” 313–314; Tarja Långström, *Transformation in Russia and International Law* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 36–50; Iver B. Neumann, *Russia and the Idea of Europe: A Study in Identity and International Relations* (London: Routledge, 1996), 47.

as much as possible the calamities of war.⁹⁹

While civilizational language was quickly becoming fundamental to the structure of the international sphere, it also started to find its first non-Catholic critics. It was at the German *Protestantentag* in 1868, a couple of months before Bluntschli left for Petersburg, that he was publicly confronted with a differing definition of civilization than the one he had advocated. Bernhard Spiegel, a Protestant theologian and Pastor at Osnabrück, asked Bluntschli whether one could really use the word civilization to describe the progress he was advocating. Referring back to the writings of Pestalozzi, he argued:

“Civilisation” bezeichnet nämlich nur etwas Aeusseres, wer Civilisation hat, weiss sich zu benehmen, wie ein anständiger Bürger, wie es in civilisirten Staaten erforderlich ist. Es giebt aber einen Unterschied zwischen civilisirten Staaten und Cultur=staaten, welchen zu machen mit hier am Platze scheint. [...] Deshalb möchte ich vorschlagen, dass an Stelle des Wortes “Civilisation” das Wort “Cultur” trete,...¹⁰⁰

Bluntschli brushed such semantic discussions aside, and stated merely that he was basing his thought on Dante 'welcher schon im dreizehnten Jahrhundert die Civilisation, d.h. die Entwicklung des Menschen zur Humanität, für die grösste Aufgabe des Staates erklärt.'¹⁰¹ Although Bluntschli clearly did not care much for such distinctions, Spiegel was not alone in advocating them. The same year, Matthew Arnold started to propose culture as a remedy for the mechanical civilization and anarchy, that he saw as enveloping England, in a series of essays later fittingly entitled *Culture and Anarchy*. Even in Prussia, Spiegel had semantic allies who started to draw clear distinctions between culture and civilization. One of them was Adolf Lasson, whose *Culturideal und der Krieg* celebrated culture as an opposition to civilization, and the reason for recent European wars. It was culture, Lasson argued, that states sought to protect when they went to war with each other and the word civilization, just as Spiegel had argued, merely expressed something external and superficial, related to trade and finance, but not to the inner-being of a nation:

99 “Declaration Renouncing the Use, in Time of War, of Certain Explosive Projectiles. Saint Petersburg, 29 November/11 December 1868,” <http://www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Article.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=568842C2B90F4A29C12563CD0051547C>, *ICRC Treaties and States Party to Such Treaties*, (n.d.), accessed August 30, 2014.

100 *Der dritte deutsche Protestantentag gehalten zu Bremen am 3. und 4. Juni 1868* (Elberfeld: R.L. Friderichs, 1868), 44.

101 *Ibid.*, 68. 'who, already in the thirteenth century, has declared civilization, which means the development of persons to humanity, to be the greatest task of any state'.

Die Civilisation also mit ihren egoistischen Interessen, kann nicht leicht den Grund zum Kriege abgeben: dagegen führt sie zu Handelsverträgen und dem geräuschlosen Wettkampfe der Konkurrenz. Aber nicht als Schildhalter der Civilisation, sondern als Grundmacht der Cultur führt der Staat Kriege, und er führt sie, während er scheinbar nur um seine Existenz kämpft, für die Culturbewegung der Menschheit.¹⁰²

Although Lasson's book was an important contribution, it would be wrong to see his opinion, as is sometimes asserted, as a majority one, or as expressing an ancient German opinion. Lasson was clearly on the fringes of a German debate that developed in the late 1860s, but that would only start to have a wider impact by the late 1880s, as I will show in the next chapters.

Civilization and German Unification

Just two years later, Prussia would again be at war, and *pace* Lasson, many interpreted it to be a war for civilization. Given the vocabulary employed, it was peculiar that it was a war against France. As shown in the early parts of this chapter, the French use of civilizational rhetoric had been criticized in the German-speaking countries for a long time. Sometimes, this critique had been spiced with suggestions that it would be better if Germany would take the baton of civilization from France. As the professor of law at the University of Würzburg, Josef von Held, had already argued in a small book entitled with the rhetorical question: *Frankreich an der Spitze der Civilisation?*, civilization could not be claimed by one state alone, and France was doing more harm than good.¹⁰³ Writers like the Hungarian politician Guido v. Bauszner agreed and in his 'Die deutsche Frage, eine Frage der Civilisation' he had already argued for the necessity of a greater Franco-German war to protect the future of civilization.¹⁰⁴ Now that France and Prussia were potentially at war, the French lead in civilization, for which Napoleon III had stated France was fighting, was more frequently disputed.¹⁰⁵ In the run up to the war, as the *Preussische Jahrbücher* would later argue, the French had become the enemies of civilization: 'während sie die Civilisation und die Freiheitsideen von 1789 im Munde führen, geradezu Feinde aller Civilisation, Verräther des Rechts und der Freiheit

102 Adolf Lasson, "Das Culturideal und der Krieg," in *Jahresbericht über die Louisestädtsche Realschule* (Berlin: Druck von W.Moeser, 1868), 28. 'Civilization with its egoist interests can therefore not easily serve as the reason for war: it leads to commercial treaties, and to silent competition. But not as a defender of civilization does a state make war, but as the main power of culture; and it leads them, although seemingly just interested in its own defence, for the general cultural development of humanity.'

103 Joseph von Held, *Frankreich an der Spitze der Civilisation?* (Würzburg: Verlag von A. Stuber's Buchhandlung, 1863). 'France at the Head of Civilization'.

104 Guido von Bauszner, "Die deutsche Frage, eine Frage der Civilisation," in *Deutschland und Oesterreich-Ungarn. Abhandlungen, Reden und Briefe, 1868-1889*. (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1890), 26–46. 'The german question, a question of civilization'.

105 Ludwig Karl Aegidi and Alfred Klauhold, eds., *Das Staatsarchiv: Sammlung der officiellen Actenstücke zur Geschichte der Gegenwart* (Hamburg: Otto Meissner, 1870), 173.

der Völker, Verschwörer gegen die Selbstständigkeit glücklicher und zufriedener Staaten geworden sind.¹⁰⁶

Especially amongst the German liberals, the French rhetoric of civilization was not the opposite of *Kultur*; as one might assume, but a mockery of the true principles of civilization they associated with Prussia and its national politics. Whereas Prussia was fighting for nations and true civilization, France was hiding behind the vocabulary of nationalism to conceal its desire for self-aggrandisement. The famous German physician and then head of the University of Berlin, Emil du Bois-Reymond, gave a paradigmatic inaugural speech, merely a month into the war:

Die Deutschen, Schweizer, Italiener, Belgier, Holländer, Skandinaven, Engländer, Amerikaner verstehen unter Civilisation den Zustand da jedes Volk mit allen anderen in Künsten des Friedens wetteifert, jedes durch Fleiss und durch Thaten des Geistes für sich, und so zugleich für alle dem Ziele höchster dem Menschen erreichbarer Macht und Wohlfahrt zustrebt, auf dem durch die Wissenschaft eröffneten Wege bewusster Naturbeherrschung. [...] In diese einmüthige verträgliche Völkerfamilie passt das heutige Frankreich nicht. Es wähnt sich an der Spitze der Civilisation, aber es täuscht sich trotz dem Glanze seiner Hauptstadt, trotz seiner Wissenschaft, Kunst und Industrie, seinem Luxus und seiner Eleganz. Denn es hat versäumt den grossen Schritt mitzumachen der im letzten halben Jahrhundert fast alle anderen Völker zur Erkenntniss ihrer wahren Aufgabe geführt hat. Es träumt noch epileptisch von Kriegeruhm und Eroberung. In unserem Sinne daher sind die Franzosen kein civilisirtes Volk.¹⁰⁷

Indeed the two accusations German liberals levelled at France, that they were not civilized and not fighting for national principles, were soon united in an outrage that the French were using non-

106 "Das diplomatische Vorspiel des Krieges," *Preussische Jahrbücher* 26 (1870): 236. 'while they were pronouncing civilization and the ideas of freedom of 1789, they were, in fact, the enemies of all civilization, the betrayers of the rights and freedoms of all peoples and conspirators against the national self-determination of happy and content states.'

107 Emil Heinrich Du Bois-Reymond, *Über den Deutschen Krieg: Rede am 3. August 1870 in der Aula der Königl. Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin gehalten von dem zeitigen Rector Emil Du Bois-Reymond* (Berlin: Verlag von August Hirschwald, 1870), 37. 'The Germans, the Swiss, the Italians, the Belgians, the Dutch, the Scandinavians, the English, and the Americans, interpret civilization to be the state in which all the peoples compete against each other in the arts of peace, where each through dedication and through the deeds of the spirit travels towards the aim of power and welfare for all, on a path of controlling nature through science. In this unanimous family of peoples, today's France is an outsider. It thinks itself at the head of civilization, but it is wrong, despite the glitter of its capital, and despite its science, art and industry, its luxury and its elegance. Because it has failed to take the great step which has, over the last fifty years, opened the eyes of almost all other peoples to recognize their true calling. France still dreams, epileptically about the honour of war and of conquest. In our eyes, the French are therefore not a civilized people.'

European troops to fight their battles. It infuriated Germans, as the historian Wilhelm Zimmermann put in his triumphantly entitled *Deutschlands Heldenkampf*: 'dass der verruchte Verbrecher auf dem Kaiserthron, welcher "an der Spitze der Civilisation zu marschieren" prahlte, solche wüste Horden heran führte, um ihren Heimathboden, den Boden der schönsten deutschen Bildung und Gesittung, durch dieselben zertreten zu lassen.'¹⁰⁸

Such accusations would not only be repeated throughout the next few months, but they also served as proof for the argument that Prussia was now leading civilization into the future. As Carl Georg Bruns, who had taken over as the head of Berlin's main university from Bois-Reymond, explained, the undisciplined and uncivilized nature of the French army was implicitly connected to its non-national troops:

Und was für eine Armee ist das, die ihre Haupthoffnung auf die Wildheit ihrer Afrikaner setzt, nach einer Niederlage alle Disciplin verliert, auf Ambulancen schießt, Capitulationen bricht [...] Wie anders erscheint da die Armee [...] in der der gemeine Soldat mit seinem König Reminiscenzen aus Horaz austauscht, und seine Siege im reinsten Sanscrit nach Hause schreibt. Da ist die Civilisation und ihr Sieg! Und es ist auch nicht nur eine civilisierte Armee, die siegt, sondern die Civilisation selber die hier zur Herrschaft kommt.¹⁰⁹

Needless to say, wherever the word civilization was used it was disputed, and where Bruns and others were claiming that Germany was now leading civilization, on the French side of the battle, and to a certain extent internationally, Prussia's actions were seen as destroying civilization. As Victor Hugo famously put it in a speech '[...] to destroy Paris was to destroy civilization'. In Prussia, Bismarck was furious about such propaganda, and he even remembered 25 years later, when he penned his autobiography, how he despised the propaganda of the Western powers, which he described as effeminate. He remembered all the talk about the "'endlichen Auffindung" Europas, oder von dem Glanznebel [...] der die englischen resp. westmächtlichen Schlagworte: "Humanität,

108 Wilhelm Zimmermann, *Deutschlands Heldenkampf*, 1870-1871 (Stuttgart: Verlag von Gustav Weise, 1873), 103. 'that the despicable criminal sat on the emperor's throne, who brags about "marching at the head of civilization", should bring such horrible hordes to destroy their native soil, the foundation of the most beautiful German culture and manners, and to have them trample all over it'.

109 Carl Georg Bruns, *Deutschlands Sieg über Frankreich* (Berlin: Verlag Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, 1870), 11. 'And what sort of an army is this, which puts its main hopes on the ferocity of its Africans, which loses all discipline after a defeat, which breaks capitulations and attacks ambulances? How different does an army appear in which the normal soldier, exchanges thoughts about Horace and who describes his victories in letters written in perfect Sanskrit. There is civilization and its victory! And it is not just a civilized army that is victorious, but civilization itself that starts to rule'

Civilisation" in deutschen namentlich weiblichen Gemüthern an grossen Höfen umgab.¹¹⁰ The destruction of Paris had nothing to do with civilization, Bismarck and Moltke argued, but was mere military necessity. To Bismarck in particular, who had already criticized the rhetoric of civilization during the Crimean War, the concept itself was spurious.

But to the German liberals, these discussions of civilization were real and they arrogantly hoped that the German intervention would push France on right way, despite all international animosity. The historian Heinrich v. Sybel argued that France's security about leading civilization had undermined its national character: 'Die Weltbeherrschung befördert nicht, sondern gefährdet die Bildung des herrschenden Volkes, und ein sicheres Mittel, allmählich die Fähigkeit zur Civilisation zu verwirken, ist der selbstgefällige Anspruch, ein für alle Mahle an der Spitze der Civilisation zu marschieren.'¹¹¹ It was the same argument David Friedrich Strauss put to Ernest Renan in their exchange of letters that would later be published both in German as well as in French. As Strauss put it, one could only hope that Germany's victory would turn French culture around and make her focus on true civilization, instead of Napoleonic aggrandisement:

Ein Volk, dass sich erhalten will darf nicht über dem Jagen nach Glanz und Genuss seinen sittlichen Kern verfaulen lassen; und das französische könnte nur dabei gewinnen, wenn es durch unser Einschreiten veranlasst würde, statt mit Turkoshorden an der Spitze der Civilisation zu marschieren, lieber daheim seine Schulen zu verbessern.¹¹²

While liberals celebrated Germany's role in leading the world to a higher civilization, German Catholics and conservatives remained sceptical about these claims to civilization and nationalism.¹¹³ The first article in the *Historisch-politische Blätter für das Katholische Deutschland* in the year 1871 proclaimed that 'der unnennbar grausige Verlauf des Kriegs' had:

doch wohl vor Allem bewiesen, daß in Wahrheit der revolutionäre Nationalismus die gefährlichste Irrlehre der Zeit ist. Die christliche Civilisation wird zurückkehren in die heidnische Barbarei, wenn es der Menschheit nicht gelingt das falsche Nationalitäts=Princip

110 Otto v. Bismarck, *Gedanken und Erinnerungen*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart: Verlag der J.G.Cotta'schen Buchhandlung, 1898), 102.

111 Heinrich von Sybel, *Der Frieden von 1871* (Düsseldorf: J. Buddens, 1871), 36.

112 David Friedrich Strauss, *Krieg und Friede. Zwei Briefe an Ernst Renan nebst dessen Antwort auf den ersten* (Leipzig: G.Hirzl, 1870), 56.

113 Ludwig Brunier, *Deutschland und Frankreich* (Bremen: J. Kührtmann's Buchhandlung, 1873), 379.

von sich auszustoßen: so lautet jetzt die Blutpredigt der französischen Schlacht= und Leichenfelder.¹¹⁴

These ideas were once again supported by conservatives like Gerlach, who saw the Franco-Prussian war as the end of a long process that had started with the Crimean War, and who remembered how 'Recht und Freiheit aus Gott' had been replaced by 'Zivilisation und Nationalität'.¹¹⁵ The *Neue Preussische Zeitung* similarly argued that the principles that were used to justify the new Empire were not the same as the ones that had dominated the old, specifically in its relationship to Rome. As its readers could see:

Man preist die Wiederherstellung von Kaiser und Reich, man betrachtet sie als Erfüllung langer und tiefer Sehnsucht des Volkes – doch wohl aufgrund der Erinnerung an die Herrlichkeit des alten Reiches – und man hat nichts Besseres zu thun, als diess zu schmähen, in völliger Verkennung des Werthes, welchen für die deutsche Bildung und für die doch sonst so hoch gehaltene “Civilisation” die enge Verbindung von Deutschland und Italien hatte.¹¹⁶

As I will show in more detail in the next chapter, the late 1860s and the early 1870s should be seen as the end of the old European ideas of civilization that men like Ludwig Gerlach sought to protect. With the foundation of Germany and Italy, the Holy Alliance, already weakened by the admittance of Turkey after the Crimean War, was completely destroyed and the principles of liberal civilization formed the new coordinates of the European political sphere. The 1860s should therefore be seen simultaneously as the start of a new international era, as they were naturally the end of another one. While some debates that had preceded the foundation of a national German state, like the fervent opposition between liberals and Catholics, continued to hold sway over national and even global politics, other aspects of civilizational discourse that had dominated the 1860s naturally faded out. Through a provisional end to the questions of nationalism in western Europe, the rhetoric of civilization also changed. The idea of civilization as showing a path to national unification had been dominant on the continent throughout the 1850s and 1860s, now other ideas were more closely

114 Joseph Edmund Jörg and Franz Binder, eds., “Das grosse Neujahr,” in *Historisch-politisch Blätter für das katholische Deutschland*, vol. 67 (Munich: In Commission der Literarisch-artistischen Anstalt, 1871), 4.

115 Max Hesse, “Die politische Haltung Ludwig von Gerlachs unter Bismarcks Ministerium 1862 bis 1877” (PhD diss., Marburg, 1912).

116 Reinhold Baumstark, *Der erste Deutsche Reichstag und die Interessen der Katholischen Kirche* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1871), 52.

associated with civilization. As I will demonstrate, the end of the 1860s marked the finale of a mostly European discourse of civilization, and through the 'era of internationalism' which followed in the next decade civilization became a truly international concept and the aims that were attached to it equally so. It is here, at the cusp between the 1860s and the 1870s, the end of an old era, and the beginning of a new, that civilization started to take on some of the colonial and imperial characteristics with which it has traditionally been associated, and whose development I will trace in the next two chapters.

Chapter 4. The Development of International Civilization (1870s)

Introduction

While civilizational debates of the 1860s had been dominated by ideas of national unification, I argue that the 1870s saw liberal politicians engaged in a fight on two fronts: to protect the achievements of what they called modern civilization at home, and to spread their ideas further afield. Following attempts by the Vatican to assert its power more globally with the proclamation of papal infallibility, German liberals commenced an official *Kulturkampf* against the Catholic Church, which was equally described as a civilizational struggle. British liberals, most importantly Gladstone, quickly followed suit and denounced the Pope as an enemy of civilization, in what the 'grand old man' understood to be a larger international battle of progress and civilization against regression and despotism. The liberal agenda was, however, not only focused on further subverting the negative international influence of the Catholic church as it also aimed at spreading liberal ideas of civilization more broadly. Throughout the early 1870s, the adherents of European liberalism, heavily opposed by socialists and Catholics with a differing political imagination, developed more global ambitions. Under the guise of liberal civilizational ideas, which they had been propagating since the 1860s, Russia's elite further expanded their empire in central Asia, Leopold II organized large conferences dedicated to the civilization of Africa, and all over Europe colonial groups started to agitate for the spreading of civilization on a world-wide scale.

These stirrings of what liberals had learned to call an *esprit d'internationalité* would be the first real instances of the civilizing mission defined as such, but these abstract ideas of international civilization and appeals to an international conscience equally affected the ever-fragile European balance, as I argue in the second half of this chapter. In 1875, a series of revolts started to shake the Ottoman Balkans. While Russian officials were immediately engaged in pushing for a civilizational intervention, European and specifically German liberals slowly warmed to similar ideas. This was a curious reversal of 1850s rhetoric, when the Ottoman Empire was celebrated in German liberal circles as the last hope of civilization against the Tsar's despotic empire. But with the changing international sphere, the civilized status of countries varied as well. Most of the *Nationalliberale*, now in coalition with Bismarck, backed the chancellor's policy of neutrality, which amounted to tacit support for Russia. In Britain, the russophile leader of the opposition, Gladstone, opportunistically moved away from anti-Catholic pamphleteering and explicitly supported Russia's interventions in the name of civilization. Showing the immense versatility of civilizational rhetoric during the last third of the century, he defended his engagement in exactly the same language in

which he had previously attacked the Catholic Church.

Gladstone's personal engagement did not just show the many fields in which civilizational language could now be used, but also that in the early 1870s the old dichotomous opposition between liberals and Catholics had received an international update. While many German liberals, now ostensibly controlling a state, had started to support Russia's civilizing mission, English and continental Catholics alike supported the Ottoman Empire against the Russian advance. In Catholic circles, Russia was seen as an international ally of the dreaded liberals of Europe, and the advance of Russia on the Ottoman Empire as a sign of their impending victory, which led the Vatican to a policy of tacit Ottoman support. The Catholic Church was not the only opponent of Russia's liberal civilizing mission. German socialists took up anti-Russian civilizational rhetoric previously pioneered by liberals in 1848, and agitated in and outside of parliament against the negative influence of Russian politics. By the end of the 1870s, I argue, new players and developments had transformed civilizational debates. While civilization had entered the international sphere as a watch-word of liberal nationalism it was now at the heart of increasingly complex internationalist debates, which, I will show in the next chapters, are the root of the dominance of civilizational language in the last decades of the century.

Old and New Civilizational Debates

Despite the fact that Prussia had won the war for civilization in 1871, domestic civilizational debates continued in the newly formed German Empire, with contributions on various sides of the political spectrum. Although the tone of liberals was positive, and commentators like Sybel were hopeful that the new German Empire would not endanger the 'Fortschritt der Civilisation', critical voices began to assert themselves in the early 1870s.¹ There were those, like the conservative Constantin Frantz, who had opposed German unification from the beginning, and now argued that the new, modern, and international character of the capital Berlin had undermined German traditions of civil coexistence. 'Unter der Hülle einer schimmernden Civilisation', Frantz explained in his sarcastically entitled *Die preussische Intelligenz und ihre Grenzen*, 'bricht oft eine Rohheit und Verwilderung hervor, die wohl in keiner deutschen Stadt ihres gleichen finden würde.'² While Frantz was worried about the effects of modernization, more liberal commentators feared the opposite. The MP Julius Wigger, for example, questioned whether Germany was truly ready to 'lead

1 Heinrich von Sybel, *Der Frieden von 1871* (Düsseldorf: J. Buddens, 1871), 35. 'progress in civilization'

2 Gustav Adolph Constantin Frantz, *Die preussische Intelligenz und ihre Grenzen* (Munich: Druck und Verlag des literarischen Instituts von Dr. M. Huttler, 1874), 22. 'Under the shell of a shiny civilization, rawness and savagery erupts, which could not be found in any other German city.'

civilization', as many of its newly acquired provinces were clearly lagging behind in development:

Wir gehen davon aus, dass das deutsche Reich an der Spitze der Civilisation marschieren soll. Aber wie soll es an der Spitze der Civilisation marschieren können, wenn noch einzelne Staaten zu denselben gehören, deren Zustände tief im Mittelalter wurzeln? Und was werden wir gegenüber denjenigen sagen welche uns zurufen: Wie! Ihr wollt an der Spitze der Civilisation marschieren, und die Zustände der einzelnen Staaten sind noch solche, dass sie im vollkommenen Widerstreit zu eurem Vorhaben stehen?³

While liberals lamented the development of certain German states, prominent socialists were arguing that, as a whole, the newly formed empire was the result of anti-civilizational politics. Already four years before the Franco-Prussian war, which set the final stage of German unification in motion, left-wing organizations like the *Berliner Maschinenbau=Arbeiterverein* had chastised a potential war against France, which they saw as a danger to civilization. In a published message to their French colleagues they had written: 'Wir verabscheuen jeden Krieg, und halten besonders einen Krieg zwischen Frankreich und Deutschland für gleich sehr schädlich den Interessen der Civilisation und der Freiheit.'⁴ Just two years later, as war with France became more likely, such rhetoric was adapted by some of the leaders of the newly founded SDAP, by then the only politically relevant worker's party. At a party conference in 1869, shortly before war was declared, Liebknecht harangued his colleagues in the southern German states to oppose a war with France more fervently:

Wir Norddeutsche sind vorläufig vergewaltigt. Aber Sie im Süden sind noch nicht völlig gefesselt. Zerreißen sie die Schlinge der Militärverträge, und ersparen sie Europa, der Welt jene Todsünde wider den heiligen Geist der Zivilisation: einen Nationalkrieg zwischen Frankreich und Deutschland.⁵

3 *Verhandlungen des durch die allerhöchste Präsidialverordnung vom 15. Juli 1870 zu einer ausserordentlichen Session einberufenen Reichstags des Norddeutschen Bundes. Vom 19. bis 21 Juli 1870* (Berlin: Gedruckt bei Julius Sittenfeld, 1870), 112. 'We assume that the German empire should take the lead in civilization. But how could it take the lead in civilization, if it counts amongst its counties some whose state can be described as medieval. And what will we say to those who tell us: What! You want to take the lead in civilization and the situation of some of your counties are the opposite of what you want to achieve.'

4 "Augsburger Tagblatt," *Augsburger Tagblatt*, April 20, 1867, 109 edition, sec. Vermischte Nachrichten, 987. 'We detest any war, but hold specifically a war between France and Germany to be equally dangerous to freedom and civilization.'

5 Quoted in Kurt Eisner, *Wilhelm Liebknecht. Sein Leben und Wirken* (Berlin: Expedition der Buchhandlung Vorwärts, 1900), 36. 'We the Germans in the North are currently coerced, but you, in the south, are not completely enchained yet. Rip the noose of military treaties apart, and save Europe and the world from the mortal sin against the holy spirit of civilization: a national war between France and Germany.'

The war, despite Liebknecht's best intentions, was no more to be stopped, but the rhetoric of civilization continued to dominate SDAP perspectives on further developments, like the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. Shortly after the war, Liebknecht and Bebel claimed in a manifesto that the integration of Alsace-Lorraine into the newly-founded empire did not fulfill the national and civilizational aims for which the war had allegedly been fought. Instead, it bred new potential crises. France would be forced to ally with Russia to reconquer its territories. Instead of ending the great power-struggles that had dominated Europe for so long, the new German Empire had merely become a part of it. In this manifesto, a document that would later be used against them in a trial for treason, they asserted their misplaced confidence in the power of the German workers: 'Die deutschen Arbeiter werden, im Interesse Frankreichs wie Deutschlands, im Interesse des Friedens und der Freiheit, im Interesse der westlichen Civilisation gegen die kosackische Barbarei, die Annexion von Elsass und Lothringen nicht dulden.'⁶ Associating Russia with intervention and war, German socialists advocated a pacifist and specifically anti-tsarist civilization.⁷ The newly formed empire should put a stop to territorial ambition and conquest, as embodied by Russia, they argued, and if it wanted to lead in civilization, it should purely be focused on defense. As the prominent politician Wilhelm Hasenclever succinctly put it in a parliamentary debate concerned with the military budget: 'Nochmals, meine Herren, schaffen Sie ein Verteidigungsheer, verurtheilen Sie eine Eroberungsarmee, und dann erst können Sie sagen: Deutschland marschirt an der Spitze der Civilisation.'⁸

Despite all socialist rhetoric, the greatest civilizational debate in early 1870s Germany was once again connected to the Catholic Church and to its relationship to modern liberalism. Shortly before the war between France and Prussia broke out, Pius IX had called for a council in Rome to deal with the continuing problem of liberalism and nationalism; and which was conceived to build on the

6 *Leipziger Hochverrathsprozess. Ausführlicher Bericht über die Verhandlungen des Schwurgerichts zu Leipzig in dem Prozess gegen Liebknecht, Bebel und Hepner wegen Vorbereitung zum Hochverrat. vom 11. bis 26. März 1872. Bearbeitet von den Angeklagten* (Leipzig: Druck und Verlag der Genossenschaftsdruckerei, 1874), 318.

'The German workers will, in the interest of France and Germany, in the interest of peace and freedom, in the interest of western civilization against cossack barbarism not allow for an annexation of Alsace-Lorraine.'

7 Literature on the international of early social democrats are few and far between, for a good introduction see Sinclair W. Armstrong, "The Internationalism of the Early Social Democrats of Germany," *The American Historical Review* 47, no. 2 (1942): 245–58.

8 *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Deutschen Reichstages. ". Legislatur=Periode. 1. Session 1874. Erster Band. Von der Eröffnungssitzung am 5. Februar bis sechsundzwanzigsten Sitzung am 28. März 1874* (Berlin: Verlag der Buchdruckerei der "Norddeutschen Allgemeinen Zeitung," 1874), 86. 'Again, gentlemen, build an army of defence and denounce an army of conquest, and only then will you be able to say that Germany marches at the head of civilization'

Syllabus of 1864. The political character of the council was clear from the beginning, as the French journalist Jean Hugot explained to his German readers:

So hätte den das Concil einen im eminenten Grade politischen Charakter, und in der Meinung Derjenigen, die es ausgedacht und vorbereitet haben, würden dessen Anatheme gegen alles Dasjenige gerichtet werden, was man so gewöhnlich “die Errungenschaften der modernen Civilisation” nennt. Es ist unmöglich sich den Ernst einer solchen Unternehmung und die Neuerung, die darin liegt, zu verhehlen.⁹

The political and civilizational debates surrounding the council, which liberals and Catholics had equally anticipated, were quickly overshadowed by the Franco-Prussian war. The council itself had to be adjourned, as Napoleon III's troops, originally sent to protect the pope, were needed in the defense of France. A few days later, the Italian army seized the opportunity to take Rome, and the same month the eternal city became the new capital of Italy. Despite its abrupt ending, the first Vatican council managed to pass some highly controversial propositions, most important among them, papal infallibility.¹⁰ It was a dogma intended to strengthen papal power beyond national borders and to make the authority of the pope absolute when speaking *ex cathedra*. Although the original document affirmed that papal infallibility had in fact always existed, as the church had always stood 'firm against the gates of hell', it was at this special time, when the church was particularly threatened, that this infallibility needed to be pronounced a dogma:

But since in this very age when the salutary effectiveness of the apostolic office is most especially needed, not a few are to be found who disparage its authority, we judge it absolutely necessary to affirm solemnly the prerogative which the only-begotten Son of God was pleased to attach to the supreme pastoral office.¹¹

While liberals were outraged, Germany's new chancellor had a distinctly pragmatic interpretation of events, based on historical rather than ideological ideas. The Vatican Council was, according to

9 Jean Hugon, *Wie es auf dem Concil zugeht* (Munich: Rudolph Oldenbourg, 1870), 53. 'The Council had an eminently political character, as, in the minds of those who had conceived and planned it, its anathema would be directed against everything one generally calls 'the achievements of modern civilization'. It is impossible to deny the seriousness and novelty of such an undertaking.

10 For the background to the debates about Papal infallibility at the First Vatican Council see Richard F. Costigan, *The Consensus of the Church and Papal Infallibility: A Study in the Background of Vatican I* (Washington D.C.: CUA Press, 2005).

11 Mary Gerhart and Fabian Udoh, *The Christianity Reader* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 498.

Bismarck, who was allegedly willing to grant the Pope asylum after his flight from Rome, nothing more than another episode in an endless power-struggle:

es handelt sich um den uralten Machtstreit, der so alt ist wie das Menschengeschlecht, um den Machtstreit zwischen Königtum und Priestertum, den Machtstreit, der viel älter ist als die Erscheinung unseres Erlösers in dieser Welt, den Machtstreit, in dem Agamemnon in Aulis mit seinen Sehern lag, der ihm dort die Tochter kostete und die Griechen am Auslaufen verhinderte, den Machtstreit, der die deutsche Geschichte des Mittelalters bis zur Zersetzung des Deutschen Reiches erfüllt hat.¹²

Keeping with this rhetoric and referring back to Heinrich IV and the debates about investiture in the 11th century, Bismarck promised the Reichstag that there would not be another Canossa: 'Seien Sie außer Sorge, nach Canossa gehen wir nicht, weder körperlich noch geistig', an expression that became so legendary, it remains until today inscribed at various Bismarck monuments.¹³ While Bismarck remained firm in his opposition to papal power-claims, and is often thought of as the head of the *Kulturkampf* campaign, he did not think of the pope's assertions as endangering modern civilization or progress. Indeed, he was unwilling to see the Catholic Party, which had taken nearly a fifth of the vote at the first elections of 1871, as anything more than political opposition to his plans.¹⁴

The *Nationalliberale*, in a fragile alliance with the chancellor, were certainly less nonchalant about this conflict, which they saw not as another incarnation of Agamemnon's struggle, but as precisely the opposite: a stumbling block towards further progress and civilization.¹⁵ As Blackbourn has argued, for them, it was a struggle between two different ways of existence: progress or

12 Moritz Busch, *Bismarck: Some Secret Pages of His History* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1898), 220–221; Gordon Alexander Craig, *Deutsche Geschichte 1866 - 1945: vom Norddeutschen Bund bis zum Ende des Dritten Reiches* (Munich: C.H.Beck, 1980), 91. 'It is the age-old power struggle, which is as old as humanity itself, the power struggle which is much older than the appearance of our saviour in the world, the power struggle in which Agamemnon was involved with his seers, that cost him his daughter and made it impossible for the Greeks to leave the harbour, the power struggle, which has dominated German history from the Middle Ages until the dissolution of the German Empire.'

13 Baedeker, *Baedeker Reiseführer Harz* (Ostfildern-Kemnat: Baedeker, 2013), 137. 'Do not worry, we are not going to Canossa, neither physically nor mentally'.

14 Sylvie Toscer-Angot, "Le Kulturkampf: le choix de la laïcité?," in *La laïcité en question: religion, état et société en France et en Allemagne du 18e siècle à nos jours*, ed. Sylvie Le Grand (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses Univ. Septentrion, 2008), 74–75.

15 Heinrich Bornkamm, "Die Staatsidee im Kulturkampf," *Historische Zeitschrift* 170, no. 1 (1950): 53; Armin Heinen, "Umstrittene Moderne. Die Liberalen Und Der Preußisch-Deutsche Kulturkampf," *Geschichte Und Gesellschaft* 29, no. 1 (2003): 140–143.

regression.¹⁶ Liberals like Bluntschli were willing to admit that the Church had once represented civilization, but argued that it had become obsolete and had been superseded by the better and freer arrangement of the modern state.¹⁷ The Catholic Church, its insistence on infallibility, and its Jesuit mercenaries, remained a danger to the modern state. The momentary powerlessness of the church, some argued, did not represent a break in spirit, as its fundamental character had not changed. Bluntschli, once again employing the language of civilization, explained that if the Jesuits could still treat their opponents as they did in the thirty-years war, they would. They were merely stopped, because 'die gesammte Fortbildung des Staatsrechts und des bürgerlichen Rechts und die heutige Civilisation, einem so heftigen Vorgehen, unübersteigliche Hindernisse in den Weg legen.'¹⁸ This modern civilization needed to be protected, Bluntschli and others claimed, and the political agitation of the church should be responded to in kind. The influence of the Jesuits in particular needed to be curbed, or, even better, the whole order expelled, a claim that would soon become one of the central tenets of the *Kulturkampf*.

Although the large debates about the church, and the expulsion of the Jesuits in particular, have become known as the *Kulturkampf*, it would be wrong to think that the word *Kultur* was used at the exclusion of civilization.¹⁹ Both outside and inside of parliament, the word civilization was employed practically interchangeably with *Kultur*; with the Jesuits being presented as the enemies of civilization and culture alike. In the public sphere, anti-Jesuit publications were alleging that even the Jesuit's motto 'omnia ad majorem dei gloriam ist ein Schlag ins Gesicht der humanen Welt und ein Protest wider den Zug der Cultur und Civilisation des Jahrhunderts'.²⁰ Inside parliament, there was a similarly agitated atmosphere when a potential expulsion of the Jesuits was discussed. While the vice-president of the Reichstag, Dr. Dove, took the lead in reminding his colleagues about the anti-civilizational stance the Catholic Church had recently taken, Catholic MPs lamented that the liberals had nothing better to do than to collate allegedly anti-civilizational passages:

Man liest uns aus Büchern vor, von allen Ecken und Enden her sucht man zusammen, was

16 David Blackbourn, "Progress and Piety: Liberalism, Catholicism and the State in Imperial Germany," *History Workshop Journal* 26, no. 1 (1988): 57–78.

17 Johann Caspar Bluntschli, *Rom und die Deutschen*. (Berlin: C.G. Lüderitz'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1872), 23.

18 Ibid., 66; *Der Katholicismus Und Der Moderne Staat :Andeutungen Zur Richtigern Würdigung Ihres Gegenseitigen Verhältnisses, Namentlich in Deutschland Und Italien*. (Berlin: Druck und Verlag von Georg Reimer, 1873), 100. 'because the development of state law, civil law, and today's civilization, were an insurmountable blockade to such drastic actions.'

19 Roísín Healy, *The Jesuit Specter in Imperial Germany* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, *Purging the Empire: Mass Expulsions in Germany, 1871-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

20 Quoted in Philaletes Freimuth, *Das moderne deutsche Kaiserreich und die Katholiken*, 2nd ed. (Luxemburg: Druck und Verlag von Peter Brueck, 1872), 166. 'omnia ad majorem dei gloriam is a slap in the fact of humanity and an explicit protest against the advance of culture and civilization in this century.'

während des achtzehnhundertjährigen Bestehens der Kirche nur immer gegen die “moderne Civilisation”, gegen die “liberalen Ideen”, gegen den “modernen Rechtsstaat”, gegen das “moderne Culturwesen” von Katholiken geschrieben worden ist; das wird alles in pikanter Auswahl hierhin gebracht.²¹

Attempts by Catholic MPs to defend the influence of the Jesuits on civilization, and protests that with this civilizational language the baby was thrown out with the bathwater were largely ignored. Conciliatory voices arguing that they understood 'in welcher Lage so viele unter Ihnen sind, welche glauben, den Jesuiten als den Erzfeinden jeder Civilisation entgetreten zu müssen', yet that such feelings did not make the expulsion just, were laughed at; and shortly after the Reichstag forbade the presence of Jesuit institutions within the territory of the new German state.²²

These discussions reveal the complex nature of 1870s German liberalism, whose ironically illiberal tendencies have been the focus of many studies.²³ The strong civilizational convictions that formed the core of the *Kulturkampf* campaign have even been made responsible for many later, apparently unconnected events. Fitzpatrick has in a recent publication compared the policies of Jesuit expulsion, pioneered in the early 1870s, with later instances of similar policies directed against Danes and Socialists, which were only made possible by these early instances of illiberal liberalism.²⁴ Zimmermann, meanwhile, has argued that the ferocity and determination of the *Kulturkampf* debate and the attempts at exclusion and denigration of a minority make the *Kulturkampf* the direct predecessor of the civilizing missions against the indigenous populations of later German colonies, which not coincidentally also relied on civilizational arguments.²⁵ What both seem to suggest is that these various instances were sudden and violent over-reactions, betraying the unstable character of day-to-day German politics, and the situation of liberals in the *Kulturkampf* not as one of strength, but of weakness.

21 *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Deutschen Reichstages. I. Legislaturperiode. III. Session. Von der einunddreissigsten bis achtundvierzigsten Sitzung am 19. Juni 1872*, vol. 2 (Berlin: Verlag der Buchdruckerei der “Norddeutschen Allgemeinen Zeitung,” 1872), 1130–1131. 'One reads us from books, from near and far one carries evidence of what, during the 1800 years of the church's existence, has been written by Catholics against “modern civilization, against “liberal ideas”, against the “modern state” and all of this is presented to us in a delicate collection.'

22 *Ibid.*, 2:1023. 'understand in which position so many of you are, who think they have to confront the Jesuits as the arch-enemies of civilization'.

23 For an overview see Michael B. Gross, *The War Against Catholicism: Liberalism and the Anti-Catholic Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 241.

24 Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, *Purging the Empire: Mass Expulsions in Germany, 1871-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

25 Andrew Zimmerman, “Race and World Politics: Germany in the Age of Imperialism, 1878–1914,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 359.

Such liberal weakness would show soon after, as at the next elections in 1874 liberals all over Europe were suffering crushing defeats. Within two weeks, German and British liberal parties were beaten badly at their respective elections. Gladstone, who had lost despite winning the majority of the popular vote, announced his immediate retirement from politics, citing as the main reason that he wanted 'some time between parliament and the grave'.²⁶ While Gladstone had been beaten by his conservative opponent, the liberal situation in Germany was arguably much worse. Not only had the various liberal parties lost, the Catholics had won. The Catholic *Zentrum* increased its proportion of the vote by 10% to almost a third of the electorate, while all the various liberal parties had been decimated. In recent historical literature, this Catholic victory has generally been interpreted as a sign of successful and modern campaign tactics, and of the better organization of Catholic politics in Germany.²⁷ Liberals at the time interpreted it simply as regression and the result of lacking liberal fervour, and logically resumed their aggressive politics in the aftermath of the elections.

The events of 1874 fanned anti-Catholic civilizational flames all over Europe, and even in Britain where the Vatican decrees had not had nearly the same impact as in Germany. Gladstone's retirement proved short-lived as he returned, within weeks, to the centre of political action with a tract designed to stir up further tension with the Catholic Church, and to criticize the negative effects of recent Vatican politics. Gladstone and his friends were, as A.J.P. Taylor once put it, 'all, without exception, fervent patriots, eager to crush anyone who should challenge the moral code of their civilization', and in the eyes of many liberals, the Vatican decrees did just that.²⁸ Gladstone signalled that he agreed with those who saw the results of the Vatican council as completing a process started with the *Syllabus of Errors* in 1864, and that they were a challenge to modern civilization as such.²⁹ As he explained in the second of a series of pamphlets detailing his position:

Without doubt, progress, liberalism, modern civilisation are terms more or less ambiguous; but they are, under a sound rule, determinable by the context. Now the context of the syllabus and the Encyclica are perfectly unambiguous: they perfectly explain what the Pope

26 Matthew R. Temmel, "Gladstone's Resignation of the Liberal Leadership, 1874-1875," *Journal of British Studies* 16, no. 01 (1976): 153-77.

27 For a good introduction to this literature, see Margaret Lavinia Anderson, "Piety and Politics: Recent Work on German Catholicism," *The Journal of Modern History* 63, no. 4 (December 1, 1991): 681-716; Margaret Lavinia Anderson, "The Limits of Secularization: On the Problem of the Catholic Revival in Nineteenth-Century Germany," *The Historical Journal* 38, no. 03 (1995): 647-70.

28 Cameron Whitehead, "Reading Beside the Lines: Marginalia, W.E. Gladstone, and the International History of the Bulgarian Horrors," *The International History Review* 0, no. 0 (2014): 6.

29 Josef L. Altholz, "The Vatican Decrees Controversy, 1874-1875," *The Catholic Historical Review* 57, no. 4 (1972): 594.

means by these words. He means to condemn all that we consider fair limitation to the claims of priestly power; to repudiate the title of man to general freedom of thought, and of speech in all its varied forms of utterance; the title of a nation to resist those who treat the sovereignty over it as a property, and who would enforce on the people – for example of the Papal States – a government independently of or against its will; in a word the true and only sure titles of freedom in all its branches, inward and outward, mental, moral, and political, as they are ordinarily understood in this age and country.³⁰

Not only did the Vatican decrees infringe on sovereignty, Gladstone claimed, they also undermined freedom and progress more broadly: 'To secure rights has been, and is, the aim of the Christian civilisation: to destroy them, and to establish the resistless, domineering action of a purely central power, is the aim of Roman policy.'³¹ Deliberately exaggerating a potential international threat of the Catholic Church, as German liberals had done for a while, Gladstone argued that if the church was not firmly opposed, not only were English freedoms in danger, but European civilization in general.³² As he dramatically put it: 'nothing shall remain, except an Asian monarchy; nothing, but one giddy height of despotism, and one dead level of religious subserviency'.³³

In many ways, Gladstone's sudden criticism of the Catholic Church came as a surprise, as the Vatican decrees, three years earlier, had not caused great outrage in Britain. Now, a huge debate developed, taking up many of the tropes pioneered on the continent in the 1860s (see chapter 4). In England, as Altholz has asserted, the general public had almost forgotten about the Vatican decrees by the time Gladstone decided to pull them to center of political attention.³⁴ Various notions of civilization were frequently discussed in Church circles in the early 1870s, yet rather as a general phenomenon and hardly ever directly connected to the *Syllabus* or the Vatican decrees.³⁵ Now that the debate had started, Gladstone was heavily attacked by Catholic papers and intellectuals alike. The Catholic Review *The Month*, seeking to reverse Gladstone's argument, claimed that he 'had cast

30 William Ewart Gladstone, "Vaticanism," in *Rome and the Newest Fashions in Religion* (London: John Murray, 1875), 31.

31 W. E. Gladstone, *Vaticanism. An Answer to Replies and Reproofs* (London: John Murray, 1875), 95.

32 William Ewart Gladstone, *The Vatican Decrees in Their Bearing on Civil Allegiance: A Political Expostulation* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1875), 50–51; Josef L. Altholz, "Gladstone and The Vatican Decrees," *Historian* 25, no. 3 (1963): 315; Heinen, "Umstrittene Moderne. Die Liberalen Und Der Preußisch-Deutsche Kulturkampf," 138.

33 Gladstone, *Vaticanism. An Answer to Replies and Reproofs*, 9.

34 Altholz, "The Vatican Decrees Controversy, 1874-1875," 595.

35 John William Henry Molyneux, *Christianity and Modern Civilization. A Letter to the Bishop of Ely* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green, 1871); R.W. Church, *Civilization. Before and after Christianity. Two Lectures Delivered in St. Paul's Cathedral at the Tuesday Evening Services, January 23d & 30th, 1872* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1872).

in his lot' with 'the bands of desperadoes, gathered from the scum of the earth' that were questioning the pope's temporal authority.³⁶ Other more nuanced figures like Manning, Acton and Newman replied in more detail, and most of their critique took up ideas developed in the 1860s when liberalism and Protestantism had first become more closely associated.³⁷

By attacking the church through the principles of liberalism and modern civilization, Catholic opinion leaders in England argued, Gladstone clearly demonstrated the close connection between Protestantism and revolutionary, atheist ideals. The ideas that Gladstone was defending were a dangerous mix of Lutheranism and revolutionary ideals, or, as Manning succinctly explained: 'The principles of 1789 are Lutheranism applied to politics.'³⁸ The later rector of the University of Ireland, Henry Canon Neville, similarly attacked Gladstone for supporting the wrong side of the battle and not the church, 'against that liberalism, which runs into Red Republicanism throughout France and Italy, into Communism in Paris, into Internationalism in England and Germany'.³⁹ The conservative MP Robert Montagu had an even more dramatic take on the subject, as he explained to students at the Catholic Union of Ireland:

I have repudiated modern thought, if the great leader of the liberal party means by modern thought the mischievous ideas of 1789, and, by fervour in religion, a little harmless artistic taste. I belong to the Church of God, not to the synagogue of Satan. I look to the church to remove now, as she did in the early centuries, the evils of modern thought by the remedial agency of her plenitude of authority.⁴⁰

This debate was not a purely British one. In the early 1870s, an international dialogue developed in the countries of the Anglo-sphere as well as in Europe, which treated the disputes between liberals and the Catholic Church as a prime issue of international politics. As has recently been argued, anti-Catholicism was strong in the US in the 1870s, where, over the next few years, politicians like Richard Thompson adopted the anti-papal rhetoric of Europe and complained that: 'We are classed,

36 T.B. Parkinson, "Mr Gladstone's 'Expostulation.' Part the Second.," *The Month and Catholic Review* 13, no. 1 (1875): 91–92.

37 Altholz, "The Vatican Decrees Controversy, 1874-1875," 599–601.

38 Henry Edward Manning, *The Vatican Decrees in Their Bearing on Civil Allegiance* (New York: Catholic Publication Society, 1875), 128.

39 Henry Neville, *A Few Comments on Mr. Gladstone's Expostulation*. (London: B.M. Pickering, 1875), 49.

40 Robert Montagu, *Civilization and the See of Rome. A Lecture Delivered under the Auspices of the Catholic Union of Ireland* (Dublin: M'Glashan & Gill, 1874), 31.

by him and his hierarchy, along with the infidels, socialists, and communists of Europe.⁴¹ In Australia, where the repercussions of this international debate were equally felt, Catholics saw civilization endangered by a new wave of anti-papal propaganda. The Melbourne Jesuit O'Malley condemned Gladstone and the liberals in a tract entitled *Secular Education and Christian Civilisation*, which alleged that without Catholicism civilization could not exist, and that Gladstone was doing the work of the devil.⁴² In European countries, like Belgium, where Catholic politicians had, as in Germany, been strengthened in the countryside, liberal internationalists continued to complain about the 'Unverträglichkeit zwischen moderner Civilisation und römischen Ideen'.⁴³

Arguably, the strongest links in this international fight had developed between Germany and Britain, where all liberal parties had suffered a backlash in 1874. Not only did Gladstone take the word Vaticanism from German and were his books translated into it, even official political meetings were held to support the German cause in Britain.⁴⁴ Gladstone himself also felt that Germany represented the vanguard of the liberal struggle he thought himself a part of, and sent the first copy of his new tract to a person he mistakenly thought of as embodying the liberal spirit of Europe: Bismarck. The chancellor, as his comments on the *Kulturkampf* show, had never believed in the great liberal project of men like Gladstone, whose idealist politics he despised, and whom he would later refer to as 'incompetent as a politician' but 'a great demagogue'.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, he thought it fair to reply:

I am very sensible of your kind attention in sending me the first copy of your Vaticanism, of which I anticipate some hours of instructive reading. It affords me a deep and hopeful gratification to see the two nations, which in Europe are the champions of liberty and conscience, encountering the same foe, stand henceforth shoulder on shoulder in defending the highest interests of the human race.⁴⁶

41 Timothy Verhoeven, "Transatlantic Connections: American Anti-Catholicism and the First Vatican Council (1869–70)," *The Catholic Historical Review* 100, no. 4 (2014): 695–720; Richard W. Thompson, *The Papacy and the Civil Power*. (New York: Nelson & Phillips, 1876), 213.

42 O'Malley, *Secular Education and Christian Civilisation* (Melbourne: Thomas E. Verga, 1875).

43 Emile de Laveleye, *Protestantismus und Katholizismus in ihren Beziehungen zur Freiheit und Wohlfahrt der Völker*. (Nördlingen: Druck und Verlag der C.H. Beck'schen Buchhandlung, 1875), 10. 'The incompatibility of modern civilization and Roman ideas'.

44 Gladstone, *Vaticanism. An Answer to Replies and Reproofs*, 7; W. E. Gladstone, *Vaticanismus. Eine Antwort auf Erwiderungen und Vorwürfe* (Nördlingen: Verlag der C.H. Beck'schen Buchhandlung, 1875); Altholz, "The Vatican Decrees Controversy, 1874-1875," 596.

45 Edgar Feuchtwanger, *Bismarck: A Political History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 226.

46 Otto v. Bismarck, *Gesammelte Werke: 1, Schriften. Bd. 1. 1871-1873*, ed. Konrad Canis (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005), 308.

Russia, the East, and the Public Conscience of the World

Such pronouncements about the highest interest of the human race, even when they were not entirely sincere, had become conspicuously frequent around the middle of the 1870s. Although some have referred to the whole nineteenth century as an era of internationalism, the idea of the international as a field of engagement had certainly intensified in the last third.⁴⁷ In the 1860s, practitioners of international law had referred to a growing *esprit d'internationalité*, in the 1870s it was formally institutionalized.⁴⁸ In 1873, the *Institut de droit international*, dedicated to the study of the science of international law and intending to push for legislation to further civilize warfare and the international sphere more broadly, was inaugurated.⁴⁹ It was, as its initiators cheekily explained: 'une espèce de concile juridique-oecuménique, sans pape et sans infailibilité'.⁵⁰ The Universal Postal Union, created to guarantee safe communications around the globe, was founded merely a year later, the international gold standard started to be widely accepted, and the mid-1870s saw a sudden rise in geographical organizations for the exploration and civilization of the globe as a whole, as well as a mushrooming of organizations dedicated to such problems as prison reform.⁵¹

This deluge of newly-founded international organizations was accompanied by a barrage of literature dedicated to what many perceived to be a new state of affairs. While Henry James dissected the differences between Britain and the US in his *An International Episode*, authors more directly interested in forcing political change, like Frederic Marshall, dedicated their books to the reform of the arcane rituals of international diplomacy, which he referred to as *International Vanities*.⁵² On both sides of the Atlantic, men of letters and politicians were calling for global reforms to start a new era of what some had started to call internationalism. The historian Frederic Seebohm collected his thoughts on the future of the international sphere in an essay he called *International Reform*, American politicians like Elihu Burritt were calling for an '*International Congress* for the purpose of elaborating and commending to the governments and peoples an *International Code*', and Britain even saw the publication of books simply entitled: *Internationalism*.⁵³ In all of these, allegedly newly existing ideals of a liberal, global civilization

47 Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (London: Penguin, 2012), 3–188.

48 Martti Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law 1870–1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 13.

49 Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations*.

50 Ibid., 39. 'A type of ecumenical-judicial council without pope and infallibility.'

51 Christopher M. Meissner, "A New World Order: Explaining the International Diffusion of the Gold Standard, 1870–1913," *Journal of International Economics* 66, no. 2 (2005): 385–406.

52 Henry James, *An International Episode*. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1879); Frederic Marshall, *International Vanities*. (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1875).

53 Frederic Seebohm, *On International Reform*. (London: Longman's, Green and Co., 1871); James Browning Miles, *Association for the Reform and Codification of the Law of Nations: A Brief Sketch of Its Formation* (Paris: Brière, 1875), 4; Arturo de Marcoartu, *Internationalism*. (London: Stevens and Sons., 1876). Emphasis in the

were lauded, and the inevitable internationalist future of the world praised in the highest tones.

The idea that a new, international spirit of civilization had started to dominate the politics of the century was an oft-repeated theme in mid-1870s discussions in western Europe, and one even philosophers not primarily interested in politics started to engage with. The writer and philosopher Arthur Elley Finch expounded on it in great detail as he addressed the Sunday Lecture Society in Westminster in February 1876 on the topic of 'Civilisation: A sketch of its rise and progress; its modern safeguards and future prospects'.⁵⁴ The Sunday Lecture Society was a liberal bastion which had counted T.H. Huxley, Herbert Spencer, and Charles Darwin as its vice-presidents, and whose listeners must have been pleased to hear Finch advance classic liberal doctrine for an international era. Freedom of speech, the steam engine and the physical sciences, Finch argued, had helped humanity to advance to a new level which was now taking on international forms. As Finch put it, an 'International Conscience' had developed, 'to whose dictates each state becomes more or less sensitive, and thereby acts of inhumanity, aggression, and persecution, that were of so frequent perpetration in the isolated communities of antiquity, are shrunk from beneath the reproachful gaze of surrounding nations'.⁵⁵ Civilization was advancing all over the globe, Finch claimed, and those countries and peoples who remained closed to the international conscience would, pressured by developments, at some point have to give in.

It was specifically one part of the globe, he argued, that had remained resilient to the advance of international civilization and whose racial and theological make-up impeded its further rise: the East. As he explained:

Eastern civilizations appear to have reached a certain point, and there to have stopped, hindered probably from advancing by reason of their knowledge being bound up with theological opinions held to be sacred and immutable, or by reason of their mental constitution having attained the natural limit imposed by their climate and surrounding physical circumstances.⁵⁶

In many ways, Finch's pronouncements were nothing new. Broad tropes of eastern inferiority had

original.

54 A. Elley Finch, *Civilization: A Sketch of Its Rise and Progress; Its Modern Safeguards & Future Prospects. A Lecture Delivered before the Sunday Lecture Society on Sunday Afternoon, 20th February 1876*. (London: The Sunday Lecture Society, 1876).

55 *Ibid.*, 24–25.

56 *Ibid.*, 14.

existed since antiquity and ideas of the theological backwardness of the east were a common staple of nineteenth century liberal argument. Indeed, merely a year earlier, Gladstone had referred to the danger of the Catholic Church as akin to an Asian monarchy. Yet, while theological opinions were mutable and prone to change, Finch and others were now referring to the 'natural limits' of the peoples of the East. As recent contributions by historians like MacMaster and Beasley have shown, Finch was not alone in these beliefs, as scientific conceptions of race, partly informed by previous discourses, started to dominate European political discussions about the international sphere from around 1870.⁵⁷ Reynaud-Paligot has even suggested that the phenomena of internationalism and scientific racism were intrinsically connected, as an increasingly international community of scholars fed with new research material from ever more far-away parts of the globe were actively engaged in producing racial maps of the world, that would later be reflected in international politics.⁵⁸

This new rhetoric had a grave impact on both domestic as well as international politics, as politicians in the west could be denigrated as inferior, and whole countries could be conquered under the premiss of civilizational and racial superiority. As Wohl has shown in an excellent article, the British prime minister, Disraeli, suffered from a flood of racial anti-Semitism in the 1870s, which was of an entirely different nature from the religiously-based insults he had been accustomed to since his youth.⁵⁹ While at his early hustings, pieces of pork had been dangled in front of his nose, he was now depicted as oriental and, given what contemporaries would have called his racial ancestry, as incapable of understanding British civilization. While Disraeli had, despite such rhetoric, reached the top of the greasy pole and was himself often engaged in racial analysis, the actual population of the 'Orient' arguably suffered more from such insidious thought, as the new wave of Russian conquests that swept over Asia in the 1860s and 1870s, was directly justified with civilizational and racial superiority.⁶⁰ As Alexander II had taken over after Nicholas' death during the Crimean War Russia had moved towards more liberal policies, seeking to rehabilitate itself internationally. After the abolition of serfdom in 1861 and several military reforms, Russia's international politics were now also justified in the name of civilization. As the international lawyer

57 Neal McMaster, *Racism in Europe 1870-2000* (Houndmills: Palgrave MacMillan, 2001), 20–30; Edward Beasley, *The Victorian Reinvention of Race: New Racisms and the Problem of Grouping in the Human Sciences* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 20–23.

58 Carole Reynaud-Paligot, "Construction and Circulation of the Notion of Race in the Nineteenth Century," in *The Invention of Race: Scientific and Popular Representations*, ed. Nicolas Bancel, Thomas David, and Dominic Thomas (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), 87–99.

59 A. S. Wohl, "«Dizzi-Ben-Dizzi»: Disraeli as Alien," *The Journal of British Studies* 34, no. 3 (1995): 375–411.

60 Simone Beate Borgstede, "*All Is Race*": Benjamin Disraeli on Race, Nation and Empire (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2011).

Fjedor Martens explained to the international audience of the *Revue de droit international et de législation comparée*:

Plus l'Angleterre et la Russie seront pénétrées du sentiment de la solidarité de leur intérêts réciproques en Asie, plus elles convaincront que le trait caractéristique de la civilisation est l'esprit de coopération pour le même but élevé, plus deviendront solides les bases de leur domination sur les peuples asiatiques et plus seront efficaces les garanties générales de la paix générale, en Europe et en Asie.⁶¹

The Russian elite had much to gain from such civilizational rhetoric, and its officials attempted to present most of their Asian conquest as serving the international civilization of humanity. Already in the mid-1860s, Russia had started to expand further into Central Asia, and Russian officials had specifically justified the conquest of Turkestan with the vocabulary of civilization. Russian rhetoric was internationally known, as several books published in German directly quoted from the official note justifying intervention:

Das Kaiserliche Kabinett, in dem es sich dieser Aufgabe widmet, hat die Interessen Russlands im Auge. Es glaubt aber gleichzeitig den Interessen der Humanität und Civilisation zu dienen. Es hat ein Recht auf die gerechte und loyale Würdigung des Ganges den es verfolgt, und der Prinzipien, die es leiten, zu zählen.⁶²

As some have argued, having a civilizing mission in Central Asia was widely seen as a short-cut to being accepted as a truly European state.⁶³ In order to gain this acceptance, Russian officials sought to establish a civilizing mission for themselves, and to explicitly compare their actions in Central Asia to Britain's endeavours. As Morrison has explored, Russian officials and political commentators specifically focused on Britain's civilizational claims in India to build the reputation

61 Fedor Fedorovich Martens, "La Russie et l'Angleterre dans l'Asie centrale," *Revue de droit international et de législation comparée* 11 (1879): 233. 'The more Britain and Russia are penetrated by the feeling of solidarity concerning their interests in Asia, the more they are convinced that the main characteristic of civilization is the shared spirit of cooperation for the same elevated aim, the more the bases of their domination over Asian peoples will be strengthened, and the general peace in Europe and Asia will be guaranteed.'

62 Alexander Petzholdt, *Turkestan. Auf Grundlage einer im Jahre 1871 unternommenen Bereisung des Landes* (Leipzig: Verlag von Bernhard Schlicke, 1874), 70–71. 'The Imperial Cabinet has, in concerning itself with these duties, the interest of Russia in mind. But it also believes to serve the interests of civilization and humanity. It therefore has a right to rely on the just and loyal praise of its route and the principles, which guide it.'

63 Filippo Costa Buranelli, "Knockin' on Heaven's Door: Russia, Central Asia and the Mediated Expansion of International Society," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 42, no. 3 (2014): 817–36.

of their own civilizing mission in Central Asia.⁶⁴

In this international war of civilizational propaganda that accompanied the strategic competition many had started to refer to as the 'Great Game', Russia's positions were loudly touted in Britain by allegedly private individuals who filled the reviews of the 1870s with pro-Russian essays, describing the success and purpose of Russia's civilizing mission. The most prominent amongst them was Olga Novikoff, whose supporters, like W. T. Stead, called 'the MP for Russia', while her opponents frequently accused her of being an agent of the Tsar.⁶⁵ In essays and pamphlets, under her own name or a pseudonym, Olga Novikoff presented the official Russian line of civilizational advance. What Martens sought to tell those engaged in international law, she explained to the wider reading public in Britain. 'The only hope of barbarism in Asia lies in discord of the two civilising Empires', she argued, 'if we are united, civilisation is safe; but a policy of antagonism, even though we do not draw the sword, may end in restoring Asia to the Asiatics'.⁶⁶ This was the official Russian position, but Novikoff also sought to engage with the argument that Russia was an inferior and uncivilized power, and argued that while this might have been true, Europe owed its civilized existence to it: 'Upon us the Asiatic wave spent its force. We were overwhelmed, but we saved Europe from the Mongol horde. While we saved, we suffered: we emerged from the flood of barbarism partially barbarous; our progress has been arrested for centuries'.⁶⁷

Yet in the new international atmosphere of the 1870s, Russia had been re-established as a civilized power and was, Novikoff argued, sometimes even superior to the old ones. While the British were boisterously confident about their own civilizational head-start, Russia's new civilizational reforms had put it ahead in many crucial areas. Russia had a reformed criminal code, whereas British sailors were still lashed, and by the standards advocated by the rapidly disseminating international organizations, Russia was ahead in civilization:

We may be 'barbarians' but our criminal code judged by the standard of the Howard Association is more humane than that of at least one other nation, which retains the lash in the army and navy, applies the cat-o-nine-tails to the garotter, and secretly strangles

64 Alexander Morrison, "Russian Rule in Turkestan and the Example of British India, C. 1860-1917," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 84, no. 4 (2006): 666–707.

65 William Thomas Stead, ed., *The MP for Russia*, vol. 2 (London: Putnam, 1909).

66 Olga Aleksevna Novikova, *Russia and England from 1876 to 1880: A Protest and an Appeal* (London: Longman's, Green, & Co., 1880), 363.

67 *Ibid.*, 43.

murderers in the recesses of her gaols.⁶⁸

Cleverly, the Russian elite and those propagating in its name used the new rhetoric and ideas of the international sphere to their advance. Russia had sunk in the appreciation of western European liberals since the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, and specifically since the Crimean War, its new policies and official diplomatic strategy now sought to reestablish it as a civilized and western power, whose reforms and international stance rivaled the traditional powers of civilization in the west.

The Eastern Crisis

While Russia was arguably on the way up, the Ottoman Empire had suffered a sharp descent in international civilizational appreciation. Despite the integration of Turkey into the European concert, many in Europe and increasingly those under its rule criticized the Ottoman Empire as lacking in civilization, although no concrete action was taken against it in western Europe. During the twenty years that had passed since the last major war in the area, the status of Turkey's Christian populations weighed heavily on the newly developing liberal international conscience. Since the Crimean War, in which Britain had supported Turkey in the name of civilization, relations between the two countries had remained strained. Already in the immediate aftermath of the Treaty of Paris in 1856, Lord Clarendon, the then Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs wrote to the British ambassador in Constantinople, Stratford de Radcliffe:

the Turkish government should be made aware that if this systematic misgovernment, and the persecution of Christians, and violations of engagements continue, it will be impossible to arrest the progress of opinion which is now manifesting itself that Mahomedan rule is incompatible with civilisation and humanity, and can no longer be endured.⁶⁹

In Britain, this progress of opinion had not been arrested until the 1870s, but with the spread of the language of civilization, even those personally revolting against the Ottoman Empire had learned to phrase their grievances as civilizational ones. Already during the Crete Revolt in 1866, the provisional Crete government had called on the rest of the world in the name of civilization. It was logical that Turkey was a despotic country, the petition asserted, 'it is, however, surprising that Europe should continue to tolerate the so-oft repeated falsehood and so much effusion of blood in

68 Ibid., 84.

69 Quoted in George Douglas Campbell Argyll, *The Eastern Question from the Treaty of Paris 1856 to the Treaty of Berlin 1878, and to the Second Afghan War*. (London: Strahan & Company, 1879), 128.

Crete. If not justice, ought not civilization at least to put an end to this affair?'⁷⁰ Despite a few volunteers, civilization had not come to the aid of Crete and European politicians, continuously concerned about the fragility of the Ottoman Empire, preferred to ignore such claims, despite their ever-increasing volume.

In 1875, a new revolt broke out against Ottoman rule in Herzegovina and this time the repercussions became more difficult to ignore, although the status of civilization in this conflict remained heavily debated.⁷¹ The revolt quickly spread all over the Balkans and in 1876 had reached Bulgaria, where the Ottoman Army, to the chorus of an international outcry, brutally suppressed several uprisings. Using irregular troops, the Ottomans managed to get the uprisings under control, yet only at enormous cost. Russia immediately promised to come to the aid of civilization and the christian populations, but despite all Russian rhetoric, international enthusiasm for such an undertaking remained tepid. The official British response was muted, as Disraeli had not changed his opinions on the threat of Russia and was not willing to terminate an alliance because of an uprising. As Henry Elliot, the ambassador to Constantinople chillingly argued, British policy was 'not affected by the question whether it was 10,000 or 20,000 persons who perished in the suppression'.⁷² Many in Britain agreed with the government and argued that in contrast to Russian claims, Russia itself was a danger to civilization. The writer John Mill quickly identified Russian ideas of panslavism as the real threat in the Eastern Crisis: 'It has taken the field in open arms against treaties, races, religions, culture – in one word *civilisation*, as understood in Western Europe'.⁷³ While Mill was not alone in regarding Russian claims to civilization with scepticism, others had even more original critiques of Russian propaganda. The conservative politician Munro-Butler Johnstone argued that Turkey was having to be considered as more civilized than the countries which were opposing it, because it did not know such abstract words as 'civilisation' and was thereby not trapped in metaphysical abstractions.⁷⁴

On the continent, many agreed with the British conservative leadership and in German debates, it was predominantly Hungarians and Poles, sharing a border with Russia, who most mistrusted the

70 "Circular Letter Addressed by the Provisional Government to All the Consuls Resident at Canea, Dated from Asygonia, January, 18.06.1868," in *Papers Relating to Article XXIII of the Treaty of Berlin*. (London: Harrison, 1880), 56.

71 The best recent guide to these uprising is Davide Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire, 1815-1914* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2011), 147–170.

72 *Ibid.*, 149.

73 John Mill, *The Ottomans in Europe or Turkey in the Present Crisis, with the Secret Societies Maps* (London: Weldon & Co., 1876), XVI.

74 Henry Alexander Butler-Johnstone, *The Turks: Their Character, Manners and Institutions, as Bearing on the Eastern Question* (Oxford: James Parker, 1876), 17.

Tsar's pronouncements. The famed Hungarian orientalist Vambéry had already argued in his 1871 work *Russlands Machtstellung in Asien* that Russian rhetoric was not to be trusted. One should not hope, Vambéry explained, that Russia was now purely being led by civilizational motives: 'Russlands Politik trägt noch immer zu sehr den mittelalterlichen Zuschnitt. Ihm ist es noch immer um neue Besitzungen und Ländereien zu thun'.⁷⁵ Now that another Russian civilizing mission became more likely, the Slavist Josef Perwolf observed, Hungarians were openly showing their contempt for Russia's claims, and like many conservatives in Britain, argued that Russia was endangering civilization:

Magnaten und Bockskorose, Juraten und Literaten, Journalisten und Deputirte, Studenten und Czikoze – sie alle überfließen von Liebe zu den “Brüdern” Osmanen, donnern, im Reichstage, auf Meetings und Festcommerzen gegen den “eisigen Hauch des nordischen Kolosses”, “gegen die barbarischen Moskowiter, welche die Civilisation bedrohen”, und predigen einen förmlichen Kreuzzug.⁷⁶

They were joined by leading German socialists like Liebknecht who formally condemned Russian claims to civilization, as Russia itself was not civilized, and merely adopted civilizational language to cover-up its own atrocities. As I have shown in the beginning of this chapter, German socialists had traditionally been skeptical towards Russia. They now became increasingly aggressive in tone. As Liebknecht argued in the socialist newspaper *Vorwärts*, Russia was 'eine halbbarbarische Macht, die sich gerade soviel Civilisation angeeignet hat, um ihre barbarischen Ziele mit dem Raffinement der Civilisation verfolgen zu können'.⁷⁷ Remembering previous revolutions and Russia's treatment of Poland, Liebknecht elaborated on what he perceived to be Russian hypocrisy:

Der brutalste Raubstaat den die Geschichte kennt, der einzige welcher der langen ununterbrochenen Reihe von an der Menschheit begangenen Verbrechen keinen der

75 Ármin Vámbéry, *Russlands Machtstellung in Asien. Eine historische-politische Studie* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1871), 76. 'Russia's policy is still defined by its medievalism, as it is still concerned with new conquests and possessions'.

76 Josef Perwolf, *Die slawisch-orientalische Frage; eine historische Studie* (Prague: T. Mourek, 1878), 142. 'Magnates and the poor, lawyers and authors, journalists and MPs, students and peasants, all of them overflow with love for the Ottomans and thunder in meetings and commercial festivities against the “icy breath of the nordic colossus”, against the barbarian muscovites which are threatening civilization. They are threatening a veritable crusade.'

77 Wilhelm Liebknecht, *Zur orientalischen Frage, oder Soll Europa kosakisch werden?: ein Mahnwort an das deutsche Volk* (Leipzig: Höhne, 1878), 7. 'a half-barbarian power, which has acquired just as much civilization, to pursue its barbarian aims with the refinement of civilization'.

Menschheit erzeugten Dienst mildernd an die Seite stellen kann, dieser räuberischste grausamste und heuchlerischste aller Raubstaaten darf es wagen sich als Vertreter der Menschheit und der Menschlichkeit aufzuspielen und die Hände noch rauchend vom Blute des gemordeten Polen Krokodilstränen zu vergießen über die Türkengräuel?⁷⁸

For English liberals, to whom Russia's previous propaganda had predominantly been addressed, this crisis had a completely different civilizational meaning. While many had still agitated for the Ottoman Empire and against Russia during the Crimean War, it was now obvious to most, as the MP Holms put it, that 'the march of civilization had come to a stand-still in Turkey'.⁷⁹ The fact that once again Christians had been attacked, a part of Ottoman society many liberals liked to see as 'an element of progress, a germ of civilisation, a beam of day-dawn, a promise of better things', further infuriated the enemies of the Ottoman state.⁸⁰ Some argued that non-intervention would solve the problem by itself. William Harcourt told the house that 'in the name of humanity and civilization' they were to 'let them sink beneath the crushing weight of their own wickedness'.⁸¹ Others actively demanded Russian intervention, and especially those who saw the Eastern crisis as a possibility to make good the faults of the Crimean War actively advocated in the name of Russia. John Bright, previously opposed to turkophile policies, invoked the spirit of Richard Cobden, whose pamphlets were reprinted to mark the occasion, and argued that this was finally a chance to reconquer Constantinople for a Christian power.⁸² Using previous Russian declarations about their civilizational intentions, Bright decried the portrayal of the Russians as dangerous intruders, and rhetorically asked his constituents at a Town Hall meeting: 'Does not every man know that Russia is continually advancing in the field of civilization?'⁸³

Some British liberals even saw the current crisis as a potential step towards the truly internationalist future many of them hoped for. The famous international law scholar, James Lorimer, publicly argued that a potential Russian intervention against the Ottoman Empire would finally help it to

78 Ibid. The most brutal state of robbers history knows, and the only one which cannot adduce a single positive deed to the long and continuous list of crimes against humanity it has committed. This most brutal, cruel, and deceitful of all states of robbers dares to present itself as the representative of mankind and humanitarianism and, with hands still smoking with the blood of the murdered Poland, cry fake tears about the brutality of the Turks?'
79 HC Deb 31 July 1876 vol. 231 col. 170

80 William Gifford Palgrave, *Essays on Eastern Questions* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1872), 165.

81 HC Deb 11 August 1876 vol.231 col. 1135

82 Richard Cobden, *Russia, Turkey, and England. Reprinted from the Political Writings of Richard Cobden* (London: Cassell Petter & Galpin, 1876).

83 John Bright, *Speech on the Eastern Question. Delivered in the Town Hall, Birmingham, December 4th, 1876* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1877), 21.

crumble, and would open the door for a grand project of a denationalized and truly international Constantinople.⁸⁴ As he explained to his students, he was not:

one of those who has ever seen grounds for the jealousy and suspicion which the mere mention of the name of Russia awakens in the mind of so many in this country. Much of the ambition with which we charge Russia seems to me perfectly legitimate, and greatly to her honour. There can be no question, at all events, that it is an ambition that very closely resembles our own, and that so far from being a badge of discord, it ought to be a bond of union and a source of sympathy between us. So far as we have yet gone, I see no reason to doubt that the efforts both of Russia and of England have tended to advance the cause of civilisation against barbarism, or order against anarchy; and those who fight for so good a cause surely ought not to fight each other.⁸⁵

Despite such high-praise for Russia, Lorimer argued that he 'should tremble to see her in the prominent position which must necessarily belong to the possessor of Constantinople.'⁸⁶ While the Russians could potentially do the fighting, Lorimer argued, Constantinople itself should later become 'the common property of civilised mankind'.⁸⁷

Whereas Lorimer interpreted this crisis as a starting point to an internationalist future, Gladstone judged the present more realistically and immediately spotted an opportunity to gain political capital, with a renewed attack on Turkey and its crimes against civilization. He left the agenda of *Vaticanism* to take up the case of the Bulgarians in Britain. In essence, the target was the same: Asian monarchy and the enemies of civilization. The result of this endeavor, a pamphlet entitled *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*, was an immediate success, sold 200000 times in the first month, and Gladstone became the figure-head of a large movement calling for some form of international intervention.⁸⁸ Only the 'thorough riddance' and 'most blessed deliverance' of Turkish rule was a 'reparation' to 'the civilization which has been affronted and shamed', Gladstone explained, and his liberal constituency seemed to agree.⁸⁹ Gladstone's critics, however, were

84 James Lorimer, *Of the Denationalisation of Constantinople and Its Devotion to International Purposes. Introductory Lecture, Session 1876-77* (Edinburgh: Edmonston & Douglas, 1876).

85 Ibid., 8–9.

86 Ibid., 12.

87 Ibid., 13.

88 William Ewart Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Questions of the East* (London: John Murray, 1876); for the argument that this was the first instance of an argument for humanitarian intervention see Gary J. Bass, *Freedom's Battle: The Origins of Humanitarian Intervention* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2008).

89 Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Questions of the East*, 62.

unimpressed. Disraeli mocked him, alleging that the pamphlet was 'vindictive and ill-written' and was 'of all the Bulgarian Horrors, perhaps the greatest'.⁹⁰ Marx apparently caustically quipped that if Gladstone's speech had introduced conscience into diplomacy, he had even more so introduced diplomacy into conscience. Indeed, on all sides of the political spectrum, there was a general suspicion that Gladstone's sudden support of Bulgaria had more selfish motives, as an anonymous writer put it in a pamphlet fittingly entitled *The question of the day*:

As the Earl of Beaconsfield is now at the head of affairs in our country, and the Right Honourable W. E. Gladstone is not, it looks uncommonly like a bid for power [...] "A man must be wild in the extreme who can imagine for a moment (all greater interest being put aside), that the Christians would better their condition by being under the energetically tyrannical Russian, rather than the indolently indifferent Turk."⁹¹

Gladstone was criticized both for his power-hungry politics, and the way he characterized Turkey's relationship to civilization. Scientific ideas of race had started to dominate liberal discourse in the early 1870s, and now they were an integral part of new discussions about the Ottoman Empire. Liberal racists and British supremacists like E.A. Freeman analysed and criticized the racial make-up of the Ottoman Empire in several works, and other commentators on the Eastern Crisis, like the MP George Campbell, also sought the opportunity to present the Eastern Crisis as a racial one.⁹² Gladstone held similar opinions, as he explained at length in his pamphlet. In Turkey, the worst aspects of 'Mahometanism' and racial inferiority combined to form the most oppressive of empires. 'Let me endeavour very briefly to sketch, in the rudest outline what the turkish race was and what it is. It is not a question of Mahometanism simply, but of Mahometanism compounded with the peculiar character of a race.'⁹³ For Gladstone, the Muslims of Turkey were not comparable to the 'gentle Indians' or the 'Moors of Spain'; they were instead 'the one great anti-human specimen of humanity. Wherever they went a broad line of blood marked the track behind them; and as far as their dominion reached civilisation disappeared from view.'⁹⁴ The increased racialization in argument was almost immediately noted by contemporaries. Two years after Gladstone's pamphlet,

90 Quoted in Ian St John, *Disraeli and the Art of Victorian Politics* (Anthem Press, 2010), 173.

91 An Englishman, *The Question of the Day: Turk Or Christian? An Answer to Mr. Gladstone's Pamphlet; with a True Narrative of the Bulgarian Horrors* (London: Diprose, Bateman & Company, 1876).

92 Vicky Morrisroe, "'Eastern History with Western Eyes': E.A. Freeman, Islam and Orientalism," *Journal of Victorian Culture* 16, no. 1 (2011): 25–45.

93 Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Questions of the East*, 9.

94 Ibid.

the orientalist Vambery explored in detail how liberal arguments against the Ottoman Empire had changed. Their explanations for the lack in civilization and adaptation to the West were now no longer rooted in theological ideas, but racial ones:

Aber, verkünden uns die Herren Freeman und Gladstone, die allerneuesten Widersacher der moslemischen Macht, nicht die Lehre Mohammeds, nicht die Prinzipien und Theorien, welche ihr entstammen, sind die Ursachen der mangelnden Assimilationsfähigkeit der Türken ans Abendland, sondern vielmehr ethnische schwerwiegende Gründe, die, weil in Fleisch und Blut gedrunen, nicht wegdisputirt werden können.⁹⁵

Vambery was right and his analysis confirms what modern historians have described as a shift towards more racialized international rhetoric in the 1870s. While civilization and race had been connected in racial writings since Gobineau's *Essai sur l'inegalite des races humaines*, the 1870s should be seen as the starting point of a racialized civilizational rhetoric that would, as I will show in the next chapters, become ever more dominant over the last decades of the century.

Debating the 1877/1878 War and Russia's Mission

The effects of the debates of what had quickly become known as the Eastern Crisis, were not limited to the introduction of a more racialized discourse of civilization, but also showed the new front lines of international politics more broadly. It was Gladstone himself who quickly had to discover the effects of his own civilizational rhetoric, when he asked for Catholic support for a potential international intervention in the Ottoman Empire.⁹⁶ Given previous pronouncements on the civilizational relationship between Russia and Turkey by now leading members of the Catholic Church, he was hoping that they would be positively predisposed for a war of civilization against Turkey. Gladstone undoubtedly knew about the speeches Newman had given during the Crimean War about the way Russia as a Christian power was spreading civilization and Turkey was impeding it.⁹⁷ The situation had now changed. Whether it was Gladstone's increasingly racial and non-religious argumentation, or general liberal antipathy against the Catholic Church, Newman

95 "Die orientalische Frage als Culturfrage," in *Die Türken in Europa*, by James Baker, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Verlag von Levy und Müller, 1879), XXIII. 'But do Mister Gladstone and Mister Freeman, the newest adversaries of the Muslim power, not proclaim that it is not the teachings of Muhammad, or the principles and theories derived from it, which are the root of the Turkish inability to assimilate in the occident; but instead grave ethnic reasons, which, because they are part of blood and flesh, cannot be disputed?'

96 For the background to these debates see John P. Rossi, "Catholic Opinion on the Eastern Question, 1876–1878," *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 51, no. 01 (1982): 54–70.

97 John Henry Newman, *Lectures on the History of the Turks in Its Relation to Christianity* (Dublin: James Duffy, 1854); Jay Newman, "Two Theories of Civilization," *Philosophy* 54, no. 210 (1979): 473–83.

politely declined an invitation to participate in a meeting against Turkish atrocities.⁹⁸ As Gladstone had to find out, opposition to him personally and opposition to a Russian civilizing mission went hand in hand. In fact, the same people who had previously been involved in the heated debates about his pamphlets on the Vatican decrees now criticized his stance on Russia and civilization in no uncertain language. The conservative MP and Catholic, Robert Montagu, again attacked Gladstone as not being a true Christian and Russian ideas of civilization as pure propaganda:

There used to be, in former times, wars for the spread of Christianity; and Christianity meant the faithfulness, justice, and mercy of men. Men now are mangled, and cruelly shot down for the cause of 'humanity'; and the ravages of war are accomplished for the "spread of civilization." Civilisation is meant to mean: opportunities for pleasure, more acute refinements in enjoyment and more efficacious methods of killing fellow Christians. The real aim of wars, hidden from the multitude under the specious pretexts of humanity and civilisation, are the advance of Russian dominion, and of the power of the secret societies,—the implacable enemies of the Catholic Church.⁹⁹

As with the Vatican decrees, this debate had rapidly turned into an international one. The Vatican itself, along with German Catholics, started to oppose Russia's civilizational rhetoric, and was in its turn criticized as backward by liberals. After papal pronouncements that amounted to tacit support for Turkey, the liberal anti-turkish campaigner MacColl saw a new coalition of regression emerge and wrote to Gladstone: 'the conduct of the Pope is about as bad as that of the Turkish government [and] in some respects worse'.¹⁰⁰ It was an opinion shared by German liberals, like Bismarck's son, Herbert, who wrote to the state-secretary Bülow: 'Das Bündnis der beiden unfehlbaren Oberhäupter ihrer Confessionen, des Sultans und des Papstes, wäre an und für sich ein logisches und geschichtlich natürliches bei der Gleichheit ihrer Bestrebungen im Kampfe gegen die Entwicklung des menschlichen Geistes.'¹⁰¹ Catholic German papers responded in kind, arguing that Russian civilizational rhetoric was merely a cover-up of Slav interests, which German liberals were thereby

98 Rossi, "Catholic Opinion on the Eastern Question, 1876–1878," 60–61.

99 Robert Montagu, *Foreign Policy: England and the Eastern Question* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1877), 127–128.

100 Rossi, "Catholic Opinion on the Eastern Question, 1876–1878," 57.

101 Herbert v. Bismarck to Buelow in: O. von Bismarck, *Gesammelte Werke. Neue Friedrichsruher Ausgabe* (NFA). Hrsg. v. K. Canis, L. Gall, K. Hildebrand u. E. Kolb. Abt. 3: 1871–1898. Schriften. Bd. 2: 1874–1876, Nr.410, 599–600. 'The coalition of the two infallible heads of their religions, the sultan and the pope, would actually be a natural one, given their similar struggles against the advancements of the human spirit.'

implicitly supporting.¹⁰² As Gummer has pointed out, the rhetoric surrounding the Eastern crisis in Germany was in many ways a sequel to the *Kulturkampf*, as the civilizational arguments about the Church's backwardness were now widely applied to the Ottomans.¹⁰³ Rhetoric that had been conceived as part of a liberal offensive against the Catholic Church was now employed in international politics, where a curious coalition of Catholics and the Ottoman Empire opposed liberals and Russian civilizational propaganda.

In April 1877, the Russian Empire attacked Turkey after a series of frustrating talks, and the almost year-long conflict that followed inevitably became another war for civilization. Already in 1876, critical German writers like Johann Ritcher had argued that a new Russian war in the East would logically be justified with civilizational vocabulary: 'Man wird fragen, mit welchem Rechte? – “Mit dem Rechte der Menschheit und der Civilisation!”'¹⁰⁴ Ritcher was right in that the rhetoric that now emanated from the mouths of Russian officials was a truly civilizational one. Fjedor Martens, again partly responsible for Russian propaganda, told his German readers:

Jeder neue Excess des muselmännischen Fanatismus fand in dem Herzen des russischen Volkes einen Wiederhall. Konnte unter solchen Umständen das Ziel der russischen Politik ein anderes sein, als das, den Interessen der Humanität und Civilisation, und der nationalen Sympathien für die Glaubensgenossen, jenseits des Balkans zugleich zu dienen?¹⁰⁵

While German liberals were positively predisposed, others had decidedly negative opinions and criticized the Russian attack in the name of civilization as a farce. The Hungarian journalist, Maljath, presumably spoke for many of his compatriots when he sarcastically described the new Russian attack on the Ottoman Empire in his *Historische Spaziergänge auf dem Felde moskowitzscher Culturbestrebungen*: 'Zum so und so vielten Male' [...] waelzen sich die bewaffneten Horden des Nordens über die Grenzen des osmanischen Reiches, damit sie [...] ein so Gott wie den Menschen wohlgefaelliges Werk der Civilisation, Cultur und guter Sitte

102 “Europa Und Das Trauerspiel Im Türkischen Reich IV,” in *Historisch-Politisch Blätter Für Das Katholische Deutschland* (Munich: In Commission der Literarisch-artistischen Anstalt, 1876), 957–958.

103 S.Chase Gummer, “The Politics of Sympathy: German Turcophilism and the Ottoman Empire in the Age of the Mass Media 1871-1914” (PhD diss., Georgetown, 2011), 160–162.

104 Johann. Ritcher, *Die produktive Politik; gesammelte Zeitfragen* (Bodenbach: M. Stopp, 1876), 16. 'One will ask: with which right? “With the right of civilization and humanity”’.

105 Fedor Fedorovich Martens, *Die russische Politik in der orientalischen Frage. Eine historische Studie* (St.Petersburg: Verlag der Kaiserlichen Hofbuchhandlung H. Schmitzdorff (C. Röttger), 1877), 23. 'Every new excess of Muslim fanaticism found its echo in the heart of the Russian people. Could, in these circumstances, the policy of Russia be another one than to simultaneously serve the interests of humanity, civilization and the national sympathies of their co-religionists in the Balkans?'

vollbringen.¹⁰⁶

Not only the reason for the Russian intervention was described as one of civilization, as the Tsar and Martens wanted to use the campaign of 1877 and the fighting itself to show Russia's civilized nature and its status as a civilized country. Russian officials, as Holquist has shown, vowed to stick to the rules of civilized warfare advocated by the Tsar since the 1860s, and to present the conflict as a war between a civilized and an uncivilized country.¹⁰⁷ The conflict was watched by liberals all over Europe, but with specific interest by men like Bluntschli, who commented on the war in the periodical *Die Gegenwart* and found Russian claims to civilization convincing. Although he admitted that Russia too had troops of dubious civilizational pedigree, it was clearly more advanced than Turkey:

unter den Russen dienen einige Stämme von sehr geringer Cultur denen man nur eine ungenügende Kenntnis unserer civilisierten Rechtsbegriffe und kaum eine Achtung und vor den unverständlichen Rechtsgeboten zuschreiben kann.' Weit schlimmer steht es auf der türkischen Seite, da sind die halbwilden und barbarischen Stämme ohne europäische Cultur viel zahlreicher vertreten, die Disziplin in der Armee lockerer und unsicherer und die kriegerischen Traditionen grausamer und wilder.¹⁰⁸

Although some in the military disagreed, British liberals broadly subscribed to Bluntschli's interpretations and also saw Russia as emerging as the more civilized of the two powers.¹⁰⁹ As the journalist and writer Goldwin Smith put it: 'Though war is always ferocious and always heart-rending, the soldiers of Russia maintain, by their comparative humanity, the claim of their country to a superior civilization.' The differences between the Turks and Russians was one of discipline, as

106 Kálmán József Majláth, *Historische Spaziergänge auf dem Felde moskowitzischer Culturbestrebungen von Colomann Josef Graf Majláth* (Vienna: Druck und Verlag von H.Gresser, 1877), 5. 'Historical walks on the field of Moscovite civilizational intentions'. 'And one more time, the armed hordes of the North push over the borders of the Ottoman Empire, to fulfil their task, in the name of God, civilization, culture and humanity'.

107 Peter Holquist, "The Russian Empire as a 'Civilized State': International Law as Principle and Practice in Imperial Russia, 1874-1878," Title VIII Program (Washington D.C.: The National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, 2004).

108 Johann Caspar Bluntschli, "Das Kriegsvölkerrecht in dem russisch-türkischen Kriege," *Die Gegenwart* 23, no. 11 (1877): 357. 'Amongst the Russians, there are a couple of relatively uncultured tribes, which cannot be made responsible for not knowing the concepts of civilized law or to have any appreciation of its, for them, incomprehensible demands. Much worse, however, is the Turkish side, where half-wild and barbarian tribes without European culture are much more frequent., the discipline in the army is much laxer and uncertain, and the traditions of war more cruel and brutal'.

109 Maureen P. O'Connor, "The Vision of Soldiers: Britain, France, Germany and the United States Observe the Russo-Turkish War," *War in History* 4, no. 3 (1997): 264-95.

he added: 'It is certain that they habitually give quarter, and respect the general laws of war; while Europe has had to remonstrate with the Turks on their flagrant breaches of the Geneva convention.'¹¹⁰ Similarly, the Duke of Argyll, former Secretary of State for India, concluded that:

The civilisation of Russia is indeed far behind our own. But it is two centuries at least in advance of the civilisation of Turkey [...] Those who read the accounts from all sides, which have been furnished by Mr. Layard, and who remember as an absolute rule that nothing is to be believed except such facts that are vouched for by the direct or indirect evidence of European witnesses, will have no difficulty in making up their minds as to which of the two parties was the most savage throughout the contest.¹¹¹

The official Russian policy of an almost aggressive rhetoric of civilization during the war itself clearly paid off, as the liberal British public deemed Russia to be, if not fully civilized, certainly more so than Turkey, an interpretation that had fundamentally changed in the two decades since the Crimean War, when Turkey was still heralded as an exemplary liberal state.

While Russian civilizational propaganda was highly successful in liberal circles, because it addressed old liberal concerns, Russia's elite arguably also profited from the general international shift that the finalization of the processes of national unification had brought about in western Europe. In a process that Gummer has traced in more detail, Bismarck's liberal coalition partners were increasingly expressing the wish to have a German foreign policy guided by independence and an equidistant relationship with Russia and the western powers. As the nationalist historian Treitschke would sum up their position:

das alte Märchen, dass die Westmächte als die alleinigen Vertreter der Civilisation darstellte, ist von der liberalen Welt zu lange nachgesprochen worden, als dass der selbstgefällige Wahn rasch wieder verschwinden könnte [...] seit den Niederlagen der Franzosen und dem selbstverschuldeten tiefen Sinken wird die gerühmte Civilisation der Westmaechte ohne überschwängliche Bewunderung gewürdigt; und seit dem wir in einem wohlgesicherten nationalen Staate wohnen, fassen wir uns das Herz die polnisch-französische Brille wegzuwerfen und betrachten endlich mit den deutschen Augen das Nachbarreich, das seit

110 Goldwin Smith, "The Slaveowner and the Turk," in *Current Discussion. A Collection from the Chief English Essays on Questions of the Time*, ed. Edward L. Burlingame, vol. 1. International Politics (New York: G.P.Putnam's Sons, 1878), 264.

111 George Douglas Campbell Argyll, *The Eastern Question from the Treaty of Paris 1856 to the Treaty of Berlin 1878, and to the Second Afghan War*, vol. 2 (London: Strahan & Company Limited, 1879), 43–44.

Jahrzehnten unser treuer Verbündeter ist.¹¹²

In German debates, liberals had therefore at least two reasons to support Russia. Those who, like their English colleagues, were convinced by Russian claims to a liberal civilization could support them just as much as those who sought to move Germany away from the western powers and into a more independent position.

The fault-lines of these foreign policy debates would show in the Reichstag in 1878, where Germany's stance towards the war was first openly discussed.¹¹³ It was an unusual debate, as the Reichstag had very little say on the issue of foreign which remained the prerogative of the chancellor. Nonetheless, the clear separation of German politics into two camps was immediately visible. The liberal Bennigsen spoke first, in support of Bismarck's policies. Then Bismarck himself explained why Germany was to remain neutral on the oriental question and how his policy of an honest broker was in the best interest of Germany. Following Bismarck, one liberal after another defended this position. Most argued that Germany needed to stay out of a larger war to prove to the rest of the world that they meant no harm, also not to upset Russia which had, after all, by its neutrality towards the Franco-Prussian war set a precedent of non-intervention.

The tone of the opposition was an entirely different one and the curious coalition that opposed Bismarckian and liberal foreign policy started to show. The Catholic representative Windthorst, accused the liberals of following Bismarck wherever he went, and questioned whether Germany could really remain neutral to the big changes in the world.¹¹⁴ He argued that although Russia had attacked under the guise of 'humanistischer Ideen', its brutality was obvious to everyone. One of the Polish representatives continued by talking about the brutalities of Russia, arguing that it acted 'unter dem Deckmantel zivilisatorischer Ideen', but had always been, in reality, a despotic power. Liebknecht spoke last, accusing Russia of hypocrisy, of enslaving the Poles and at the same time pretending to be the power for good in the East. Russia's politics was a 'Verbrechen an der Menschheit', and the theories of international law currently proposed in Europe needed a thorough

112 Heinrich von Treitschke, *Zehn Jahre deutscher Kämpfe*. (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1879), 594. 'the old fairy-tale, that presented the western powers as the only representatives of civilization has been repeated by the liberal world for too long for this self-indulgent craziness to disappear any time soon (...) but since the defeats of France and its self-induced sinking, the famous civilization of the western powers is lauded without great admiration; since we live in a safe national state, we have taken the great step to throw away the polish-french glasses and to look, with german eyes, at this neighbourly power, which has been our ally for so long.'

113 *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des deutschen Reichstags. 3. Legislaturperiode II. Session 1878. Von der Eroffnungssitzung am 6. Februar bis zur dreissigsten Sitzung am 6 April 1878*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Verlag der Buchdruckerei der "Norddeutschen Allgemeinen Zeitung," 1878).

114 *Ibid.*, 1:102.

re-evaluation, and Liebknecht demanded that 'auf einer anderen besseren Grundlage das europäische Staatensystem wieder aufgebaut wird.'¹¹⁵

The response from the government was short, as Bismarck only mocked the unlikely coalition of Poles, Catholics and Socialists, but the liberal representative Hellwald showed how deep the rifts of foreign policy affected domestic German politics, in the last speech of the day. Referring to Liebknecht he added:

Wir haben keine Ursache den geringsten Zweifel daran zu hegen dass die kräftige Hand welche bisher die Außenpolitik gelenkt hat auch hier das richtige finden werde. Nur eins möchte ich dem letzten Vorredner gegenüber noch bemerken Er hat viel von der zivilisatorischen Mission und der Kulturaufgabe seiner Partei gesprochen. Ich möchte glauben dass eine Vergleichung der zivilisatorischen Mission Russlands für eine lange Reihe von Völkern und der zivilisatorischen Mission der Sozialdemokratie möglicherweise sehr zu Ungunsten der letzteren ausfallen möchte.¹¹⁶

As the 1870s drew to a close, larger European debates about civilization had arguably taken on a new form. The early 1870s had still widely featured many of the tropes that had also dominated the 1860s, yet by 1878 the discussions about civilization were no more concerned with Europe, but with the globe in its entirety. The domestic enmities, which had structured the politics of nationality were, to a certain extent, still intact, as the Catholic Church opposed not just European liberals, but even Russia's international intervention, associated with international liberalism. Other coalitions, however, had broken. As Russian politicians were wholeheartedly embracing the rhetoric of civilization, the Ottoman Empire had ostensibly failed to live up to the hopes European liberals had placed in it since the mid-nineteenth century. Russia was the new leader in civilization, and its mission, as Hellwald's statement showed, could even be favourably compared to the aspirations of those questioning this international liberalism, like the German social democrats. As I will show in

115 Ibid., 1:114. 'Crime against Humanity'. 'that the European state system will be constructed anew on a different and better basis.'

116 *Stenographische Berichte Über Die Verhandlungen Des Deutschen Reichstags. 3.Legislaturperiode II. Session 1878. Von Der Eroeffnungssitzung Am 6. Februar Bis Zur Dreissigsten Sitzung Am 6 April 1878*, 1:115. 'We have no reason to believe that the strong hand which has until now guided our foreign policy will now too find the right decisions. But I still have something to say to the preceding speaker. He has spoken much about the civilizational mission and the cultural tasks of his party. I think, however, that the a comparison between Russia's civilizing mission to some many peoples and the mission of the social democratic party will not be a positive one for his side.'

the next chapter, international ideas of liberalism soon found a new target in the Scramble for Africa, which was also fervently opposed by those who did not agree with the liberal missions. Throughout the 1880s the civilizational language of liberalism, which had acquired an international character during the 1870s, started to be ever more heavily criticized, and slowly declined.

Chapter 5. Spreading and Questioning Civilization (1880s)

Introduction

The roots of a new wave of European colonization that would later become known as the Scramble for Africa lay in the mid-1870s.¹ 'The disease of Afromania', as the imperial historian John S. Galbraith would later call it, had started to grip larger sections of the European public, and in 1876 most of those interested in Africa descended upon Brussels to participate in a large conference dedicated to its exploration and civilization.² Over the next decade, which would culminate in an even larger conference at the German capital, civilizational rhetoric was seemingly everywhere, and it was finally formally inscribed in the sixth article of the general act of the conference of Berlin. The article declared, in very clear language, that the signatory powers should bring home to the natives 'the blessings of civilization'. Needless to say, the Berlin conference has since then become seen as epitomizing European ideas of superiority, and an apparently unanimous stance towards civilization and colonization. Indeed, even such a critical voice as Carl Schmitt has argued that the general act of the conference should be seen as 'a remarkable final document of the continuing belief in civilization, progress and free trade'.³ In the literature on civilization and colonization, the Berlin conference takes a special place, embodying what seem to be the main values of European international politics in the last third of the century.

As I will demonstrate, most of these accounts overlook the complicated landscape of European debates on colonization, and the immense disputes over civilization they were intrinsically linked to. The apparent connections between colonialism and civilization, that colonial agitators had started to tout from the mid-1870s, were often heavily criticized by their contemporaries. It was not unusual for those who doubted the economic benefits of colonization to also question the claims of its civilizational impact, often with direct reference to the atrocities of the Americas in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Large-scale economic depression and the often negative impact of industrialization on the working populations of Europe led many in the early 1880s not only to question whether civilization should be exported, but to ask whether it was a good in itself. They saw modern civilization as destroying the countryside – a point romantics had been making since the early nineteenth century – and held it responsible for rising rates of insanity and the spread of

1 Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau, "Introduction: A Missing Link? The Significance of the 1780s–1880s," in *From Slave Trade to Empire Europe and the Colonisation of Black Africa 1780s–1880s*, ed. Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 1–18.

2 John S. Galbraith, "Gordon, Mackinnon, and Leopold: The Scramble for Africa, 1876–84," *Victorian Studies* 14, no. 4 (1971): 369.

3 Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europäum* (New York: Telos Press Publishing, 2003), 216.

what many in Germany would soon call *Zivilisationskrankheiten*.⁴

While such debates gripped predominantly left-leaning politicians and thinkers of the early 1880s, on an international political level, disputes over who was entitled to bring civilization, which dominated debates about Asia (see the previous chapter) continued. It was one of these disputes between Portugal and Britain, I argue, that sparked the process leading to the conference of Berlin. In other words, it was dispute over civilization, rather than unanimity that should be seen as the origin of the Congo Conference. Finally, as I show in the last section, dealing directly with the conference protocols, European conceptions of civilization and its link to Christianity were contested by the Ottoman Empire during the final negotiations. The results of this intervention, which stressed the civilizing effects of Islam, can be seen in the surprisingly secular formulation of Article VI that allowed for the protection of all civilizing agencies 'without distinction of creed or nation'. I do not dispute to what extent the negotiations of 1884/1885 ignored and disregarded indigenous concerns, as well as the impact it had on the development of African history. Rather, I hope to explore the intellectual landscape that gave rise to this document. The debates on civilization that preceded it are riddled with complexity, and any uni-dimensional perspective on it does it a historical disservice.

A New European Debate on Civilization

The beginnings of the large-scale European colonization of Africa in the nineteenth century can be dated with surprising exactness. As the organizers of the Brussels geographic conference in 1876 remembered:

Vers la fin de l'année 1876, il s'était manifesté, dans les courants généraux de l'opinion un mouvement marqué vers l'Afrique [...] ce continent lui-même, attaqué d'après un plan systématique sur les points essentiels, pourrait-il garder plus longtemps ses secrets et demeurer étranger au bienfaits de la civilisation?⁵

Leopold enthusiastically greeted the various explorers 'dont j'ai suivi depuis des années les travaux et les valeureux efforts en faveur de la civilisation.' He insisted that civilization had made him bring all of them together:

4 'diseases of civilization'.

5 *L'Association internationale africaine et le Comité d'études du Haut-Congo. Travaux et résultats de décembre 1877 à octobre 1882 par un de leurs coopérateurs* (Bruxelles: Institut Nationale de Geographie, 1882), 6–7.

Le sujet qui nous réunit aujourd'hui est de ceux qui méritent au premier chef d'occuper les amis de l'humanité. Ouvrir à la civilisation la seule partie de notre globe où elle n'ait point encore pénétré, percer les ténèbres qui enveloppent des populations entières, c'est, j'ose le dire, une croisade digne de ce siècle de progrès.⁶

For Leopold, the congress was a remarkable success. In its wake all over Europe geographical and colonial organizations were set up dedicated to the civilization of Africa, and that notable explorers and politicians came together in national committees lauding Leopold's benevolent spirit and service to civilization.

Despite such high-flying rhetoric, the impact of Leopold's ideas on international politics was limited until elite circles in countries like France and Germany started to espouse such civilizational projects as national ones. Leopold's organizations had been founded in 1876 and the Portuguese government started so-called 'public works expeditions' into Africa in 1877. For France and Germany, it is the year 1878 that can be seen as the real start of a new era of colonization.⁷ As Conklin has argued, by 1878 the French 'republican leadership began to accept the argument that for political and economic reasons France should begin asserting itself overseas.'⁸ Although German elites took a little longer to be convinced, contemporary German papers and journals noted a distinctive shift in rhetoric around the same time. As the *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, put it in 1882: 'Mit dem Jahre 1878 beginnt in der deutschen Literatur über Auswanderung und Colonisation eine zweite Periode'.⁹ It was a second period, because German liberals had briefly and inconsequentially flirted with imperialism in the late 1840s. Since then, as the *Deutsche Rundschau* equally noted in 1882, 'ist nichts in dieser Frage geschehen.'¹⁰

Despite a recent historiographical trend that asserted the continuities between this early period of colonial agitation and later German colonial projects, we need to be careful not to overestimate the

6 Leopold II., "Discours prononcé par le roi à l'ouverture de la conférence.," in *L'Afrique et la Conférence géographique de Bruxelles*, ed. Émile Théodore Joseph Hubert Banning, 2nd ed. (Brussels: Librairie européenne C. Muquardt, 1878), 185.

7 Alexandre Valentim, "The Portuguese Empire, 1825–90: Ideology and Economics," in *From Slave Trade to Empire Europe and the Colonisation of Black Africa 1780s–1880s*, ed. Olivier Pétré-Grenouilleau (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 120.

8 Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 13.

9 Ernst Hasse, "Auswanderung Und Kolonisation," *Jahrbücher Für Nationalökonomie Und Statistik / Journal of Economics and Statistics* 4 (38), no. 3/4 (1882): 308. 'With the year 1878, a second period starts in the German literature on emigration and colonization'.

10 "Deutsche Colonisation I," *Deutsche Rundschau* 31, no. 1 (1882): 39–40. 'nothing has happened regarding this question.'

similarities of historically very different periods, especially concerning the concept of civilization.¹¹ While colonial debates of the 1840s and 1850s are indeed predecessors of the agitation of the 1870s, the rhetoric with which such projects were advanced and defended was an entirely different one. The idea of civilizing the rest of the globe was mostly absent in German debates of the mid-century mainly concerned with overpopulation and emigration. This is not to suggest that such language only started to exist in the 1870s: men like Friedrich Fabri had, a decade earlier, argued that Germans had a duty to civilization and an obligation to expand, but in contrast to ten years later, nobody had listened to them. As Fabri put it in the fateful year 1866: 'Kolonialbesitz' was part of the 'zivilisatorischen Aufgabe der germanischen Völker'.¹² Yet, in the year of the German *Bruderkrieg* understandably few were interested in expanding a non-existent empire over-seas. By 1878, times had changed. Germany had become a continental power in its own right, and the main crises of the 1870s were a thing of the past. In 1878, with the Treaty of Berlin, the Eastern Crisis had found a provisional conclusion, with the death of Pius IX and the new conciliatory stance of Leo XIII, the *Kulturkampf* had ended, and the German chapters of Leopold's organization advocated new duties of civilization abroad. Domestically, too, German politics had changed. In an ongoing financial crisis and continuously poor election results of the chancellor's long-term allies, the *Nationalliberale*, Bismarck was now leading a coalition of conservatives and the *Zentrum*. While the *Nationalliberale* had argued for free trade, Bismarck's new coalition partners were more open to protectionist policies. With them, the subject of colonial expansion, anathema with the liberals, was back on the agenda.

It was in this entirely new political climate that Fabri's next publication *Bedarf Deutschland der Colonien* became a surprising bestseller. His advocacy of 'zivilisatorischer Aufgaben' that tied in with the demands of Germany's geographical organizations, gained both other apostles as well as a larger following.¹³ Fabri and his allies described colonial expansion and the spread of civilization not only as a panacea to the economic problems that plagued Germany, but also as an important project for humanity, in which the young nation should have a part. In his introduction, Fabri directly referred to the 'Zeiten der Nothstände und des Druckes' that Germany found itself in and

11 Susanne Zantop, *Kolonialphantasien im vorkolonialen Deutschland (1770-1870)* (Erich Schmidt Verlag GmbH & Co KG, 1999); Brian Vick, "Imperialism, Race, and Genocide at the Paulskirche. Origins, Meanings Trajectories," in *German Colonialism and National Debate*, ed. Michael Perraudin and Jürgen Zimmerer (New York and London: Routledge, 2011), 9–20; Matthew P. Fitzpatrick, *Liberal Imperialism in Germany: Expansionism and Nationalism, 1848-1884* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008).

12 Klaus J. Bade, *Friedrich Fabri und der Imperialismus in der Bismarckzeit Revolution – Depression – Expansion* (Freiburg i. Breisgau: Atlantis, 1975), 101. 'colonial possessions'. 'the civilizing task of the Germanic peoples'.

13 Friedrich Fabri, *Bedarf Deutschland der Colonien?: eine politisch-oekonomische Betrachtung* (Gotha: Perthes, 1879). Ibid.

that it was time 'nach neuen Aufgaben [...] sich auszustrecken'.¹⁴ Primarily, the acquisition of colonies would be a solution to economic problems, alleviating the dilemma of Germany's overpopulation as well as opening new markets for German products. It would also give a moral purpose to the newly-founded German state. 'Gewichtiger noch freilich ist die Erwägung', Fabri argued, 'dass ein Volk, das auf die Höhe politischer Machtentwicklung geführt ist, nur so lange seine geschichtliche Stellung mit Erfolg behaupten kann, als es sich als Träger einer Cultur-Mission erkennt und beweist.'¹⁵

Fabri's ideas were quickly taken up by others similarly predisposed, like the traveller, writer and later theosophist Hübbe-Schleiden. While Germany had previously not been more than a geographic expression, Hübbe-Schleiden claimed in several successful publications and speeches, it now had to project its positive national power overseas. This was a natural progression, he argued in his *Überseeische Politik*: 'Seitdem wir jetzt aber als Nation reif und stark geworden sind wird auch die Entfaltung unserer nationalen Kräfte ihren normalen Fortgang nehmen.'¹⁶ As Fabri and Hübbe-Schleiden stressed in unison, this national project was nonetheless to be embedded in the progress of humanity as a whole:

Wie die ganze Menschheit continuirlich dem Ideale der Cultur, einer organischen Entwicklung der Civilisation zustrebt, so muss auch jede Nation, welche ein lebensfähiges Glied dieses Menschengeschlechtes bleiben will, sich an diesem gemeinsamen Streben beteiligen. Wer an dem Werden der Civilisation nicht Antheil nimmt, und selbst neue Formen schafft, dessen eigene Gestaltung muss nach übereinstimmenden Gesetzen der Natur und der Cultur unrettbar zugrunde gehen.¹⁷

It was a curious mix of competition and cooperation the agitators for colonization and civilization in Germany advocated. They were not alone. The civilizational language of cooperation previously propagated by Russia was now truly global. Hübbe-Schleiden asserted that to his chagrin: 'Das Prestige der Civilisation war [...] angelsächsisch geworden', and simultaneously saw the three

14 Fabri, *Bedarf Deutschland der Colonien?: eine politisch-oekonomische Betrachtung*, III. 'Times of difficulties and of pressure', 'stretch to reach new tasks'.

15 Ibid., 111.

16 Wilhelm Hübbe-Schleiden, *Überseeische Politik, eine culturwissenschaftliche Studie mit Zahlenbildern* (Hamburg: L.Friederichsen & Co., 1881), 111. 'Since we have become mature and strong as a nation, the development of our national power will take its normal path'.

17 Ibid., 129–130. 'Just as humanity continuously strives towards the ideal of culture, an organic development of civilization, every nation, which wants to remain a functioning link in the chain will have to participate in this endeavour. Those who do not take part in this development of civilization, and create their own forms, will, according to the laws of nature and of culture, die away'

Germanic powers, England, Germany and the US (sic) as the most important bringers of civilization.¹⁸ Such feelings were reciprocated in these 'Germanic countries'. The President and founder of Cornell University, Andrew D. White, for example, saw Germany and the US dominating the century in the name of civilization and hoped:

that each may regard the other as a steadfast ally in the great effort to move the world forward toward higher views of right and duty and toward nobler conceptions of civilization. Well may we say with one of the truest souls ever given by the old world to the new: "God bless Germany! The future history of mankind and humanity stand in need of her!"¹⁹

In Britain, although ferocious competition for resources had started on the ground, medals were given to German explorers of Africa like Nachtigal, and the German ambassador Münster-Ledenburg who received them in his stead continued to emphasize the spirit of cooperation necessary for those wanting to spread civilization: 'Er schloss mit dem Wunsche, dass, wo immer Christenthum und Civilisation in fernen und bisher barbarischen Gegenden verbreitet würde, Engländer und Deutsche stets Seite an Seite neben einander stehen mögen.'²⁰

Reading Fabri's and Hübbe-Schleiden's contributions and seeing the later colonial development of Germany, it is all too easy to assume that these opinions were widely shared. On the contrary, especially amongst liberals, these renewed propositions of colonization and their alleged connection to civilization were often not well received. At the congress of German economists (*Kongress deutscher Volkswirthe*), a liberal stronghold violently opposed to Bismarck's new tariff politics, the newest colonizing tendencies were debated in October 1880.²¹ Two members from Berlin, Friedrich Kapp and F. C. Phillipson, proposed a resolution condemning Fabri's and Hübbe-Schleiden's plans. In no uncertain terms, they argued that the congress should distance itself from ideas previously propagated by their liberal ancestors. 'Die Colonisation ist [...] ein *Anachronismus*', the proposition read, which had had its place in the debates of the 1840s, but not in a new Germany.²² This refutation was not just based on economic arguments, indeed it went back to old Sallustian tropes of moral degradation and corruption. Fabri's and Hübbe-Schleiden's colonial propaganda relied on the

18 Ibid., 5, 70. 'The prestige of civilization has become Anglo-Saxon'

19 Andrew Dickson White, "The New Germany," *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* 4 (1882): 258. The quotation itself is from a letter of Lieber to Holtzendorff

20 Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin., "Vermischte Nachrichten," *Verhandlungen der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*. 9 (1882): 350.

21 M. Broemel, ed., *Bericht über die Verhandlungen des neunzehnten Kongresses deutscher Volkswirthe in Berlin am 21., 22., und 23. Oktober 1880* (Berlin: Verlag Leonard Simion, 1880).

22 'Colonisation is an anachronism'.

link between civilizational and economic concerns, and Kapp equally engaged with it in the speech explaining his resolution:

Die Spanier haben, wie sie wissen, nach der Entdeckung Amerikas Handelskolonien angelegt, Gold gesucht, mit Priestern und Bluthunden ihre sogenannte Civilisation den Indianern aufzudrängen versucht und Negersklaven importirt, um die Colonien moeglichst auszubeuten, und sie sind schliesslich darüber verarmt.²³

The moral of this harrowing story for Germany's colonizers, Kapp thought, was obvious. Not only was colonization unprofitable, its civilizational impact was dubious. The majority of the economists present agreed, and the resolution condemning potential German colonization passed, as the protocol noted, with 'great majority'.²⁴

Outside of the *Kongress deutscher Volkswirthe*, the debate about colonization and its civilizational impact continued unabated in newspapers and independent publications. Some, like the traveller Paulitschke, were naively optimistic that the 'Verwirklichung eines der grossartigsten Gedanken des 19. Jahrhunderts' the 'Entdeckung und Civilisation Afrikas' would peacefully go ahead, whereas most anticipated at least some form of violence.²⁵ There were hardliners like the liberal Russian expert Ernst von der Brüggén, who argued that the European conquest of the world was an undisputable fact, and 'es wäre höchst sentimentale Schwäche, diese Thatsache als eine unberechtigte Vergewaltigung anderer Völker zu bedauern'.²⁶ At the same time, most were ambivalent. The famous African explorer Pechuel-Lösche told the *Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin* in 1884: 'Handel, Colonisation, Civilisation in Afrika sind Schlagworte geworden die mehr als je zuvor die Gemüther erregen'.²⁷ He questioned whether the spread of civilization was really the right word to describe what was currently going on in Africa: 'Die Auffassung der Vorgangs kann eine sehr verschiedene sein, muss es sein, je nachdem die verlierende oder gewinnende Partei

23 Ibid., 123. The Spanish have, as you know, after the discovery of the Americas, constructed commercial colonies, looked for gold, with priests and bloodhounds spread their so-called civilization amongst the Indians, imported negro-slaves to exploit the colony to the fullest, and they have become, because of all of this, impoverished'.

24 Ibid., 147.

25 Philipp Viktor Paulitschke, *Die geographische Erforschung des afrikanischen Continents von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf unsere Tage*, 2nd ed. (Vienna: Brockhausen & Braeuer, 1880), VIII. 'the realization of the greatest idea of the nineteenth century, the discovery and civilization of Africa'.

26 van der Brueggén, "Auswanderung, Kolonisation und Zweikindersystem," *Preussische Jahrbücher* 49, no. 3 (1882): 295.

27 Eduard Pechuël-Loesche, "Congoforschung und die Congofrage," in *Verhandlungen der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin.*, ed. Paul Guessfeldt, vol. 11 (Berlin: Verlag von Dietrich Reimer, 1884), 202. 'Commerce, colonization, and civilization have become catch-words, which more than ever before agitate the population'.

urtheilt; aber “Verbreitung der Civilisation” wäre doch der letzte Ausdruck den man darauf anwenden könnte.²⁸

In the pamphlets and books published for a wider German public, the negative history of previous colonization and its alleged connection to civilization were most fervently criticized. Critics of colonization like H.Loehnis argued against those who attempted to portray the new wave of colonization as akin to the conquest of the Americas and therefore positive: 'Alle diese Kriege waren grausam und blutig, meist ungerecht gegen die Eingeborenen, und wer sie im Namen der Civilisation rechtfertigt, darf nicht verschweigen, dass diese mit höchst uncivilisierten Mitteln ihr Reich in Amerika gründete.'²⁹ The famous Protestant theologian Thiersch saw it similarly: 'Die sogenannte Civilisation hat jenen unglücklichen Stämmen mehr Verderben als Segen gebracht.'³⁰ Even Emil Deckert, professor of geography and firm believer in the civilizing mission, argued in his book *Die civilisatorische Mission der Europäer unter den wilden Völkern* that Europe's previous record did not look positive. Europeans had acted despicably, burnt villages and traded slaves: 'Nachtseiten und Laster der Civilisation brachten wir den wilden Menschen viele, Segnungen wenige'.³¹

The Critique of Civilization Itself

The emphasis on 'Nachtseiten und Laster der Civilisation' was a common feature of European in the late 1870s and early 1880s, as many liberals and conservatives alike started to question previous optimistic ideas of a continuous rise in civilization. In 1878, as the new debate on colonization and civilization started to gain traction all over Europe, the famous Scottish physician Arthur Mitchell addressed his students at Edinburgh in a lecture entitled 'What is Civilization?'³² Nobody could really know, Mitchell asserted, because: 'We use it familiarly, as a word well understood; but, in reality, we do not attach to it any precise meaning. Both general talk about it, and reference to books which treat of it, show that our views towards its nature are very indefinite.'³³ Although Mitchell

28 Ibid., 207. 'The interpretation of this process can take very different forms, has to take different forms, depending on whether the winning or the losing party is judging. But “spreading civilization” is really the last expression one could apply'.

29 H. Loehnis, *Die europäischen Kolonien: Beiträge zur Kritik der deutschen Kolonialprojekte* (Bonn: Emil Strauss, 1881), 21. 'All of these wars were cruel and bloody and generally unjust against the native populations, and who justifies them in the name of civilization should not deny that this civilization was founded with uncivilized means in America.' 'Of the negative influences and of the vices of civilization, we brought many to the savages, of the blessings, few.'

30 Heinrich W.J. Thiersch, *Ursprung und Entwicklung der Colonien in Nordamerika. 1496-1776* (Augsburg: Verlag von Richard Preyss, 1880), 15. 'The so-called civilization has brought these tribes more misery than bliss.'

31 Emil Deckert, *Die civilisatorische Mission der Europaer unter den wilden Völkern* (Berlin: Verlag von Carl Habel, 1881), 28–30. 'Dark sides and vices of civilization we brought the savages many, of blessing very few'.

32 Arthur Mitchell, *The Past in the Present. What Is Civilization?* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1881), 181–197.

33 Ibid., 181.

was merely unsure about the definition of civilization, others started to criticize old liberal conceptions of civilization more broadly. The Cambridge professor J. R. Seeley, widely considered a pro-colonial scholar, nonetheless had a distinctly negative opinion of the connection between civilization and colonization. In the beginning of a lecture to first year undergraduates, Seeley attacked the whole notion of civilization:

It is a very fair sample of bad philosophizing, this theory of civilisation. You have to explain a large mass of phenomena, about which you do not even know that they are of the same kind – but they happen to come into view at the same time -; what do you do but fling over the whole mass a word, which holds them together like a net. You carefully avoid defining this word, but in speaking of it you use metaphors which imply that it denotes a living force of unknown, unlimited properties, so that a mere reference to it is enough to explain the most wonderful, the most dissimilar effects. It was used to explain a number of phenomena which had no further apparent connexion with each other than that they happen to appear often together in history; sometimes the softening of manners, sometimes mechanical inventions, sometimes religious toleration, sometimes the appearance of great poets and artists, sometimes scientific discoveries, sometimes constitutional liberty. It was assumed, though it was never proved, that all these things belonged together and had a hidden cause, which was the working of the spirit of civilisation.³⁴

In the early 1880s, both the concept of civilization and its future were questioned in English debates. Travels to the US, which many of England's upper-classes had started to see as a country embodying the future, proved to be an often frightening glimpse into the fate of civilization. Matthew Arnold's *Civilization in the United States*, an almost dystopian account of a country full of wind farms and bereft of anything interesting or elevated, was a not-so-subtle premonition of what he thought England would become.³⁵ Oscar Wilde, who similarly toured the US in the early 1880s and shared many of Arnold's prejudices, warned his readers that technical innovation was endangering true civilization, when it was mistaken for it: 'And let us not mistake the means of civilisation for the end of civilisation; steam-engine, telephone and the like, are all wonderful, but remember that their value depends entirely on the noble uses we make of them, on the noble spirit

34 John Robert Seeley, *The Expansion of England: Two Courses of Lectures* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1883), 12.

35 Matthew Arnold, *Civilization in the United States* (Boston: DeWolfe, Fiske & Co., 1900), 157–192.

in which we employ them, not on the things themselves.³⁶ US Americans equally weighed in on a discussion that quickly engaged both sides of the Atlantic. In 1884, in a series of articles in the universally popular *North American Review*, the Chicago judge and intellectual John A. Jameson not only asked 'Is our Civilization perishable?', but also 'Shall our Civilization be preserved?', a question that must have seemed ludicrous to writers even a generation before him.³⁷ In the middle of a second industrial revolution and a rapidly changing social structure, Jameson saw his civilization threatened by modernity and, amongst other things, 'the thickening danger of industrial discontent'.³⁸

Most important amongst all the books concerned with danger of industrial discontent and written with civilizational concerns in mind was Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*, published in 1879, the year civilizational and colonial propaganda heated up all over Europe.³⁹ In contrast to the progressive optimism that drove so much of the colonial movement in the late 1870s, George saw civilization in the west if not on the brink of at least close to destruction. In what he described as an 'inquiry into the cause of industrial depressions', he argued that a new class of aristocrats, with all the power but none of the original virtues, were ruling the west whose increasing industrialization was widening the gap between rich and poor. Only radical politics could stop the otherwise inevitable spiral of civilizational decline. In the last chapter of his book dramatically entitled 'How civilization might end', he offered a succinct description of how he saw the future of the western world:

What has destroyed every previous civilization has been the tendency to the unequal distribution of wealth and power. This same tendency, operating with increasing force, is observable in our civilization to-day, showing itself in every progressive community, and with greater intensity the more progressive the community. Wages and interest tend constantly to fall, rent to rise, the rich to become very much richer, the poor to become more helpless and hopeless, and the middle class to be swept away.⁴⁰

36 Oscar Wilde, "Art and the Handicraftsman," in *Essays and Lectures*, 2nd ed. (London: Methuen & Co., 1909), 177.

37 J. A. Jameson, "Is Our Civilization Perishable?," *The North American Review* 138, no. 328 (1884): 205–15; John A. Jameson, "Shall Our Civilization Be Preserved?," *The North American Review* 138, no. 329 (1884): 336–48.

38 Jameson, "Shall Our Civilization Be Preserved?," 348.

39 Henry George, *Progress and Poverty: An Inquiry into the Cause of Industrial Depressions and of Increase of Want with Increase of Wealth. The Remedy* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1882).

40 *Ibid.*, 475.

In Britain, Henry George's civilizational critique was well received and often repeated. As Alfred Russell Wallace put it, *Progress and Poverty* was 'undoubtedly the most remarkable and important book of the present century.'⁴¹ Many in the higher echelons of power agreed, even personalities less idiosyncratic than Wallace. Politicians like Sam Smith, the liberal MP for Liverpool, where the effects of the new economic order were arguably as pronounced as in the US, used his book *The Nationalisation of the Land* to repeat many of George's criticisms of modern society and civilization.⁴² As he explained, even admitting taking his cues from George's work, 'Modern civilisation does not diminish but accentuate moral and intellectual differences [...] and there is an increased tendency to precipitate the coarser material to the bottom of the social edifice – hence we see in all our cities a huge and melancholy deposit of human wretchedness and vice.'⁴³ Skepticism of modern civilisation would drive much of the social critique of 1880s England, even that less focused on economic problems, as exemplified in Edward Carpenter's oft-quoted essay *Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure* that was first published along with other works in the late 1880s.⁴⁴ As the Fabian philosopher explained: 'We find ourselves today in the midst of a somewhat peculiar state of society, which we call Civilisation, but which even to the most optimistic among us does not seem altogether desirable.'⁴⁵

The uneasiness with the civilization of English society that Carpenter felt but could not quite put his finger on, was equally perceived on the continent. In 1884, Max Nordau, the later co-founder of the World Zionist Congress, claimed that he had started to feel the cracks in the seemingly solid edifice of European civilization, or, as he variously called it, the *Kultur Menschheit*. The slow dissolution of western civilization was a process he saw at work everywhere, even in England.⁴⁶

In England scheint bei oberflächlicher Betrachtung der Boden fest und der Staatsbau ganz. Wenn man aber das Ohr an die Erde legt, so fühlt man sie beben, und hört die dumpfen Schläge der unterirdischen Riesen, die mit den Hämmern an die Decke ihres Gefängnisses pochen, und wenn man die Mauern ganz nahe besieht so erkennt man unter dem Firnis und

41 David Stack, *The First Darwinian Left: Socialism and Darwinism, 1859-1914* (New York: New Clarion, 2003), 33.

42 Samuel Smith, *The Nationalisation of the Land* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1884).

43 Ibid., 36–37.

44 Edward Carpenter, "Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure," in *Civilisation: Its Cause and Cure and Other Essays*, 2nd ed. (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1891), 1–50.

45 Ibid., 1.

46 Max Nordau, *Die conventionellen Lügen der Kultur Menschheit*, 13th ed. (Leipzig: Verlag von B. Elischer, 1888); Petra Zudrell, *Der Kulturkritiker und Schriftsteller Max Nordau: zwischen Zionismus, Deutschtum und Judentum* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2003).

der Vergoldung die gefährlichen Sprünge, die von unten bis oben laufen.⁴⁷

Whereas the English walls merely showed cracks, Nordau saw his native Germany as divided by ethnic strife, antisemitism and the opposition of the ever-growing socialist influence against the ruling order. It was not difficult to understand that in the eyes of these cultural critics the rise of modern civilisation was to blame for all of these problems. It was a seeming paradox the industrialist and economist, Flürscheim, expressed the same year in his *Auf friedlichem Wege ein Vorschlag zur Lösung der sozialen Frage*: 'wir können es uns nicht verhehlen, die Gesellschaft ist in ihren Grundlagen untergraben, während wir fragen, wie ist es möglich, dass eine Zivilisation, wie diese, mit ihren Eisenbahnen, Tagesblättern und elektrischen Telegraphen je vernichtet werden sollte.'⁴⁸

In an era that Rohkrämer has rightly described as in search of a new and alternative modernity, many described modern civilization itself as ruining humanity.⁴⁹ As the Austrian writer Friedrich Hellwald explained at length in his *Kulturgeschichte in ihrer natürlichen Entwicklung bis zur Gegenwart*, which had reached its third edition in 1884:

Die Civilisation umgibt den Menschen mit unendlichen Gefahren. Die Wasserleitungen unterwaschen, wenn sie schadhafte werden, die Fundamente der Häuser. Die Gasleitungen strömen die tödliche Luft in die geschlossenen Räume aus, wo Menschen wohnen, um sie zu ersticken, oder um sie durch plötzliches Aufblammen zu tödten. Die Drähte der Telegraphen und der Telephone, die sich über die Häuser hinwegziehen, sie locken den Blitz an und die Zahl der vom Blitz Erschlagenen wird von Jahr zu Jahr grösser seit die eisernen Nervenstränge der Civilisation sich verdichten. Das elektrische Licht, es schwächt die Sehkraft, und kommt jemand in ungeschickter Art mit den Leitkabeln des Stromes in Berührung, so kann er das mit seinem Leben bezahlen. Was in den Theatern wie sie die moderne Civilisation haben will, durch die szenische Kraft derselben geschehen kann, das hat man des öfteren schauernd miterlebt. Wie die Kriege beschaffen sind, denen die

47 Nordau, *Die conventionellen Lügen der Kulturmenschheit*, 4. 'In England the ground seems, after superficial examination, firm and the state of the institutions safe. Yet, when one puts an ear close to the ground, one hears it move, and can listen to the underground giants hitting the ceiling of their prison with hammers, and if one looks very closely at the walls, one can see under the cover and the gold dangerous cracks appear.'

48 Michael Flürscheim, *Auf friedlichem Wege: ein Vorschlag zur Lösung der sozialen Frage* (Baden-Baden: O. Sommermayer, 1884), 267. We cannot deny, that the fundamentals of this society are damaged, while we ask: how is it possible that such a civilization, with its trains, daily newspapers and electric telegraphs should ever be destroyed.'

49 Thomas Rohkrämer, *Eine andere Moderne? : Zivilisationskritik, Natur und Technik in Deutschland 1880 - 1933* (Paderborn, Munich, Vienna, Zurich: Schöningh, 1999).

Civilisation ihre Waffen der Zerstörung liefert, das zeigen die Verlustlisten der Armeen. Niemals hat es früher eine ähnliche Zerstörung des Eigenthums gegeben, niemals ist das Leben des Menschen bedrohter gewesen als jetzt, und je grösser die Fortschritte der Civilisation werden, desto grösser werden auch die Gefahren, die den Menschen bedrohen.⁵⁰

It is remarkable how many different phenomena Hellwald mixed in his description of civilization and what a plenitude of problems came to be associated with it. Given such widely spread rhetoric, it is not at all surprising that the designation of what German doctors would soon call *Zivilisationskrankheiten* was born out of general scepticism towards modern civilization as well.⁵¹ Even though they had previously not referred to these as *Zivilisationskrankheiten*, a word that was first used in 1885, the gist of what they were describing had already been clear in the mid-1870s.⁵² Alois Geigl, professor of hygiene in Würzburg, felt he was speaking for the whole medical profession when he explained in his *Handbuch der öffentlichen Gesundheitspflege und der Gewerbekrankheiten*:

Aber so sehr wir auch [...] erkennen müssen, wie diese Civilisation unser Volk nach den meisten Richtungen gefördert hat, so sind wir doch alle weit davon entfernt, sie für etwas annähernd Vollendetes zu halten. Vielmehr wissen wir recht gut [...] dass sie gar manche Krankheitsanlage entwickelt, die in früheren Zeiten schlummerte, und das die hieraus entspringenden Gebrechen und Krankheiten, des einzelnen wie der Gesellschaft eben die Volksseuchen unserer modernen Zeit, die Nachtseiten unserer humanen und nationalen Cultur bilden.⁵³

50 Friedrich von Hellwald, *Kulturgeschichte in Ihrer Natürlichen Entwicklung Bis Zur Gegenwart*, 3rd ed., vol. 2 (Augsburg: Lampart & Comp., 1884), 717. 'Civilization surrounds the human being with endless dangers. The water pipes weaken, when they fail, the fundamentals of houses. The gas pipes bring deadly air into the rooms, where people live, to suffocate them or to kill them through sudden inflammation. The wires of the telegraphs and of the telephones, that reach across the houses, attract lightning and since the iron nerves of civilization have increased, the amount of people dying through lightning is increasing constantly. The electric light, it weakens the eyesight, and if someone touches an electric wire in a haphazard way, he can pay with his life. What happened in the theatres, which modern civilization demands, we have seen with horror. The character of the wars, whose weapons modern civilization supplies, can be seen in the long lists of dead. Never has there been a similar destruction of property, never has the life of people been more endangered as now. And the greater the progress of civilization is, the greater are its threats to humanity.'

51 'diseases of civilization'.

52 Pflaum argues that the term *Zivilisationskrankheit* was an invention of the Nazi period, but in fact there are much earlier mentions starting with the 1880s see Pflaum, "Zivilisation," 325; Josef Gängl von Ehrenwerth, *Das Eisenhüttenwesen Schwedens* (Leipzig: Felix, 1885).

53 Alois Geigl, Ludwig Hirt, and Gottlieb Merkel, *Handbuch der öffentlichen Gesundheitspflege und der Gewerbekrankheiten* (Leipzig: F.C.W. Vogel, 1874), 8. 'But as much as we have to recognize that civilization has benefited our people in most ways, we are all far from recognizing it as something entirely positive. On the contrary, we know exactly, that it has awoken dormant diseases, and that the pestilences and disabilities in the

While Geigl identified several diseases as caused by civilization, the most dramatic of all them was the perceived increase in insanity and suicides. The 1880s saw the beginning of a trend linking psychological problems to the rise of civilization, a development that would famously culminate in Freud's *Unbehagen in der Kultur*.⁵⁴ The origins of a debate about the negative impact of civilization on the psyche was older. Discussions about the relationship between insanity and civilization had shook France as early as the 1820s and 1830s, a time when the French psychiatrist Esquirol had first noted that 'madness is the disease of civilisation'.⁵⁵ But in the early 1880s, this phenomenon had reached unprecedented levels, as the *Contemporary Review* in London explained:

The increase of insanity, so long doubted by the Lunacy commissioners, is now [...] too patent to admit of question, and, as it is accompanied both here and on the Continent by an increase in suicide, it is beginning to attract the notice of Europe. That there is a close relationship between insanity and civilization, appears from the fact that where schools and newspapers are few the number of insane is small, the ratio rising in the various countries so regularly that we might almost say the circulation of daily papers determines the proportion of lunatics.⁵⁶

Writing in 1883, the *Contemporary Review* was arguably already far behind scientific developments. The European public had already, two years before, been treated to two scientific works seeking to establish the connection between suicides and the rise in civilization beyond all doubt. Enrico Agostini Morselli's Europe-wide and oft-translated best-seller *Suicide: An Essay on Comparative Moral Statistics* reached the certain conclusion that 'to our mind it is indisputable that madness and suicide are met with the more frequently in proportion as civilisation progresses'.⁵⁷

individual and in the society as a whole, it has created are the new plagues of our modern time, the dark-sides of our humane and national culture.'

54 Sigmund Freud, *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur* (Wien: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1930);

Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (London: Penguin UK, 2002); Eduard Reich, *Die Geschichte Der Seele, Die Hygiene Des Geisteslebens Und Die Civilisation* (Minden i.W.: Brun, 1884); Paul Frederick Lerner, *Hysterical Men: War, Psychiatry, and the Politics of Trauma in Germany, 1890-1930* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003).

55 Hugh P. Whitt, "The Civilizing Process and Its Discontents: Suicide and Crimes against Persons in France, 1825–1830," *American Journal of Sociology* 116, no. 1 (2010): 130–86; Sarah York, "Alienists, Attendants and the Containment of Suicide in Public Lunatic Asylums, 1845–1890," *Social History of Medicine*, 2011, 1–19; John C. Weaver and David Wright, eds., *Histories of Suicide: International Perspectives on Self-Destruction in the Modern World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 19.

56 M.J. Mulhall, "Insanity, Suicide, and Civilization," *The Contemporary Review* XLIII (1883): 901.

57 Enrico Agostino Morselli, *Suicide: An Essay on Comparative Moral Statistics* (New York: D. Appleton and Co.,

Perhaps more importantly for the German-speaking public, a young doctoral student at the University of Vienna, had also published his findings the same year. The young man was Thomas Masaryk, who later became the first president of the independent Czechoslovakia, but was in his early life more interested in psychological statistics. In his dissertation *Der Selbstmord als Massenerscheinung der modernen Civilisation*, he reached the same conclusions as Morselli and argued that it was beyond doubt 'dass sich die Massenerscheinung des Selbstmordes aus und in dem modernen Culturleben entwickelt hat'.⁵⁸

With such damning sociological criticism of civilization, more theoretical approaches to sociology would soon include the concept itself in their repertoire. In 1887, the Frisian sociologist Ferdinand Toennies argued his case for a sociological distinction between what he called, *Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft* and *Cultur/Civilisation*. Whereas *Gemeinschaft* was characterized as a natural community between humans that understood themselves as living together, *Gesellschaft* was a mere agglomeration of individuals driven by their own desires as opposed to communal thought. Toennies certainly attempted a vaguely academic understanding of modern society, but his binary oppositions that included *Civilisation* and *Cultur* as corresponding ideas to *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* were undoubtedly politicized. It was difficult not to read between the lines when Toennies argued that 'die Civilisation des Staatsthums' develops from 'der Cultur des Volksthums' and 'da die gesammte Cultur in gesellschaftliche und staatliche Civilisation umgeschlagen ist, so geht in dieser ihrer verwandelten Gestalt die Cultur selber zu Ende.'⁵⁹ Despite Toennies' description of civilization and culture as ideal-types, it was clear that he saw the former as lacking and deficient. Conversely, he held up *Cultur* as an ideal of human cooperation lost in the alienation of modernity. Many understood the message, and in a small circle of followers, Toennies developed into the 'Nekrolog der modernen Zivilisation', as the philosopher Friedrich Paulsen later put it.⁶⁰

The Beginnings of the Berlin Conference

While such skeptical ideas about civilization were brewing in Europe and the US around the 1880s,

1882), 117.

58 Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, *Der Selbstmord als sociale Massenerscheinung der modernen Civilisation* (Vienna: Verlag von Carl Konegen, 1881), VI. 'suicide as a public phenomenon of modern civilization', 'that the mass-appearance of suicide has developed in and out of our modern culture'.

59 Ferdinand Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft. Abhandlung des Communismus und des Socialismus als empirischer Culturformen* (Leipzig: Fues, 1887), 316, 324. 'civilization of the state develops from the culture of the people'. 'and because all culture has become the civilization of the state culture itself, in its changed form, has come to an end.'

60 Günther Rudolph, "Ferdinand Tönnies und die Lehre von Karl Marx Annäherung und Vorbehalt," in *Hundert Jahre "Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft"*. *Ferdinand Toennies in der international Diskussion*, ed. Lars Clausen and Carsten Schlueter (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 1991), 311.

in international politics and diplomacy an older type of optimistic liberalism still reigned supreme. It was the Portuguese government that most fervently employed civilizational ideas as the basis for territorial claims in Africa. For the better part of the first half of the nineteenth century, various Portuguese governments had sought to unify their territories in Central Africa, but this endeavor had been steadfastly blocked by Britain.⁶¹ In the early 1880s, with the background of a slow encroachment of explorers into territory claimed by the Portuguese and the spread of the new vocabulary of civilization, the Portuguese government made a new attempt at convincing its international competitors. The foreign minister de Serpa Pimentel wrote to several of his colleagues, like France's Laboulaye, urging them to agree: 'les bases d'un arrangement profitable aux relations amicales des deux pays, ainsi qu'au développement de leur action civilisatrice sur la côte occidentale d'Afrique.'⁶² The Portuguese pursued a two-tiered strategy, insisting on the one hand on ancient rights, and, on the other, on new and recent international duties. Both were presented as civilizational claims. The papal bull of 1452, the government argued, gave them permission to take possession of the territories found; a right, they added in brackets, 'which we may style the right of civilisation'.⁶³ The Portuguese government not only invoked a 431-year old document to justify its claims to African land, but also alluded to the current situation in many parts of Africa, arguing that these were 'incompatible with the principles of international law, and injuriously affect the progress of civilisation in Africa.'⁶⁴ It consequently promised to alleviate these conditions and formally ban the slave trade, which many still associated with regions informally under Portuguese control. Pushing the argument to the extreme, Portugal's officials insisted that anyone who opposed their claims to territories like the Congo was standing in the way of civilization:

how deplorable, how inhuman, and opposed to civilisation, is the opposition at various times manifested against the establishment in the Congo of a permanent and effective legal system, a system which we alone have the right to introduce, and which we alone can create with efficacy, and in a manner tending to general security.⁶⁵

These claims to civilization were not taken very seriously in Britain. Gladstone and his new foreign

61 Perry Anderson, "Portugal and the End of Ultra-Colonialism- Part I," *New Left Review* 1, no. 15 (1962): 98–99.

62 M. de Serpa Pimentel to M. de Laboulaye, Lisbon, 13.08.1883 in Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Documents diplomatiques. Affaires du Congo et de l'Afrique Occidentale (16 Octobre 1882 - 2 oct. 1884)* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1884), 21.

63 Luciano Cordeiro, ed., *Portugal and the Congo: A Statement. Prepared by the African Committee of the Lisbon Geographical Society* (London: Edward Stanford, 1883), 71.

64 *Ibid.*, 93.

65 *Ibid.*, 66.

minister Granville were nonetheless willing to negotiate a new African treaty, to the outrage of a large section of liberal MPs. Over previous decades, Portugal had acquired a horrible reputation as lagging behind all other European countries in civilization. Since the beginning of attempts to suppress the slave trade, various British governments had been involved in disputes with the Portuguese, whose willingness to spread civilization had frequently been questioned.⁶⁶ The accusation that Portugal was behind all other European states in its civilizational development was not even questioned by its most passionate defenders, like the journalist Oswald Crawford. In his description of Portugal, Crawford, who had served as the British ambassador to Porto, merely argued that it was 'laughably unjust' to claim that Portugal was a 150 years behind in civilization as 'the charge dwindles down to this, that the Portuguese nation is only behindhand in civilisation to the few nations of Western Europe who, in respect of progress, and civilization, and humanization, are, and long have been, the very salt of the earth'.⁶⁷ Parliamentary opposition to a new Anglo-Portuguese treaty was not based on the situation of civilization in Portugal itself: it had more pragmatic international considerations. As a French contemporary observer rightly noted, there were three groups amongst the British liberals, who opposed an Anglo-Portuguese treaty: those who thought that England stood to lose power in the region through a treaty with the Portuguese, those who thought that the Portuguese would levy high taxes detrimental to trade, and those who were sceptical of Portugal's claims to eradicate the slave trade and to bring civilization.⁶⁸

These distinctions overlapped in the person most violently opposed to Anglo-Portuguese negotiations, and who led parliamentary opposition from the front: John Bright's younger brother Jacob. Elected the MP for Manchester in 1880, Bright did everything in his power to nip the negotiations in the bud. Already on 3 April 1883, shortly after negotiations had unofficially started, Bright brought a resolution to the House:

That, in the interests of civilisation and Commerce in South West Africa, this House is of the opinion that no Treaty should be made by Her Majesty's Government that would sanction the annexation by any Power of territories on or adjacent to the Congo, or that would interfere with the freedom hitherto enjoyed by all civilising and Commercial agencies at work in those regions.⁶⁹

66 Maeve Ryan, "The Price of Legitimacy in Humanitarian Intervention: Britain, the Right of Search, and the Abolition of the West-African Slave Trade, 1807-1867," in *Humanitarian Intervention: A History*, ed. Brendan Simms and D. J. B. Trim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

67 Oswald Crawford, *Portugal. Old and New* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1882), 98.

68 Georges Villain, *La question du Congo et l'Association internationale africaine* (Paris: Chalmel Aine, 1884), 5.

69 HC Deb 03 April 1883 vol. 277 col.1284

In the discussion which followed the resolution, Gladstone and Granville were confronted with the veritable hatred of liberals against Portugal, which they presented as an enemy of civilization. Most agreed that Portugal was a corrupt and mismanaged country, and liberals 'looked upon [it] as a faithless Power', as the MP George Anderson eloquently put it.⁷⁰ It was Jacob Bright himself who knew best how to charm the liberals by comparing Portugal to the other great enemy of civilization, the Ottoman Empire:

There is a wonderful similarity between Turkey and Portugal. You have a Turkey in the East of Europe, and you have a little Turkey in the West. There is similarity in this respect that the officials and employees of both are ignorant; they are badly and irregularly paid, and the consequence is that they are corrupt and feed upon the Natives. There is also this similarity, that where Turkey rules, the Provinces are often desolate; and, according to an authority who may be perfectly trusted, the Provinces of Portugal are in many places rendered desolate by the presence of the Portuguese.⁷¹

The alternative to an agreement with Portugal, which Bright outlined, was to have large parts of the disputed areas controlled by an independent association founded by the 'enlightened initiative and public spirit of the King of the Belgians', the 'international association of the Congo' which would finally bring the benefits of free trade to the heart of Africa.⁷² Judging the parliamentary level of excitement as too dangerous for his own standing, Gladstone budged and promised the House major powers in the rest of the negotiations.⁷³ While he was not willing to give up his prerogative to negotiate, the prime minister assured the House that no treaty would be made with the Portuguese without the approval of the House, concessions previously unheard of.

It is unclear whether Bright's fervent support for Leopold's organization in the British parliament was entirely idealistic, and not in some way remunerated, as many other influential figures who placed their weight behind Leopold's campaign were officially or unofficially in his pay. While the historian Barbara Emerson has suggested that Bright was in Leopold's employ, the evidence is rather sketchy.⁷⁴ Other major figures, however, were undoubtedly in Leopold's pocket. Fitzmaurice

70 HC Deb 03 April 1883 vol. 277 col.1327

71 HC Deb 03 April 1883 vol. 277 col. 1294

72 HC Deb 03 April 1883 vol. 277 col. 1316

73 HC Deb 03 April 1883 vol. 277 cols. 1321-1327

74 Barbara Emerson, *Leopold II of the Belgians: King of Colonialism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979), 103.

has recently traced the unfortunate entanglement of the international lawyer Travers Twiss with the Belgian King, but the most important asset for Leopold's endeavours was the journalist and explorer Henry Morton Stanley, who did Leopold's bidding in various circles and countries. In all of them, he stressed either Leopold's civilizational intentions or the benefit of doing business with him instead of the Portuguese.⁷⁵ 'You smile blandly at your "*Suum Cuiques*"', he told a meeting of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, 'who are Portuguese agents in disguise, and for a few cheap phrases about expansion of civilisation, ancient allies, friendly power, and so forth, you proceed to sign away a future market of £25.000.000 a year to the Portuguese.'⁷⁶ In a letter to the *Deutsche Revue* he similarly sought to discredit Portuguese claims, not with monetary considerations, but by claiming lack of civilizing fervour:

"Ausbreitung der Zivilisation!" ruft der portugiesische Minister. "Ein friedlicher Zufluchtsort für Kolonisten und ein Ausgangspunkt für Unternehmungen" echoet die geographische Gesellschaft von Lissabon. Grosser Gott! Was bedeuten solche Redensarten im Munde der Portugiesen, einer Nation, welche Afrika während eines Zeitraumes von 200 Jahren nur als eine Lieferstätte von Sklaven angesehen hat.⁷⁷

Such propaganda was highly successful, as otherwise independent German papers soon copied Leopold's and Stanley's rhetoric. The colonialist paper *Export*, enthralled with Stanley's reputation as an explorer, quickly emulated his political rhetoric: 'kaum ist es den Portugiesen in einer ihrer Besitzungen gelungen, erträgliche Verhältnisse einzurichten, geschweige denn Civilisation einzuführen, ebensowenig sind sie dem Sklavenhandel energisch auf den Leib gerückt.'⁷⁸

As a draft treaty between England and Portugal was announced in early 1884, agitation against persisted with known men like Bright once again taking the lead. On 5 February 1884, the Queen announced in her annual speech that 'An Agreement has been arrived at with Portugal respecting the

75 Andrew Fitzmaurice, "The Genealogy of Terra Nullius," *Australian Historical Studies* 38, no. 129 (2007): 1–15.

76 Henry M. Stanley, *Address of Mr. H.M. Stanley: On England and the Congo and Manchester Trade, and the Work and Aims of the International Association* (Manchester: A. Ireland and Co., 1884), 25.

77 Henry M. Stanley, "Stanley's Ansicht Über Die Stellung Der Europäischen Mächte Zur Congofrage," ed. Richard Fleischer, *Deutsche Revue Über Das Gesamte Nationale Leben Der Gegenwart* 9, no. 4 (1884): 102. "Spread of civilization" exclaims the Portuguese minister, "a peaceful haven for colonists and a good starting point for expeditions" echoes the geographical organization of Lisbon. Great God! What do these phrases mean from the mouth of the Portuguese, a nation which has seen Africa for 200 years only as a place from which slaves were delivered.'

78 "Afrika," *Export: Organ des Centralvereins für Handelsgeographie und Förderung deutscher Interessen im Auslande* 6, no. 24 (1884): 377. 'The Portuguese have hardly ever succeeded in establishing bearable conditions in their colonies, and have never managed to bring civilization, or to energetically stop the slave trade.'

River Congo and the adjacent territories. This Agreement will be presented to you forthwith.' Soon after, British MPs would hold in their hands a draft treaty, the introduction of which announced that it was 'animated by the desire to draw closer the ties of friendship which unite the two nations', and to solve the difficulties of sovereignty over the Congo.⁷⁹ Perhaps most importantly, the treaty announced the desire of the two states 'to provide for the complete extinction of the slave trade; and to promote the development of civilization and commerce in the African continent'.⁸⁰ In both countries the treaty was heavily criticized. In Portugal, it received a frosty response from conservative circles who had hoped for larger territorial concessions.⁸¹ In Britain, the main criticism came from those who doubted Portuguese intentions. Jacob Bright was furious and used *The Aborigines' Friend: Journal of the Aborigines Protection Society* to vent his anger:

This little country, which cannot pay its debts at home, which fails conspicuously "to promote the development of commerce and civilisation abroad", is to be placed by England, for some inscrutable reason, over a new and important territory, just at a time when its commercial value has been made clear.⁸²

He continued his onslaught in various, more mainstream media like the *Daily News* in which he announced: 'The world is familiar with the hollowness and insincerity of diplomatic utterances, but it would be difficult to find a stronger case of insincerity than in the document from which I quote: The Portuguese are to develop commerce and civilisation on the Congo!'⁸³

For obvious geopolitical reasons, these British debates were studied in detail by the ambassadors and leaders of the other European countries, especially by Britain's main rivals France and Germany, whose leaders decided to sink the treaty and start fresh negotiations between all European powers. From a purely strategic perspective, both Ferry and Bismarck could not be happy with a potential Anglo-Portuguese treaty, as both countries also had major commercial interests in the area that would be impeded through sovereign control.⁸⁴ Traders and chambers of commerce in Germany had already written to the chancellor urging him to stop a potential Anglo-Portuguese agreement. In these letters, which were later presented to the Reichstag, serious doubts were raised about the

79 Thomas Tomlinson, *The Congo Treaty* (London: Edward Stanford, 1884), 46.

80 Ibid.

81 Valentim, "The Portuguese Empire, 1825–90: Ideology and Economics," 123.

82 Jacob Bright, "The Congo Treaty," *The Anti-Slavery Reporter* 5 (1884): 100.

83 Tomlinson, *The Congo Treaty*, 41.

84 *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstags. 6. Legislaturperiode. I. Session 1884/1885. Anlagen zu den Verhandlungen des Reichstags Nr.287-421*, vol. 7 (Berlin: Gedruckt bei Julius Sittenfeld, 1885), Nr. 1645.

civilizational and commercial promises contained in the draft. The *Handelskammer des Kreises Solingen* was but one of many petitioners, which could not put their trust in the Portuguese:

wird die Entwicklung der Handels und der Civilisation auf dem afrikanischen Kontinent als zu erreichendes Ziel bezeichnet, während in Wirklichkeit aber genügend Grund für die Annahme vorliegt, dass der Handel im Congo ernsthaft geschädigt, wenn nicht vollständig ruiniert werden wird.⁸⁵

Following such recommendations, and undoubtedly for other geopolitical reasons, Ferry and Bismarck voiced their strongest opposition against the ratification of the agreement. The concerns of the two major political figures in continental Europe left the Gladstone's government no choice but to abandon its endeavor. This situation opened the door for a renewed Franco-German push at regulation of African affairs. Bismarck and Ferry had decided to organize a conference in Berlin to settle most of the questions relating to trade and exploration.

Together, Ferry and Bismarck drafted a note that was surprisingly matter of fact. The invitation to this major conference in Berlin finally settling African affairs did not mention the idea of civilization once. It is still unclear whether this was due to Bismarck's skepticism about civilizational claims, to which I already alluded in previous chapters, or other reasons of international diplomacy. In the end, the invitation was purely justified on economic and political grounds, as this translation later presented to the Reichstag explained:

Die Ausdehnung welcher der afrikanische Handel seit einiger Zeit genommen, hat den Regierungen von Deutschland und Frankreich den Gedanken eingegeben, dass es im gemeinsamen Interesse der an diesem Handel beteiligten Nationen liegen würde, die Bedingungen, welche die Entwicklung des letzteren zu sichern und Zwistigkeiten und Missverständnisse zu verhüten geeignet scheinen, im Geiste guten gegenseitigen Einvernehmens zu regeln. Um dieses Ziel zu erreichen sind die Regierungen von Deutschland und Frankreich der Meinung, dass es wünschenswerth sein würde, eine Verständigung über folgende Grundsätze herbeizuführen.⁸⁶

85 *Aktenstücke Betreffend Die Kongo-Frage, Nebst Einer Karte von Zentral-Afrika von L.Friederichsen in Hamburg. Dem Bundestag Und Dem Reichstag Vorgelegt Im April 1885* (Hamburg: L.Friederichsen & Comp., 1885), 10. 'the development of civilization and commerce on the African continent, is the pronounced aim, but in reality there is reason to believe that commercial activity in the Congo will be severely damaged, if not completely destroyed.'

86 *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstags. 6. Legislaturperiode. I.Session 1884/1885.*

Those *Grundsätze* were (in order): free trade in the Congo Area, the application of the principles of the Congress of Vienna pertaining to the rivers of that area, and finally a series of formalities guaranteeing effective appropriation of land.

The invitation reached the majority of European states, but there were some surprises as well. Apart from Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden-Norway, the United States would be invited for the first time to what was ostensibly a European conference. Slightly later, an invitation would also be extended to that favorite liberal scapegoat: the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁷ A special letter of invitation also reached the man who Jacob Bright had favored for the job of administrating the Congo area, the benevolent king of the Belgians Leopold II. His organization, the *International Association of the Congo* would have special status at the Conference and its experts and explorers like Henry Morton Stanley would help with the details on the ground. The invitation of Leopold was a surprise given Bismarck's previous dealings with him. In an exchange leading up to the conference, in which Leopold had claimed that the reason his organization wanted to control tracts of land abandoned by Egypt was to completely eradicate the slave trade, Bismarck had, in big letters, written in the margins: 'swindle' and further down, in a passage detailing Leopold's plans: phantasies.⁸⁸ Apart from the United States, no other country had formally recognized Leopold's organization. Strategically, one day before the conference was due to start, Bismarck did the same. After all, Bismarck reasoned, Leopold and his organization would be helpful. Firstly, they could be used to play off other European powers against each other. Secondly, they could be helpful for Bismarck's domestic undertakings, so as a special part of Leopold's 'conference package' Bismarck reserved the rights to parade Stanley, the great explorer, around all of Germany to praise the colonial enterprise, which he was now engaged.

Bismarck's strategy was enormously successful as a wave of enthusiasm greeted Stanley in Berlin and in most other German cities he visited. Bismarck ensured that Stanley spoke to all those who were curious about his colonial policies, most of all the *Kolonialvereine*. The *Deutsche*

Anlagen zu den Verhandlungen des Reichstags Nr.287-421, 7:1661. 'The expansion of African trade in recent years has convinced the German and the French government that it must be in the common interest of all the nations partaking in this trade to find an agreement to protect the conditions which enable it, and to prevent disputes and misunderstandings. In order to achieve this aim, the governments of Germany and of France think it preferable that the following basic tenets should be agreed on.'

87 The sample invitation submitted to the Reichstag notes that the same invitation was later also sent to the Ottoman Empire.

88 Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1999), 83.

Kolonialzeitung, whose readership Stanley addressed in November, reported parts of his speech to their congregation: 'Fragen Sie mich nun was wir wollen, so sage ich: wir sind gewillt einem jeden die Hand zu bieten in jenem freien Afrika der dort an den zivilisatorischen Unternehmungen sich beteiligen will, einem jeden, besonders aber den Deutschen (Lebhaftes Bravo).'⁸⁹ Stanley was not only applauded but his engagement for civilization was specifically lauded and for which he was even given an honorary doctorate. As the *Kolonialzeitung* noted:

Der Vorstand des deutschen Kolonialvereins hat Henry Moreland Stanley "in Anerkennung seiner durch die Erforschung des Kongogebiets der Zivilisation geleisteten Verdienste" zu seinem Ehrenmitgliede ernannt, wie ihn auch die Universität Halle durch Verleihung des philosophischen Doctogrades ehrte.⁹⁰

With Stanley's speeches and presentations, the German public could experience, the project of African civilization, as close as possible and an enthusiasm for new German projects in Africa swept through the capital.

The Conference

While the papers had already introduced the various topics of the conference over several days, the first official communication started with the publication of Bismarck's opening speech which set the tone for the whole event. Given Stanley's presence and the ubiquitous rhetoric of civilization, the media-savvy Bismarck decided to strike a more civilizational tone. He originally wanted to refer to the successful introduction of Christian civilization, but later decided to drop this allusion, presumably because of the Ottoman presence.⁹¹

En conviant à la conférence le gouvernement Impérial a été guidé par la conviction que tous les gouvernements invités partagent le désir d'associer les indigènes d'Afrique à la civilisation en ouvrant l'intérieur de ce continent au commerce, en fournissant à ses habitants les moyens de s'instruire, en encourageant les missions et les entreprises de nature à propager les connaissances utiles, et en préparant la suppression de l'esclavage, surtout de la traite des

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- 89 "Stanley in Berlin," *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* 24 (1884): 481. 'If you ask me what we want, then I will tell you: we are happy to stretch out our hand to anybody, who wants to partake in the civilizing activities in a free Africa, but especially the Germans.'
- 90 Ibid., 483. The board of directors of the German colonial association has decided to make Henry Moreland Stanley an honorary member of its organization in appreciation of his service to civilization in the exploration of the Congo, as the University of Halle has conferred onto him an honorary Doctorate in philosophy'.
- 91 Jörg Schildknecht, *Bismarck, Südwestafrika und die Kongokonferenz: die völkerrechtlichen Grundlagen der effektiven Okkupation und ihre Nebenpflichten am Beispiel des Erwerbs der ersten deutschen Kolonie* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 1999), 295.

noirs, dont l'abolition graduelle fut déjà proclamée au Congrès de Vienne de 1815, comme un devoir sacré de toutes les puissances.⁹²

Most of the pro-colonial papers carried his speech and the *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* also published it at the next possible opportunity, interpreting it as an indication of Germany's new colonial path and the positive future, civilization would have in Africa⁹³

Despite the public enthusiasm for civilization, inside the conference, previous rivalries of civilizational questions continued unabated. The Portuguese delegate Penafiel stressed the importance of Portugal for the spread of civilization in Africa: 'Vous savez Messieurs que le Portugal a introduit les germes de la civilisation en Afrique, vous connaissez aussi les sacrifices qu'il s'est imposé pour arriver à l'entière suppression de la traite dans ses territoires.'⁹⁴ This was undoubtedly a snide remark dedicated to the British representatives, whose Liberal party had after all been responsible for the fact that Portugal could not just sign one treaty, but now had to fight for its possessions in European-wide forum. He added:

Il espère enfin voir les vœux émis par S. E. le Plénipotentiaire de la Grande Bretagne pour que les indigènes profitent autant que possible des avantages de la civilisation, se réalisent d'une manière complète, au moyen de l'extinction de la traite et de l'esclavage, les plus grands obstacles qui puissent être opposés aux progrès de cette civilisation sur les côtes de l'Afrique.⁹⁵

Similar tactics were pursued by the American representative Kasson. Slightly awkwardly for such a gathering, Kasson was unwilling to address the other diplomats in French and instead harangued the delegates in English that it had been an American citizen, Stanley who had brought the light of civilization to central Africa, an action that in itself justified the US presence at the conference.⁹⁶

92 Jean Suret-Canale and Frank Th. Gatter, eds., *Protocoles et Actes Generale de La Conference de Berlin. 1884-1885* (Bremen: Übersee Museum Bremen, 1984), 66. 'In setting up this conference, the imperial government was guided by the belief that all the invited governments share the desire to enable the African natives access to civilization, by opening the interior of the continent to trade, providing its inhabitants with the means of education, encouraging missions and companies likely to propagate useful knowledge, and to prepare the suppression of slavery, especially the slave trade, the gradual abolition of which had already been proclaimed at the Congress of Vienna 1815, as a sacred duty of all the powers.'

93 "Westafrikanische Konferenz Zu Berlin," *Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* 1 (1884): 1–6.

94 Suret-Canale and Gatter, *Protocoles de Berlin*, 4.

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid., 76.

While these statements were possibly annoying yet benevolent, it was the Italian contribution to the problem of civilization which would occupy the conference for several sessions and arguably showed the distinctions in their understanding of civilization most profoundly. The first sessions could be used by various delegates to make amendments to the draft declaration which the secretariat had provided. The Italian representative, de Launay, was unhappy with the neutral depiction of civilization in the sixth paragraph of the draft, which read:

Toutes les Puissances exerçant des droits de souveraineté ou une influence dans lesdits territoires, prendront l'obligation de concourir à la suppression de l'esclavage et surtout de la traite des noirs, de favoriser et d'aider les travaux des missions et toutes les institutions servant à instruire les indigènes et à leur faire comprendre et apprécier les avantages de la civilisation.⁹⁷

A specific mention of scientists and christian missionaries was missing, the Italian representative claimed. De Launay insisted that no distinction would be drawn between Catholics and Protestants. It purely aimed at showing their importance for the idea of civilisation. The impact of his proposal was probably less impressive than de Launay had hoped for, as the general discussion quickly moved on to other topics. Along with all the other proposals, de Launay's amendment would be handled by a commission which would decide on the details of Article VI.

On 27 November, the negotiations to article VI were opened again to the delegates themselves and de Launay affirmed the point he had tried to make before. This time, however, he elaborated on why he thought it was important to mention scientists, Christian missionaries and their service to civilisation:

C'est aux savants, aux explorateurs, dit le Comte de Launay, que nous sommes redevables des merveilleuses découvertes faites dans ces dernières années en Africque. Les missionnaires prêtent, de leur côté, un précieux concours pour gagner ces pays a la civilisation inséparable de la religion. Il est de notre devoir de les encourager, de les protéger tous, dans leur recherches et expéditions présentes ou ultérieures, et dans un œuvre ou leurs efforts se combinent et se complètent. Bien des pays ont fourni un glorieux contingent. Leurs noms sont présentés à notre mémoire. Pour ce qui concerne l'Italie, son excellence cite entre

97 Ibid., 72. 'All the Powers exercising rights sovereignty or influence in those territories, are obliged to contribute to the abolition of slavery and especially the slave trade, to promote and assist the work of missions and all institutions serving to educate the natives and make them understand and appreciate the benefits of civilization.'

autres ceux de Massaia, Cecchi, Antinori, Bianchi, Chiarini, Antonelli, Gessi, Casati, Matteucci, Comtoni, Piaggia, Sapeto, Borghese, massari, Giulletti, Salimbeni, Colaci, Dabbene, Pippo, Naretti, Sacconi, etc. etc.⁹⁸

The other delegates were skeptical at what appeared as another attempt to specifically mention the Italian contribution to civilization. The secretary of the conference, Busch, suggested to add this statement to some other article, but not to the declaration itself. Other amendments brought in at the same time did not suffer from similar problems, as a proposal by the British representative to insert a line on freedom of religious practice was immediately accepted.

De Launay must have known why the rest of the conference reacted so awkwardly to his proposal. There were two major problems with it. The first, although virtually unmentioned, was the state religion of the Ottoman Empire. Despite being invited late and having been denigrated as an opponent of civilization by the then British prime minister, the Ottoman Empire was, for all intents and purposes, a civilized state. In fact the status of the Ottoman Empire would be asserted by the conference at a later stage.⁹⁹ It would therefore have been a minor diplomatic affront to specifically mention the christian connection to civilization, despite the fact that most of the other delegates probably assumed it. The second issue concerned the other European states, which had very diverging approaches to religion. As the Belgian representative Lambermont noted, it would be difficult to convince the states in Europe with a more secular agenda to agree to support the religious missions directly.¹⁰⁰ Lambermont was right, Gladstone had been fighting against the church for a while and in the motherland of civilisation, Ferry was working hard to push back the influence of the church on public education and the public sphere more generally, and the official French mission of civilization diverged quite dramatically from those advocated by French Catholics.¹⁰¹

The proposal went back to the commission and it was again impossible to reach unanimity on

98 Ibid., 83. 'It is to scholars and explorers, said the Count de Launay, we owe the wonderful discoveries made in recent years in Africa. Missionaries, in their own way help to win these countries for civilization which is inseparable from religion. It is our duty to encourage them, to protect them all, in their research and expeditions now or in the future, and where their work and efforts combine and complement each other. Many countries have provided a glorious contingent. Their names are present in our memory. Regarding Italy, his excellency cites those of Massaia, Cecchi, Antinori, Bianchi, Chiarini, Antonelli, Gessi, Casati, Matteucci, Comtoni, Piaggia, Sapeto, Borghese, Massari, Giulletti, Salimbeni, Colaci, Dabbene Pippo, Naretti, Sacconi, etc.. etc.'

99 Ibid., 101–102.

100 Ibid., 90.

101 Ahmet T. Kuru, *Secularism and State Policies Toward Religion: The United States, France, and Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 146; see J.P. Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

anything relating to Christian missionaries, so a new wording was recommended which just contained the word missionaries. It left out the fact, which de Launay had wanted to stress, that they had to be christian. Although this diplomatically appeared as a wise choice, de Launay was unhappy and when the next session started, he resumed his efforts. At first he merely summed up what the Commission had already decided:

Le Comte de Launay fait connaitre que les mots 'les missionnaires' ont été inscrits au paragraphe 2 de l'article à la suite de la demande qu'il en a faite à la Commission. Il avait d'abord désiré que l'on écrivit : "Les missionnaires chrétiens" mais après avoir pris part à la dernière séance, il a dû se convaincre que, pour l'assurer l'unanimité des voix à la proposition, il fallait s'abstenir d'une désignation plus précise à l'égard des missionnaires.¹⁰²

He went on to suggest that since it was obvious that only Christian missionaries were going to be active in the areas the Conference was considering, he would have still liked to have them mentioned in a separate part of Article VI.

A period of confused discussion ensued about the exact formulation, which revealed both the lack of unanimity about which civilization was to be imported in Africa, but also the strength of Ottoman claims to civilization. In recent years, much has been written about an Ottoman civilizing mission, with most literature on the topic emphasizing the claims to civilization the Ottoman Empire was making about certain groups living inside its boundaries.¹⁰³ Yet, the Ottoman civilizing mission was felt even at the heart of what is often presented as the most European of gatherings. In a moment of silence, interrupting intense discussion, the Ottoman representative, Said Pasha, announced that no declaration would be passed that merely mentioned Christian civilization as: 'il doit être bien entendu que s'il se produisait des missions religieuses musulmanes elles bénéficieraient d'une protection égale à celles dont jouissent les mission chrétiennes.'¹⁰⁴ Without the agreement of the Ottoman Empire, and given the general scepticism towards de Launay's proposition, his suggestions

102 Suret-Canale and Gatter, *Protocoles de Berlin*, 96. 'Count de Launay made it be known that the words "the missionaries" had been included in paragraph 2 of the article following the request he made to the Commission. At first he had wished that one wrote: 'the Christian missionaries' but after taking part at the last meeting, he had to convince himself that to assure the unanimity with respect to the proposal, one should refrain from a more precise designation with respect to the missionaries.'

103 Selim Deringil, "'They Live in a State of Nomadism' : The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 02 (2003): 311–42; Birgit Schäbler, "Globale Moderne und die Geburt der Zivilisationsmission an der kulturellen Binnengrenze: die mission civilisatrice ottomane," in *Westasien und die Moderne*, ed. Birgit Schäbler (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2003), 9–29.

104 Suret-Canale and Gatter, *Protocoles de Berlin*, 99. 'it must be understood that if at some point a Muslim mission should materialize that that it would benefit from the same protection as those granted to the Christian mission.'

for an amendment would not be the main feature of article VI. The Ottoman and the other European representatives, however, did agree that it could form a (completely irrelevant) sub-clause.

After extended haggling and debate, Article VI, promising civilization to the inhabitants of Africa would be the most confused one the conference passed. The final version of the *Acte général* was a mutant of several resistances and compromises. It started off with the original German proposition:

All the Powers exercising sovereign rights or influence in the aforesaid territories bind themselves to watch over the preservation of the native tribes, and to care for the improvement of the conditions of their moral and material well-being, and to help in suppressing slavery, and especially the slave trade. They shall, without distinction of creed or nation, protect and favour all religious, scientific or charitable institutions and undertakings created and organized for the above ends, or which aim at instructing the natives and bringing home to them the blessings of civilization.

It continued by then integrating de Launay's suggestion: 'Christian missionaries, scientists and explorers, with their followers, property and collections, shall likewise be the objects of especial protection.' De Launay might have been happy with this addition, but from a point of international law it was completely irrelevant. In the end, article VI protected a potential Muslim mission, as much as any Christian or secular initiative.

The final version of article VI. should therefore not be read as a clear insistence on western, Christian civilization. It is a surprisingly secular and pragmatic part of a document, which, although it inscribed the idea of civilization officially in international law, cannot be seen as merely the product of the ideology of western powers. Indeed, as I have insisted throughout this chapter, it is wrong to read the 1880s as a time period of civilizational unanimity, as in Berlin, but also in the other capitals of Europe, the idea of civilization was heavily discussed and criticized. In fact, one might argue, that the high-time of liberal civilizational idealism had already passed, as the 1880s started and that with the last decade of the nineteenth century, that I will explore in the next two chapters, the fragmentation and slow dissolution of the idea of civilization continued. Needless to say, I do not suggest that the politics of civilization did not have often catastrophic consequences, but merely that the picture of a monolithic ideology that sustained it is in need of revision.

Chapter 6. Civilization in Danger: The 'Yellow Peril' and the Hague Conference (1890s)

Introduction

The last decade of the nineteenth century has often been described as marking a fundamental rift in the international sphere, which arguably developed an ever-more competitive and aggressive character.¹ While most commentators agree that this was a pan-European or even global phenomenon, Germany is most often adduced as a case in point. The newly formed nation-state's bid for power on a global scale from around 1890 referred to by the young emperor Wilhelm II and his entourage as *Weltpolitik*, has served in popular interpretations of German history as the most crucial episode of the larger paradigm of the *Sonderweg*.² The great post-war historians of Germany, Fritz Stern, George Mosse and Hans Rosenberg can be seen as the originators of a still largely accepted master-narrative of a country that politically and culturally slid away from the international community.³ In such interpretations, the dichotomy between German *Kultur* and western *Zivilisation* that was allegedly gaining ground in Germany at the time, serves as the cultural background for this political alienation. From a cultural insistence on singular, deep *Kultur* as opposed to superficial civilization, a logical narrative can be built which directly links a late nineteenth century disenchantment with modernity and First World War propaganda.

As I seek to show in the first part of this chapter, such interpretations are in need of revision. While German foreign policy undoubtedly led to a process of international alienation, this development was not connected to the rise of a dichotomous separation between culture and civilization. In fact, I

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- 1 Richard Langhorne, *The Collapse of the Concert of Europe, 1890-1914* (London: Macmillan, 1981); Barbara W. Tuchman, *The Proud Tower: A Portrait of the World Before the War, 1890-1914* (New York: Random House, 2011); Henry Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society: The Reorientation of European Social Thought, 1890-1930* (New York: Transaction Publishers, 2002); Robert Wolfson and John Laver, *Years of Change: European History, 1890-1990*, 3rd ed. (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2001); Paul Hayes, *Themes in Modern European History, 1890-1945* (London: Routledge, 1992).
 - 2 Dieter Hertz-Eichenrode, *Deutsche Geschichte 1890-1918: das Kaiserreich in der Wilhelminischen Zeit* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1996); Konrad Canis, *Von Bismarck zur Weltpolitik: deutsche Aussenpolitik 1890 bis 1902* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1997); Gregor Schöllgen, "Die Großmacht als Weltmacht. Idee, Wirklichkeit und Perzeption Deutscher 'Weltpolitik' im Zeitalter des Imperialismus," *Historische Zeitschrift* 248, no. 1 (1989): 79–100; Peter Walkenhorst, *Nation – Volk – Rasse: Radikaler Nationalismus im Deutschen Kaiserreich 1890–1914* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011).
 - 3 Fritz K. Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community, 1890–1933* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969); Fritz Richard Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961); George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964); Suzanne L. Marchand and David F. Lindenfeld, *Germany at the Fin de Siecle: Culture, Politics, and Ideas* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2004); Kevin Repp, *Reformers, Critics, and the Paths of German Modernity: Anti-Politics and the Search for Alternatives, 1890-1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); Colin Loader, *Alfred Weber and the Crisis of Culture, 1890-1933* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); R. Hinton Thomas, *Nietzsche in German Politics and Society, 1890-1918* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983).

argue, although such distinctions were advocated on the fringes of German society, they cannot be seen as widely successful until 1899, when they first received major attention through the work of Stewart Houston Chamberlain. Indeed, throughout the 1890s, the largest Europe-wide debate featuring civilizational vocabulary – to which the majority of this chapter is dedicated – discussions about the threat of militarism to civilization, were conducted in Germany in much the same way as in other European states. Far from opposing civilization as such, German-speakers, like all other Europeans, were embroiled in a large discussion about the relationship between war and civilization. While the later Nobel Peace Prize winner, Bertha von Suttner, opposed the increasing militarization of European society with reference to older liberal tropes promising the end of war through a rise of civilization, military men like Moltke saw civilization endangered through a potential absence of war. In these debates, which dominated not just the German-speaking countries but Europe in general, culture and civilization were hardly ever opposed, but merely the future and character of civilization disputed.

Where German discussions did differ from their European counterparts was the widespread scepticism towards the international regulation of conflict in the name of civilization, and the acceptance of non-European countries as civilized members of the international sphere. As I show in the last two sections of this chapter, dealing with the discussions surrounding the Sino-Japanese war and the Hague Conference respectively, the German emperor was violently opposed to Japanese claims to civilization, which he perceived to be part of a wider alliance of Asian states threatening European civilization. While he was therefore seeing his cousin Nicholas II as the easternmost representative of Europe, opposing the yellow peril, he could not support the Tsar's suggestions of international peace talks in the name of civilization, which took place at the Hague in 1899. Considering the threatening international environment, the Kaiser argued, such peace agreements were naïve and not worth the paper they were written on. In the peculiar sphere of German politics, even those more likely to be in favour of international agreements opposed them, albeit for entirely different reasons. German socialists, who formed a significant part of the German peace movement, were also not convinced of Russian pronouncements. To their leaders, Russia was still a despotic and tyrannical country and any Russian idea of civilization to be seen as mere propaganda.

Discussing Culture and Civilization

Some form of a distinction between culture and civilization had been advocated by various fringe

groups in German society for almost the whole nineteenth century, but these were not widely spread and certainly not a majority opinion. As Breuer has argued, the groups that were most strongly advocating a distinction between *Zivilisation/Kultur* at the end of the nineteenth century, like the circle surrounding the writer and poet Stefan George, were certainly not at the intellectual centre of the German Empire.⁴ Breuer does not seem to suggest that such a distinction was unknown to other sections of German society; it was just not as widely spread as many have previously assumed. Although Breuer's article is predominantly concerned with those who actually advocated a distinction, his assertion is borne out by contributions of those who were not part of the circles he has studied. Other writers around the same time were not advocating a distinction between *Kultur/Zivilisation*. They were merely interested in the actual use of both words, like the Jesuit Nostitz-Rieneck whose work has recently received more attention.⁵ Just a year after the publication of Toennies's *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, Nostitz-Rieneck addressed similar issues in his *Das Problem der Kultur*.⁶ In many ways, the Jesuit intellectual noted the same problems in German society that Toennies sought to put his finger on. He even interpreted what he saw as an increasing use of *Kultur* as a symptom of dramatic changes. He disagreed, however, that these could be, or were framed as an opposition between *Zivilisation/Kultur*:

Manche meinen, Cultur und Civilisation ständen in einem ähnlichen Gegensatze wie wirthschaftlicher Wohlstand und geistige Bildung. So berechtigt diese Auffassung scheinen mag, so kann sie für uns schon darum nicht die leitende sein, weil der gegenwärtige Sprachgebrauch von so enger Verwendung des Wortes Cultur sich sehr weit entfernt, und vielmehr dahin zielt dem Worte Cultur wie die weiteste Anwendung so auch die weiteste Bedeutung zu geben. Ja was man früher fast ausschliesslich Civilisation nannte, Bildung des Geistes, Feinheit der Sitten, das heisst heute fast vorzugsweise Cultur.⁷

4 Stefan Breuer, "Späte Barbaren. Kultur und Zivilisation im kaiserlichen Deutschland," in *Politik-Verfassung-Gesellschaft: Traditionslinien und Entwicklungsperspektiven. Otwing Massing zum 60. Geburtstag* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1995), 35–50.

5 See the various contributions in Rüdiger Vom Bruch, Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, and Gangolf Hübinger, eds., *Kultur und Kulturwissenschaften um 1900: Krise der Moderne und Glaube an die Wissenschaft* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1989); Andrea Seier, "'Überall Kultur und kein Ende'. Zur diskursiven Konstitution von Kultur um 1900," in *Der Gesellschaftskörper: Zur Neuordnung von Kultur und Geschlecht um 1900*, ed. Andrea Seier, Hannelore Bublitz, and Christine Hanke (Frankfurt a. M.: Campus Verlag, 2000), 112–78.

6 Robert v. Nostitz-Rieneck, *Das Problem der Kultur* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1888); Seier, "'Überall Kultur und kein Ende'. Zur diskursiven Konstitution von Kultur um 1900."

7 Nostitz-Rieneck, *Das Problem der Kultur*, 5. 'Some think that culture and civilization stand in a similar opposition to each other as economic welfare and intellectual culture. As right as this idea may seem, we cannot interpret culture in such a way as the current use of language is very far from such a specific use of this word. Indeed, the current trend is to give the word culture, both the widest application as well as meaning. What we used to, almost exclusively, call civilization: intellectual culture, refinement of manners, that is today predominantly known as culture.'

Nostitz-Rieneck was right in that the 'gegenwärtige Sprachgebrauch' of the 1890s did not include a frequent distinction between *Kultur/Zivilisation*, a phenomenon that would only touch larger sections of German society in the early twentieth century.

Throughout the 1890s, next to nothing was written about the allegedly pervasive distinction between *Zivilisation/Kultur* until Stewart Houston Chamberlain took this distinction up in his bestseller *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, a book that deeply impacted German ideas of *Zivilisation*.⁸ To claim that Chamberlain's book was widely successful would be a severe underestimation. Finished in 1898, it went through several editions before 1910, and by 1914 had sold 60.000 copies.⁹ The impact of Chamberlain's book cannot be measured merely in copies sold. Chamberlain's close connection to the emperor Wilhelm II, who was smitten with his work and kept in correspondence until the end of his life, enabled Chamberlain a cultural impact far beyond the likes of Toennies. As the German-born British Nietzsche scholar Oscar Levy remembered in 1914: 'Mr Chamberlain's book [...] has become the bible of modern Germany. It was freely distributed, as bibles usually are, all over the fatherland by no less a personage than the German emperor himself, who had a copy of this book sent to every school.'¹⁰ Although by no means primarily concerned with the difference between *Kultur/Zivilisation*, Chamberlain advocated such a distinction as he contrasted the true *Kultur* of a small and homogenous society with what he called *Zivilisation*, the dubious effects of modernity on national communities:

Was ausserhalb dieses mikrokosmischen Kulturlebens steht, ist lediglich 'Civilisation', das heisst, ein beständig höher potenziertes, zunehmend emsigeres, bequemes und unfreieres Ameisenstaatendasein, gewiss reich an Segen und insofern wünschenswert, eine Gabe der Zeiten jedoch, bei welcher es häufig überaus fraglich bleibt, ob das Menschengeschlecht nicht mehr dafür bezahlt als erhält. Civilisation ist an und für sich nichts, denn es bezeichnet nur ein Relatives.¹¹

8 Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Munich: Verlagsanstalt F. Bruckmann A.G., 1899).

9 William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011), 107.

10 Peter Hoeres, *Krieg der Philosophen: die deutsche und britische Philosophie im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schoehning, 2004), 198.

11 Chamberlain, *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 1:62. 'What lies outside of this microcosmic cultural life is merely 'civilization', which means an ever increasing, ever more industrious, ever more comfortable, and ever less free state of ants. It is certainly rich in blessings and therefore desirable, but it is a gift of the times which raises the question, whether the human race is not paying more than it gains. Civilization is in itself nothing, because it only refers to something relative.'

While the immediate influence of books is practically impossible to prove, and other factors, as I will show in the next chapter, certainly enabled the spread of such a distinction, the direct contemporary references to Chamberlain's work speak for themselves. Although some actively ignored the distinctions Chamberlain was drawing between *Kultur/Zivilisation*, others specifically focused on it, and Chamberlain became seen as their main representative.¹² While it was unsurprising that the *Bayreuther Blätter* described Chamberlain's distinction in more detail, leading German newspapers like the *Grenzboten* also reviewed Chamberlain's work and specifically lauded him for taking a firm stance on what was a 'schwankender Sprachgebrauch':

Für sehr verdienstlich müssen wir es erklären, daß Chamberlain den Unterschied zwischen Zivilisation und Kultur scharf hervorhebt, und doppelt freut es uns, daß er auch in dem bekanntlich schwankenden Sprachgebrauch mit uns übereinstimmt; wie wir nennt er das Niedere, das Technische Zivilisation, das Höhere Kultur.¹³

While the *Grenzboten* insisted on the changing usage around 1900, throughout the early twentieth century this distinction was often attributed to Chamberlain himself. Hans Weicker, part of the German colonial administration in China, claimed in 1908 that the distinction between *Kultur/Zivilisation* was the most important contribution of Chamberlain's book: 'Was H. St. Chamberlains viel gelesene "Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts" so wertvoll macht, ist eben dies, dass darin Zivilisation und Kultur jedes für sich gewürdigt wird, und dass sie immer als zwei ganz verschiedene Dinge scharf auseinandergehalten werden.'¹⁴ Heinrich Driesman in his book emblematically entitled *Wege zur Kultur*, similarly argued: 'Zu jüngst hat es H. St. Chamberlain unternommen, durch scharfe Unterscheidung von Kultur und Zivilisation die allseitig richtige Erfassung des Begriffes zu gewinnen.'¹⁵ Such instances do not suggest that a distinction between *Kultur/Zivilisation* did not exist before, or that Chamberlain himself had invented the dichotomy.

12 Arthur Drews, *Die Grundlagen der geistigen und materiellen Kultur der Gegenwart* (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1899), 1.

13 W. Golther, "Die Germanen," *Bayreuther Blätter* 23 (1900): 336–40; "Entwicklung und Fortschritt, Zivilisation und Kultur," *Die Grenzboten: Zeitschrift für Literatur, Politik und Kunst*, 1900, sec. Volkswirtschaft, Rechtspflege, Schule und Kirche, 242. 'We find it admirable that Chamberlain sharply emphasizes the distinction between culture and civilization. We are even more happy that, given today's fluctuating parlance, he agrees with us, calling the low and technical aspects of life, civilization, and the higher: culture.'

14 Hans Weicker, *Kiautschou. Das deutsche Schutzgebiet in Ostasien* (Berlin: Verlagsbuchhandlung Alfred Schall, 1908), 174. 'What makes H. St. Chamberlain's widely read "Foundations of the Nineteenth Century" so valuable, is precisely that civilization and culture are treated separately, and are kept separately as two entirely different things.'

15 Heinrich Driesmans, *Wege zur Kultur: Grundlinien zur Verinnerlichung und Vertiefung des deutschen Kulturlebens* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1910), 7. 'Recently Stewart Houston Chamberlain has attempted to reach the correct definition of culture and civilization through a complete separation of the two.'

They show, instead, that amongst wider circles of the German population, this distinction was mainly attributed to a book only published in 1899.

Nonetheless, such a distinction only continued to spread slowly in the early twentieth century and many of those who started to advocate radical civilizational dichotomies acknowledged the influence of Chamberlain on their work. In 1904, the young doctoral student Alexander Koch, who was writing his thesis with the neo-idealist Rudolph Eucken, was still unsure about the spread of civilizational dichotomies:

Das Wort "Kultur" wird oft gleichbedeutend mit Zivilisation gebraucht, oft aber auch im scharfen Gegensatz dazu. Da man für ein und dieselbe Sache nicht zwei Ausdrücke nötig hat, so wäre es wünschenswert, wenn sich eine unterschiedliche Nutzung beider im Sprachgebrauch fixieren wollte. Aber leider ist für eine solche Fixierung wenig Aussicht vorhanden, da gerade diejenigen, welche zwischen Kultur und Zivilisation scharf scheiden, sich untereinander zum Teil in diametralem Widerspruch befinden.¹⁶

Koch was probably correct that Chamberlain's distinction, even by 1904, had not spread to include all of those concerned with the topic. Around the same time, however, many of those who did advocate a distinction admitted their indebtedness to Chamberlain. The historian and traveller Albrecht Wirth, whose studies strongly focused on a distinction between *Kultur/Zivilisation* mentioned Chamberlain's influence on him several times.¹⁷ Two years later, Moeller van den Bruck's *Die Zeitgenossen*, famously analysed in Stern's study *The Politics of Cultural Despair*, dedicated two sections to both Chamberlain and the distinction between *Kultur/Zivilisation*.¹⁸ The same year, the disturbing best-seller *Der Kaiser und die Zukunft des deutschen Volkes*, by the cultural critic and Nietzsche enthusiast Georg Fuchs, lauded Chamberlain and employed a clear distinction between *Kultur* and *Zivilisation* as he had advocated:

Die 'moderne Zivilisation' vernichtet die Volkstümer. [...] Nur wo der unbezähmbare

16 Alexander Koch, "Philosophische Erörterungen über die Stellung der Geschichtswissenschaften" (PhD diss., Gesamtuniversität Jena, 1904), 9. 'The word "culture" is often used synonymously with civilization, but equally often in sharp contrast. Since one does not require two words for one and the same thing, it would be desirable if a differential use would become fixed in common parlance. Yet, unfortunately, there is very little hope for such an undertaking, since it is precisely those who differentiate culture and civilization most sharply, who differ most amongst themselves about their definitions.'

17 Albrecht Wirth, *Volkstum Und Weltmacht in Der Geschichte* (Munich: Bruckmann, 1904).

18 Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, *Die Zeitgenossen: Die Geister - Die Menschen* (Minden i.W.: J.C.C. Bruns, 1906), 6–19, 99–102.

Machtwille einer Rasse sich weigert, wo er sich zum Meister aufwirft über jenes Ungeheuer, das in dem Gelehrten-Rotwelsch mit dem Fachausdrucke 'Zivilisation' belegt wird und es durch die Vergewaltigungen seiner Umarmungen zwingt, in den Rhythmen, in den Formen sich zu bewegen, welche dem Blute dieser Herrenrasse und diesem allein eigen sind: nur da bleibt Volksthum, nur da bleibt Kultur.¹⁹

By the end of the first decade of the new century, Germans and international commentators recognized a clearly German distinction between *Kultur* and *Zivilisation*. The left wing and social reformer Gertrud Bäumer expressed her criticism of modernity writing that in Germany: 'It could probably be summed up with this formula: the difficulties of our modern culture lie in the fact that today *Kultur* and *Zivilisation* have fallen into a kind of hostile anti-thesis.'²⁰ The same year, the Swedish sociologist and politician Steffen, while admitting that some were advocating similar distinctions in other countries, presented the phenomenon of a distinction between *Kultur/Zivilisation* as a predominantly German one.²¹ Another two years later, Ernst D. Richard, ironically named 'Lecturer in German Civilization' at Columbia University, explained to his audience, with the certainty of a scientist:

The Germans make a clear distinction between civilization and culture. Under the former term they include the external relations of men to each other and to nature as expressed in the organization of society and material progress. Culture, on the other hand, refers to the development of the inner, the higher forces of men, as expressed in philosophy, science, art and religion.²²

Today, as I have shown in the first chapter, this distinction has become seen as an almost perennial one. In the early twentieth century, however, many could still remember when it was not as clear cut. As the sociologist and later Nazi-supporter Max Hildebert Böhm put it in 1916: 'Erst in allerjüngster Zeit ringt sich im allgemeinen Bewusstsein eine Scheidung zwischen Kultur und

19 Georg Fuchs, *Der Kaiser und die Zukunft des deutschen Volkes*, 3rd ed. (Munich: Georg Mueller, 1906), 63. 'Modern civilization' destroys the culture of peoples. (...) Only where the indomitable will to power of a race refuses to abide, where it turns itself into the master of this monster, which in common academic parlance is referred to by the technical expression civilization, and where it seeks to force it, through its embrace, into the natural movement of the blood of this 'Herrenrasse', only there the culture of this people, and culture in general, will prevail.'

20 Repp, *Reformers, Critics, and the Paths of German Modernity*, 135.

21 Gustaf Fredrik Steffen, *Lebensbedingungen moderner Kultur. Sozialphilosophische, soziologische und sozialpolitische Studien* (Jena: G. Fischer, 1909), 58–60.

22 Ernst D. Richard, *History of German civilization. A general survey* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1911), 4.

Saving Civilization from War

In the early 1890s, when Germans, like all other Europeans, were gripped by a large debate about the threatening rise of militarism, the distinctions Böhm was talking about were practically unknown. Organizations dedicated to the spreading of peace had existed for a long time. Their growth had intensified after the 1848 Revolutions, but it was the decade of the 1890s that saw their wide and global proliferation.²⁴ 1889 became the *annus mirabilis* of international efforts for peace, as the foundation of the International Parliamentary Union coincided with the first Universal Peace Congress in Paris and the publication of Bertha v. Suttner's pacifist world-wide best-seller *Die Waffen nieder*.²⁵ In the book, the later Nobel Peace Prize winner recounted the life of the fictional Martha, whose existence is marred by the destruction and terror of the wars of nineteenth century nationalism, to which she (directly or indirectly) loses two husbands, her sisters, and a brother. Despite, or perhaps because of, the personal tragedies that dominate her life, Martha, a pacifist and feminist heroine, continues to support classic liberal doctrine of the abolition of war. It was Buckle – whose work enjoyed a period of renaissance in the 1890s after his quick fall from grace – she recounts, that first introduced her to the classically liberal position on war.²⁶ Buckle, Martha told her readers:

führt den Nachweis, dass das Ansehen des Kriegerstandes im umgekehrten Verhältnis zur Kulturhöhe eines Volkes steht. [...] Er betont, dass im Fortschritt der Gesellschaft, mehr noch als der Krieg selber, die Liebe zum Krieg im Schwinden begriffen sei. Das war mir aus der Seele gesprochen.²⁷

Throughout the book, the heroine's liberal perspective is confronted with the ideas of military necessity as well as with a general inability to see a larger civilizational argument. As Martha remembers one of several conversations: 'ich teilte ihm die von Buckle aufgestellten Betrachtungen

23 Max Hildebert Böhm, *Der Sinn der humanistischen Bildung* (Berlin: Druck und Verlag von Georg Reimer, 1916), 5. 'Only in very recent times, a distinction between culture and civilization starts to prevail.'

24 David Cortright, *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 38–40; Sandi E. Cooper, "Pacifism in France, 1889-1914: International Peace as a Human Right," *French Historical Studies* 17, no. 2 (October 1, 1991): 359–86.

25 Bertha von Suttner, *Die Waffen nieder!*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Dresden: E. Pierson, 1899). 'Lay down your arms!'

26 John Mackinnon Robertson, *Buckle and His Critics. A Study in Sociology* (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1895); George Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: The Free Press, 1987), 110–143.

27 Suttner, *Die Waffen nieder!*, 1:71–72. 'proves that there is a negative correlation between the general level of culture in a country and the appreciation of men-of-war. He asserts that with the progress of society not just war itself but also the love of war diminishes. I found myself in total agreement.'

über den mit steigender Civilisation abnehmenden Kriegsgeist mit – diese Reden passten nicht für die Ohren des Generals Althaus.²⁸

Suttner's fictionalized struggle of a pacifist against the military establishment was enormously successful, primarily because it was based on European reality. Indeed, the later decades of the nineteenth century were dominated by a struggle between what Best has termed a 'pro war' and an 'anti-war' party.²⁹ Already in 1890, the famous legal scholar at the university of Heidelberg, Jellinek, had noted in a lecture entitled 'Die Zukunft des Krieges':

Über den Krieg selbst ist nämlich, seitdem die modernen Humanitätsideen zu herrschen begannen, ein heftiger literarischer Krieg entbrannt. Ob der Krieg ein Übel oder ein Gut für die Menschheit sei, ist von Staatsmännern, Feldherren, Politikern und Gelehrten untersucht worden. Begeisterte Friedensapostel stehen nicht minder begeisterten Anhängern des Krieges gegenüber.³⁰

The war party gathered behind the statements of military men like Moltke, who since the 1840s had argued for the positive effects of war on human societies and civilization. Moltke's pronouncements had long been known, but they were epitomized in a published and oft-quoted letter he had written to Bluntschli, and in which he argued:

Der ewige Friede ist ein Traum, und nicht einmal ein schöner, und der Krieg ist ein Glied in Gottes Weltordnung. In ihm entfalten sich die edelsten Tugenden des Menschen, Mut und Entsagung, Pflichttreue und Opferwilligkeit mit Einsetzung des Lebens. Ohne den Krieg würde die Welt im Materialismus versumpfen.³¹

Moltke's ideas were supported by many in the military, like the soldier and writer Albert von Boguslawski who in his *Der Krieg in seiner wahren Bedeutung für Staat und Volk* had questioned

28 I told him about Buckle's reflections on the diminishing war spirit with increasing civilization - these words did not please the ears of General Althaus.

29 Geoffrey Best, *Humanity in Warfare. The Modern History of the International Law of Armed Conflicts* (London: Methuen & Co., 1983).

30 Georg Jellinek, *Die Zukunft des Krieges: Vortrag, gehalten in der Gehestiftung zu Dresden am 15. März 1890* (Berlin: Verlag von Julius Springer, 1916), 5. 'A fierce literary war has broken out about war itself. The question of whether war is good or bad for humanity has been investigated by statesmen, generals, politicians and scholars. Enthusiastic apostles of peace are facing no less enthusiastic supporters of war.'

31 Johann Caspar Bluntschli, *Denkwürdiges aus meinem Leben*, vol. 3 Heidelberg (Nördlingen: Verlag der C.H. Beck'schen Buchhandlung, 1884), 471. 'Eternal peace is a dream, and not even a beautiful one. War is a link in God's world order and in it the noblest virtues of man, courage and self-denial, self-sacrifice and devotion to duty in life-threatening conditions, develop. Without war, the world would stagnate in materialism.'

ideas about a pacifist future, and lauded the positive influence of conflict and war.³² While Moltke and Boguslawski saw war as a positive influence on human civilization, other writers opposed the idea that culture and civilization were something that could slowly prevail over the necessity of conflict. The Austrian writer Binder-Krieglstein asked the readers of his 1895 publication if the demands made by authors like Bluntschli and Suttner could ever become part military thinking: 'Ist die Cultur und Civilisation der Massstab mit dem man Heere misst? Es scheint wohl nicht. Einzig die Brauchbarkeit für den Krieg kann dieser Massstab sein.'³³

Those opposing war, meanwhile, were getting their arguments from works in which the future of civilization was imagined through a complete absence of war (like the works of Jan Bloch), although their reasoning sometimes differed substantially.³⁴ Some followed Buckle's and Suttner's ideas that the rise in civilization would convince ever larger sections of the public of the negative influence of war, and that the peoples of Europe themselves would take charge against the governments sceptical of peaceful solutions. The professor of international law, Komarowskii, explained to his German readers:

Je mehr unsere Zivilisation fortschreitet, in einem umso schreienderen Widerspruch stellt sich zu ihr der Krieg. [...] Es ist möglich, dass die Regierungen bei ihrer Scheu vor der Annahme der besprochenen Reformen beharren werden, doch wird die allgemeine Meinung im Stande sein sie zu bekehren, sofern sie nur einmüthig und energisch handelt.³⁵

More radical elements of society also imagined the future of civilization as warless, but differed on how such a future was to be achieved. The marxist intellectual Georg Zepler, like many on the left, chastised the continuous existence of war in his *Die Sünden unserer Civilisation*. In contrast to Komarowskii, he imagined that these sins were only to be absolved through a larger revolution,

32 A. von Boguslawski, *Der Krieg in seiner wahren Bedeutung für Staat und Volk* (Berlin: E.S. Mittler und Sohn, 1892).

33 Carl Binder von Krieglstein, *Friedens- und Kriegsmoral der Heere am Ausgange des XIX Jahrhunderts: eine Streitschrift* (Vienna: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1895), 18. 'Are culture and civilization the scale with which one measures armies? It does not seem so. Only the usefulness in times of war can be that scale.'

34 For Bloch's life and work see T.H.E. Travers, "Technology, Tactics, and Morale: Jean de Bloch, the Boer War, and British Military Theory, 1900-1914," *Journal of Modern History* 51, no. 2 (1979): 264–86; Grant Dawson, "Preventing 'a Great Moral Evil': Jean de Bloch's The Future of War as Anti-Revolutionary Pacifism," *Journal of Contemporary History* 37, no. 1 (2002): 5–19; Ela Bauer, "Jan Gottlieb Bloch: Polish Cosmopolitanism versus Jewish Universalism," *European Review of History: Revue Européenne D'histoire* 17, no. 3 (2010): 415–29.

35 Leonid Aleksieïevich Kamarovskii, *Über Die Friedensbestrebungen Der Völker. Die Abrüstungsfrage. Über Einige Internationale Kongresse Im Jahre 1889* (Berlin: Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, 1890), 14. 'The more our civilization advances, the more it stands in clear opposition to war. (...) It is possible that the governments will remain hesitant in their adoption of the discussed reforms, but the general public will be able to convert them, provided that they act unanimously and vigorously.'

with which war would become once and for all a thing of the past.³⁶ While Zepler imagined a future revolution, which was to change the way the world worked, the Polish economist Jan Bloch argued that already the current capitalist political system had made war impossible. As he explained in his Europe-wide best-seller *The Future of War. Is War Now Impossible?*, the economic intricacies of the modern world, the continuous developments in military technology, and increased armaments had made war so ruinous to the economy at large that nobody should dare to engage in it.³⁷

The debate on the benefits and pitfalls of war was an international one, although perhaps most heated in the German-speaking countries. In a world-wide and decade-long debate anthropological, social, and economic arguments for and against war clashed. And most of these considered positive and negative effects with a view to civilization as a whole.³⁸ In Germany, this debate had reached the centre of the political discussion. Apart from Moltke, who had internationally become known for his pro-war stance, Germany's most rabid war campaigner was the nationalist historian Treitschke. Treitschke held the nation to be the essence of international politics, and military engagements between them as essential for their well-being, as he argued in several best-selling publications. He had famously advocated the need for war before German unification, but continued his rhetoric even after it had been achieved. He believed in the necessity of war, and denounced the hope to rid the world of conflicts between nations as 'nicht nur sinnlos, sondern tief unsittlich.'³⁹ It was war that rescued nations from the fate of 'Selbstsucht' and that inspired the 'Opfermut' of individuals. War was a 'Kernfrage der Staatswissenschaft'.⁴⁰ Amongst his historian colleagues, this was not a majority opinion. The old Theodor Mommsen confessed he found Treitschke's nationalism odious, an attitude of mind he described as 'Ausdruck sittlicher Verrohung die unsere Civilisation in Frage stellt.'⁴¹ Even in the Reichstag, some of Treitschke's successors saw

36 Georg Zepler, *Die Sünden unserer Civilisation* (Berlin: Hugo Steinitz, 1893). 'The sins of our civilization'.

37 I.S. Bloch, *The Future of War in Its Technical, Economic and Political Relations. Is War Now Impossible?* (New York: Doubleday & McClure Co., 1899).

38 S. B. Luce, "The Benefits of War," *The North American Review* 153, no. 421 (1891): 672–83; S. C. Bushnell, "The 'Invigorating Influence of War,'" *The Advocate of Peace* 58, no. 2 (1896): 38–39; W. P. Trent, "War and Civilization," *The Sewanee Review* 8, no. 4 (1900): 385–98; W.D. Le Sueur, "War and Civilization," *Popular Science Monthly* 48 (1896): 749–70; John M. Robertson, "The Moral Problems of War," *International Journal of Ethics* 11, no. 3 (April 1, 1901): 273–90; D. G. Ritchie, "The Moral Problems of War-In Reply to Mr. J. M. Robertson," *International Journal of Ethics* 11, no. 4 (July 1, 1901): 493–514; Alexander McKenzie, "If Civilization Advances, War Will Cease.," *The Advocate of Peace* 66, no. 5 (1904): 86–87; Sebald Rudolf Steinmetz, *Der Krieg Als Sociologisches Problem* (Amsterdam: W. Versluys, 1889); J. Novikov, *Der Krieg und seine angeblichen Wohltaten* (Leipzig: August Schupp, 1896).

39 Heinrich von Treitschke, "Das constitutionelle Königthum in Deutschland," in *Historische und politische Aufsätze.*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: G. Hirzel, 1870), 768. 'not just pointless, but deeply immoral'

40 Ibid. 'self-indulgence'. 'the central question of political science'.

41 Quoted in Stefan Rebenich, *Theodor Mommsen und Adolf Harnack: Wissenschaft und Politik im Berlin des ausgehenden 19. Jahrhunderts : mit einem Anhang, Edition und Kommentierung des Briefwechsels* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1997), 71, 358.

it similarly. Ernst Harmening, MP for the *Freisinnige*, heavily criticizing Treitschke's ideas, advocated opposing ideas in his *Das Recht der Völker auf Frieden* in which he presented the 'Ausbreitung der Civilisation' as a 'Gegengewicht' to the 'Übel des Krieges'.⁴²

Amongst the peace movement, Treitschke's and Moltke's ideas were not only seen as questioning civilization, as Mommsen had argued, but directly opposing it. As Wilhelm Carl Becker, who would later become famous for his book *Der Nietzschekultus*, explained in his clearly entitled pacifist pamphlet "*Patriotismus*" *contra Civilisation!* Treitschke was 'der Apostel des rabiatesten, engherzigsten Pseudopatriotismus'.⁴³ Patriotism, the way that the general and the nationalist historian understood it, was the true 'Hemmschuh der Civilisation', and to claim that men like Moltke were great thinkers was a 'lächerliche Übertreibung'.⁴⁴ The passion and desperation of Becker's arguments for his understanding of civilization was most palpable in his *ad hominem* attacks. Moltke's 'sehr eng begrenzter geistiger Horizont', combined with Treitschke's 'dummdreister Arroganz' were the forebears of a complete destruction of civilization, because their arguments were pushing humanity away from the ideas and developments of universal peace and progress.⁴⁵

Despite his anger at particular war enthusiasts and their justifications for the continuation of war, Becker realized that these were merely the philosophical figure-heads of a much larger European development that he and many others referred to as militarism. No consensus existed as to what militarism actually meant. It was most commonly used to describe the increasing importance of military forces in Europe, specifically since the 1870s and the dangers involved with this increase in armaments.⁴⁶ While the arguments Treitschke and Moltke were making for war could be seen as philosophically and morally sustaining the increase in European armaments, it is important not to draw any generalization, as there were in fact two different debates. Arguments about the necessity of war were, for the most part, anthropological debates about human beings (or nations) and differing conceptions of civilization. The debates about militarism referred to a very specific time period and development in European history. They were equally related to ideas of civilization. The

42 Ernst Harmening, *Das Recht der Völker auf Frieden* (Breslau: Verlag von Leopold Freund, 1891), 37.

43 Wilhelm Carl Becker, *Der Nietzschekultus: ein Kapitel aus der Geschichte der Verirrungen des menschlichen Geistes* (Leipzig: Lipinski, 1908); Wilhelm Carl Becker, *Patriotismus contra Civilisation!: der Völkerfriede: Betrachtungen über die gegenwärtigen internationalen politischen Zustände der Kulturstaaten und Ideen hinsichtlich der zukünftigen Gestaltung derselben* (Zurich: Verlags-Magazin, 1893), 242. 'the apostle of the most violent and selfish pseudopatriotism'.

44 Becker, *Patriotismus contra Civilisation!*, 110. 'a stumbling block to further civilization'; 'ridiculous exaggeration'.

45 *Ibid.*, 110, 242. 'closely confined mental horizon'; 'stupid and brazen arrogance'

46 Nicholas Stargardt, *The German Idea of Militarism: Radical and Socialist Critics 1866-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 21–26.

famous naturalist Alfred Russell Wallace clearly demonstrated the difference in his 1898 *The Wonderful Century*, of which a whole chapter was dedicated to 'Militarism the curse of civilization'.⁴⁷ Wallace, whose politics were often unorthodox, was sure of the unique status of the nineteenth century, and in contrast to those who hailed the eternal need of human nature for war, he understood the time that followed the wars of nationalism as different from previous ones:

The evils of these wars did not cease with the awful loss of life and destruction of property, which were their immediate results, since they formed the excuse for that inordinate increase of armaments and of the war-spirit under which Europe now groans. This increase, and the cost of weapons and equipments, have been intensified by the application to war purposes of those mechanical inventions and scientific discoveries which, properly used, should bring peace and plenty to all, but which, seized upon by the spirit of militarism, directly tend to enmity among nations and to the misery of the people.⁴⁸

All of these were not auspicious signs for civilization in general, as Wallace assured his readers:

It will be held by the historians of the future to show that we of the nineteenth century were socially and morally unfit to possess and use the enormous powers for good and evil which the rapid advance of scientific discovery has given us; that our boasted civilization was in many respects a mere surface veneer.⁴⁹

It was not only idiosyncratic thinkers like Wallace or socialists and radicals who claimed that the arms race and the spirit of militarism were taking a huge toll on Europe in general.⁵⁰ From the prime Minister to the backbenchers, the House of Commons in the 1890s was full of people who argued against 'the spirit of militarism', most of them on civilizational grounds. As Gladstone himself put it in a debate concerned, amongst other things, with the reduction of the military budget: 'I cannot question that intention, neither can I question the fact that militarism itself is a tremendous scourge, a tremendous curse to civilisation.'⁵¹ Gladstone was in agreement with most of his liberal party

47 Alfred Russell Wallace, *The Wonderful Century. Its Successes and Its Failures* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1899), 325–342.

48 Ibid., 333–334.

49 Ibid., 341–342.

50 Geoffrey Best, "Peace Conferences and the Century Of Total War: The 1899 Hague Conference and What Came After," *International Affairs* 75, no. 3 (1999): 620.

51 HC Deb 16 June 1893 vol. 13 col.1269

colleagues who, throughout the decade, would harbour a 'general feeling of intolerance of these naval and military armaments which is spreading through the whole civilised world.'⁵² He was even supported by members on the other side of the House, like George Smyth Baden-Powell, the older brother of the more famous Robert, and himself a conservative MP. The duty of England and of the House of Commons was, he explained, the 'saving of modern civilisation from the fate that wars had brought upon previous civilisations', something that the 'spirit of militarism' threatened to do once again.⁵³

This almost unanimous opposition to militarism raised the question of who was to blame for this 'scourge of civilization'. The culprits were to be found amongst the military, some dared to suggest with Suttner. As the radical Irish MP John Dillon told the House at a later stage of a discussion that stretched through several years: 'We are travelling at a rate of accelerated rapidity every year along that path of militarism which adds fresh fuel to the patriotic fervour of those military gentlemen to whom we listen sometimes with interest and sometimes with great weariness.'⁵⁴ Both sentiments were justified. Many 'military gentleman' understood the problematic of increasing armaments and the peril of another war, yet often refused to draw pacifist conclusions. Despite the enormous cost of armaments, a guide to the Royal Navy concluded in 1896: 'the fact of our being unprepared and weak would constitute the greatest danger to the peace of the world'.⁵⁵ Eerily prescient, the much-maligned Moltke had similarly weighed in on the subject of European armaments in a speech at the *Reichstag* in 1890:

Meine Herren, wenn der Krieg, der jetzt schon mehr als zehn Jahre lang wie ein Damoklesschwert über unseren Häuptern schwebt, - wenn dieser Krieg zum Ausbruch kommt, so ist seine Dauer und sein Ende nicht abzusehen. Es sind die grössten Mächte Europas, welche, gerüstet wie nie zuvor, gegeneinander in den Kampf treten [...] Meine Herren, es kann ein siebenjähriger, es kann ein dreissigjähriger Krieg werden – und wehe dem, der Europa in Brand steckt, der zuerst die Lunte in das Pulverfass schleudert!⁵⁶

52 HC Deb 13 April 1899 vol. 69. col.1031.

53 HC Deb 16 June 1893 vol. 13. col.1269.

54 HC Deb 20 October 1899 vol. 77. col. 441.

55 Frederick T. M. Gibbs, *The Illustrated Guide to the Royal Navy and Foreign Navies; Also Mercantile Marine Steamers Available as Armed Cruisers and Transports, Etc.* (London: Waterlow Bros. & Layton, 1896), vii.

56 *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstags VIII. Legislaturperiode. I.Session. Von der Eröffnungssitzung am 6.Mai 1890 bis zur 32. Sitzung am 2.Juli 1890*, 3 (Berlin: Druck und Verlag der Norddeutschen Buchdruckerei und Verlagsanstalt, 1890), 76. 'Gentlemen, when the war that has been hovering over our heads like the sword of Damocles for almost ten years, when this war breaks out, its duration and its end are unfathomable. The greatest powers of Europe, which more heavily armed than ever will join this fight. Gentlemen, it can be a seven-years war, it can be a thirty-years war - and woe to him who puts Europe on fire, the first to light the powder-keg.'

While men like Wallace, and even Gladstone, argued that civilization could only be saved through a stop to the general militarization of society, Moltke was convinced of the opposite. Despite his weariness of a potential war, he argued that 'die Fortdauer der gesellschaftlichen Ordnung und der Zivilisation' depended on Germany's preparedness for war.⁵⁷ Again, it is important not to confuse the argument Moltke was making in 1890 with the argument in his famous and oft-quoted letter to Bluntschli. In 1890, he was not arguing for the anthropological worthiness of war. He stated simply that the race of European armaments and the spirit of militarism did not allow for unilateral disarmament. This was not an anthropological argument, it was game theory. Both arguments related to civilization, but whereas Moltke's previous utterances emphasized the human need for war as a sustenance to civilization, in 1890, he was arguing that an end of armaments would lead to war, and thereby to the end of civilization. The fin-de-siècle had produced a myriad of arguments for and against war and armaments, all of which were formulated with recourse to the same word, but certainly not the same concept of civilization.

Far Eastern Crises and the Rhetoric of Civilization

The international debate on militarism and the ideas of the decline of civilization, did not monopolize the political use of civilization in its entirety. The justification of particular wars (as opposed to war as a general phenomenon) through civilizational language was still popular. Wars in the name of civilization had for a long time been a privilege of European countries. Now, in the 1890s non-European powers started to adopt similar language. Japan in particular had undergone a process of 'learning the competence and skill to be a "civilized" state', as Shogo Suzuki has called it.⁵⁸ An integral part of that process was the adoption of civilization as a justificatory tool. The start of the Sino-Japanese war in 1894, a power-struggle over the Korean peninsula, was marked by concerted rhetorical efforts on the Japanese side to prove that their wars too, were wars for civilization. The Japanese elites understood well that a war in the late nineteenth century could not be an aggressive and egoistic action. It had to be phrased in the international language of the day: the duty of civilization. It was therefore no surprise that the justification for Japan's aggressive action sounded very much like previous European pronouncements. As the Japanese representative in London M.Y. Uchida told the *Times* shortly after the start of the hostilities: 'The height of Japan's satisfaction would be to see her neighbour China consolidated, freed from corruption, prosperous,

57 *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstags VIII. Legislaturperiode. I. Session. Von der Eröffnungssitzung am 6. Mai 1890 bis zur 32. Sitzung am 2. Juli 1890*, 76. 'The continuous existence of our societal order and civilization'

58 Shogo Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire: China and Japan's Encounter with European International Society* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 89–113.

and open to commerce and civilization'.⁵⁹

The Japanese rhetoric of civilization did not stop throughout the war, or even afterwards. The message that Japan was bringing modernity and civilization to China was consistently emphasized in a large public relations effort geared towards showing Japan's modern civilization at war with reaction. After the war, most officials repeated the official message, as the former foreign minister who remembered in his memoirs: 'it was obvious that one day a conflict would appear and its cause would be the collision between the new Western civilization and the old Asian civilization'.⁶⁰ Japan represented modern and western civilization – some journalists even describing it as the most western country of the Occident – whereas China was depicted as backward, reactionary and badly administered. A piece of propaganda entitled *Heroic Japan* explained the Japanese war aims to the British public: it was 'a planting of the standard of civilization on the shores of conservatism and irreconcilable maladministration'.⁶¹ The Japanese machinery of international diplomacy was impressive in its own right, still, it is difficult not to see the resemblance between Japanese rhetoric and previous liberal arguments relating to the international sphere, especially with regard to Turkey. The argument for war in the name of civilization, wherever it was used, functioned in the same way. The country claiming to fight for civilization was not fighting for itself, but for progress, peace and against maladministration. In this case, there was arguably more at stake. Whereas western interventions could always easily be justified with recourse to civilization, and because the civilized nature of the attacker was never in doubt, Japan clearly used the language of civilization not only to justify the war itself, but also its own civilized state.

Japanese elites sought to distinguish their country from its enemies through the fighting itself, and in doing so, they were implicitly backed by European powers. As I have explored in previous chapters, the idea of the civilized nation was often connected to the principles of civilized warfare (see chapter 4 and 5). Arguments for this connection had existed since the mid-nineteenth century, but it was Russia's war against the Ottoman Empire in 1877/1878 that saw the two explicitly connected for purposes of international propaganda. During the Sino-Japanese war, many pages were taken out of Russia's book to present Japan as a leading nation in the art of civilized war, tactics that would later even be used against the Russians themselves.⁶² The Japanese government

59 "The War in the East," *The Times*, November 9, 1894, 34417 edition, sec. News.

60 Quoted in Yamauchi, "Civilisation and International Law," 11.

61 F. Warrington Eastlake and Yamada Yoshiaki, *Heroic Japan: A History of the War Between China & Japan* (London: Sampson Low, Marston and Company, 1897), 409.

62 Yamauchi, "Civilisation and International Law"; Rotem Kowner, "Becoming an Honorary Civilized Nation: Remaking Japan's Military Image during the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905," *Historian* 64, no. 1 (2001): 19–

had announced before the start of hostilities that it would stick to the modern rules of civilized warfare, and Japanese generals similarly emphasized throughout the conflict that 'notre armée [...] combat suivant les lois de la civilisation'⁶³. As Howland has argued, this Japanese manoeuvre was driven by a concerted international effort, as Japanese and British lawyers worked together to establish Japan's civilized status regarding the rules of war.⁶⁴ In editorials preceding the onset of hostilities, the Japanese point of view was touted by eminent British scholars like T. E. Holland and John Westlake. After the war, several books Japan's international lawyers published in support of their country's adherence to the rules of war had their prefaces written by the same men.⁶⁵ It was through their proven adherence to European rules of law, British and Japanese lawyers argued in unison, that Japan's status as a civilized power could be confirmed and China's doubted. As T. E. Holland put it in his *Studies in International Law*:

Our review of the course of recent events would seem to lead to the following conclusions. Japan, apart from the lamentable outbursts of savagery at Port Arthur, has conformed to the laws of war, both in treatment of the enemy as well as in her relations to neutrals, in a manner worthy to the most civilized nations of Western Europe. China, on the other hand, has given no indication of her acceptance of the usages of civilized warfare.⁶⁶

It is unclear to what extent this Anglo-Japanese cooperation should be seen as linked to the start of a process of abandoning the unequal treaties, or indeed as an indication of the later alliance in 1902. There were similar efforts by French lawyers and, despite the dubious optics, there was probably no larger master plan.⁶⁷ Britain had indeed signed a new 'Treaty of Commerce and Navigation' a month before war was declared. Yet, as the *Times* that had also printed most positive material on the Japanese argued, a majority in Britain was sceptical about the potential end of extraterritoriality, and the government did not pursue a larger orchestrated line.⁶⁸ In France, the prominent lawyer Paul Fauchille had taken it upon himself to write the equivalent introduction in Nagao Ariga's *La guerre*

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63 'Our army fights according to the laws of civilization.' Oyama quoted in Nagao Ariga, *La guerre sino-japonaise au point de vue international*. (Paris: A. Pedone, 1896), 42.

64 Douglas Howland, "Japan's Civilized War: International Law as Diplomacy in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895)," *Journal of the History of International Law* 9, no. 2 (2007): 179–201.

65 John Westlake, "The Sinking of the Kowshing," *The Times*, August 3, 1894, 34333 edition, sec. Letters to the Editor; Howland, "Japan's Civilized War," 193–194.

66 Thomas Erskine Holland, *Studies in International Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898), 128–129.

67 Howland, "Japan's Civilized War," 184.

68 "The Announcement That a New Treaty Had Been....," *The Times*, September 18, 1894, 34372 edition, sec. Editorials/Leaders.

sino-japonaise au point de vue international, exclusively published in French. As his English colleagues, Fauchille emphasized the civilized nature of Japan's armed forces. More importantly, he expressed admiration for the work of Ariga himself. He explained: 'la 'civilisation' du conflit Sino-Japonais a été son oeuvre. Plusieurs des règlements que publièrent les généraux furent, en effet, préparés par lui.'⁶⁹ Fauchille drew similar conclusions to Holland and Westlake. Because Japan's military was not dominated by rules of military necessity but by legal scholars who knew the rules of war, Japan's civilized status should no longer be doubted by Europeans. Given these French pronouncements, the support of English lawyers seems less extraordinary and certainly less politically motivated. They prove that the legal sympathies for Japan's claims to civilization were international and not exclusively British.

The Japanese civilizational propaganda was largely successful all over Europe, and whether legal or otherwise, the arguments advanced gained traction amongst the European public and coincided with rabid Sinophobia. Throughout the nineteenth century, European estimations of China had not been the highest. With its 'newly civilized' neighbour Japan as comparison, the Chinese reputation in Europe suffered even more.⁷⁰ As Wippich has discovered, scores of congratulatory letters from normal German citizens, more than from any other country, reached the Japanese ministry of war in the months after the conflict, most of them uttering admiration for the efficient and modern Japanese war machine.⁷¹ Japan's apparently united and national front impressed many in the recently unified Germany. The national nature of Japan's struggle in particular, opposed to the purported chaos of the declining Qing dynasty, was seen as a sign of advanced civilization. The national character and the unified nature of the Japanese people was emphasized in Alfred Müller's *Der Krieg zwischen China und Japan, 1894/1895*:

das Parlament erklärte, dass es sich dem Wunsche und Willen ihres Herrschers, die barbarische Hartnäckigkeit Chinas zu brechen und Japan die Stellung einer Grossmacht zu verschaffen, voll und ganz anschliesse, und es mit ihm China als den Feind der Civilisation betrachte. Nichts von alledem in China! Ein Bild trauriger Zustände und trostloser

69 Paul Fauchille, "Preface," in *La guerre sino-japonaise au point de vue international*, by Nagao Ariga (Paris: A. Pedone, 1896), IX. 'The 'civilization' of the Sino-Japanese conflict was his work. Many of the regulations the generals published were effectively prepared by him'.

70 Ernst Rose, "China as a Symbol of Reaction in Germany, 1830-1880," *Comparative Literature* 3, no. 1 (1951): 57-76.

71 Ikura Akira, "The Yellow-Peril and Its Influence on Japanese-German Relations," in *Japanese-German Relations, 1895-1945: War, Diplomacy and Public Opinion*, ed. Christian W. Spang and Rolf-Harald Wippich (Oxford: Routledge, 2006), 80-97.

The vilification of China was by no means a purely German phenomenon. The *Times* journalist Chirol asserted the war did not only show Japan's 'reality of a new civilisation' but also the 'immeasurable rottenness hitherto half concealed under the venerable cloak of an ancient civilisation' like China's.⁷³ Some British liberals, like the journalist and later MP for Wolverhampton Henry Norman, went so far in their sinophobia as to argue that the Japanese army had been too soft with China. Japan's quest for civilized warfare had been misunderstood, he argued, instead Japan should have flouted international norms and would have thereby 'taught China more civilisation than she has learnt in the last 1000 years.'⁷⁴

Despite the enormous public support shown for Japan in Germany and other European countries, some had become sceptical of Japanese claims, and a certain fear of Japan had started to proliferate in the higher echelons of power. Even friends of Japan voiced their concern that 'the military spirit of the people has intensified rather than diminished by contact with the civilisation of the West'.⁷⁵ The argument against Japan came in various forms. There were more restrained East-Asia experts, like the long-term Prussian diplomat in China Max von Brandt, who argued that Japan's path to power was dubious and had nothing to do with Japanese claims to civilize:

Es gibt andere Mittel und Wege, Reiche der Civilisation zu erschliessen und zuzuführen, als gezogene Geschütze und Gewehre, und die Welt hat kein Interesse daran, in Ostasien einen Staat entstehen zu sehen, der, wie Frankreich in Europa, durch seine ungezähmte und lange ungestrafte Eitelkeit, Ruhm und,- Ländergier, seinen Nachbarn eine Geissel und allen Staaten ein Gegenstand fortwährender Besorgnis wird.⁷⁶

72 von Müller, *Der Krieg zwischen China und Japan, 1894/1895. Auf Grund authentischer Quellen*, 2nd ed., vol. 1. Das Jahr 1894 (Berlin: Verlag der Liebel'schen Buchhandlung, 1895), 30. 'The Japanese parliament stated that it wholeheartedly supported the desire and will of its ruler to break the barbarous obstinacy of China and his plan for Japan to gain the status of a great power. They therefore, like him, looked upon China as the enemy of civilization. None of this in China, where there was a hopeless state of affairs and endless confusion.'

73 Valentine Chirol, *The Far Eastern Question* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1896), 138.

74 Henry Norman, *The Peoples and Politics of the Far East: Travels and Studies in the British, French, Spanish and Portuguese Colonies, Siberia, China, Japan, Korea, Siam and Malaya* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), 379.

75 J. Morris, *Advance Japan: A Nation Thoroughly in Earnest*. (London: W.H. Allen and Co., 1895), 323.

76 Max von Brandt, "Der chinesisch-japanische Conflict," in *Ostasiatische Fragen. China. Japan. Corea. Altes und Neues*. (Berlin: Verlag von Gebrüder Paetel, 1897), 268. 'There are other ways to open countries to civilization than canons and rifles, and the world has no interest to see a state rise to prominence in East Asia, which, like France in Europe, with its untamed and long unpunished vanity, greed for glory and possessions, will be a scourge to its neighbours and an issue of continuous concern for all other states.'

It is safe to assume that Brandt was no friend of Japanese foreign policy. In other works, he uttered the suspicion that the Japanese had only superficially adopted western civilization, could not understand it, and probably even despised it.⁷⁷ Others had even more alarming visions. The historian Christian Spielmann saw the recent events in East Asia, as the title of his book helpfully explained, as *Der neue Mongolensturm*.⁷⁸ 'Das ganze Abendland ist in eine förmliche Japanschwärmerei hineingeraten', argued Spielmann, claiming he was a lone voice in the wilderness.⁷⁹ Unlike what the majority of his compatriots argued, Japan was not to be trusted, and its nationalism and militarism, that so many in Europe admired, were the beginning of a wave of Asian aggression against Europe. The only positive Spielmann could draw from his over-dramatized description of the Sino-Japanese war, was that it would bring Europe closer together. As he put it in the concluding paragraphs of his incendiary pamphlet: 'La France marche toujours à la tête de la civilisation – angesichts des drohenden asiatischen Sturms wird unser Nachbarvolk im Westen dessen eingedenk werden.' France, Spielmann argued, would have to put its anti-German resentments behind it, then both its peoples would, arm in arm, face the coming century together.⁸⁰ In a fight between Europe and Japan, Asian claims of civilization would evaporate and the legitimate ruling order of the globe would be re-instated.

Spielmann was admittedly a crackpot, yet similar ideas were held by people with real power in Germany, most importantly the Kaiser himself. In contrast to Spielmann, it was not France that the Kaiser sought to ally with in the name of civilization, but Russia. Since 1892, Russia had been in an alliance with France, a situation the always careful Bismarck had done his utmost to avoid.⁸¹ The Kaiser too was not enthused, and he saw the new situation that developed in the Far East as a possible pivot point to re-arrange the European balance of power. Many in Russia's military had long held designs to some of the territories that Japan had just conquered from China, and used their alliance with France to push for an international intervention against the undisputed victor of the Sino-Japanese War. Wilhelm II, who himself was eager to expand his influence in China, joined what would later become known as the Triple intervention against Japan, that had to relinquish control of the Liaodong Peninsula.

77 M. von Brandt, *Die Zukunft Ostasiens. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und zum Verständnis der ostasiatischen Frage* (Stuttgart: Verlag von Strecker und Moser, 1895), 16.

78 Christian Spielmann, *Der neue Mongolensturm. Caveant Europae populi. Stimme eines Predigers in der Wüste über die Vorgänge in Ostasien* (Braunschweig: C.A. Schwetschke und Sohn, 1895).

79 Ibid., 4.

80 Ibid., 79–80.

81 For the whole network of alliances see William Mulligan, *The Origins of the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 23–92.

While Russia's strategy was based on obvious interests and France's on an official alliance, Germany's part in the intervention has always been more mysterious and was specifically surprising to the Japanese public.⁸² Apart from the territorial gains that Germany was to have from such an intervention, the Kaiser's (English) correspondence with his cousin, Tsar Nicholas II, reveals a more civilizational motive. As he wrote to the Tsar not long after the successful intervention:

I thank you sincerely for the excellent way in which you initiated the combined action of Europe for the sake of its interests against Japan. [...] It shows to evidence how necessary it is that we hold together, and also that there is existant (sic), a base of common interests upon which *all* European nations may work in *joint action* for the welfare of all as is shown by the adherence of France to us two. [...] I shall certainly do all in my power to keep Europe quiet and also to guard the rear of Russia, so that nobody shall hamper your action towards the Far East! For that is clearly the great task in the future of Russia to cultivate the Asian continent and to defend Europe from the inroads of the Great Yellow Race.⁸³

While France's contribution was soon forgotten by the Kaiser – he even implored his cousin to terminate his alliance with France, because it would lead to a European war, instead (!) of a war against Asia – he certainly hoped for a continuing collaboration between Russia and Germany.⁸⁴ In a letter three years after the intervention, Wilhelm was still talking about Russia's mission to 'promote civilisation' in Asia, and added:

Will you kindly accept a drawing I have sketched for you, showing the Symbolising (sic) figures of Russia and Germany as sentinels at the Yellow Sea for the proclaiming of the gospel of Truth (sic) and Light (sic) in the East. I drew the sketch in the Xmas week under the blaze of the lights of the Xmas trees.⁸⁵

It was not the first symbolic sketch the Kaiser had drawn, and he was not very secretive about his feelings towards Asia and his enthusiasm for Russia either. Right after the Sino-Japanese War, in the summer of 1895, Wilhelm II had ordered his former drawing teacher Knackfuss to finish a sketch he himself designed, showing what he would refer to as the 'Gelbe Gefahr' or as it would become

82 Akira, "The Yellow-Peril and Its Influence on Japanese-German Relations," 81.

83 Walter Goetz, ed., *Briefe Wilhelms II. an den Zaren, 1894-1914* (Berlin: Verlag Ullstein & Co., 1920), 290–291. emphasis in the original.

84 Goetz, *Briefe Wilhelms II*, 296.

85 Ibid., 306.

known in English as 'the yellow peril'.⁸⁶ It showed the archangel Michael and, as the historian Gollwitzer later sarcastically put it, a group of 'im Walkürenstil kostümierter Frauengestalten' in front of a distant thunderstorm in which the silhouette of a menacing Buddha had started to appear.⁸⁷ The angel called on Europe, allegorically represented in this group, 'wahrt eure heiligsten Güter'.⁸⁸ Wilhelm had the sketch sent to be distributed on all German ships going to Asia, as well as to several heads of state, and even to former politicians like Bismarck who admitted that he did not quite see the point.⁸⁹ The Kaiser reserved the biggest propaganda effort for the country he perceived to be his greatest ally: Russia. He told the members of the foreign office that it was essential to protect Russia as 'Hort the Zivilisation' against Asian advances.⁹⁰ In his letters, he continued to egg his cousin on to further intervention, arguing that combined German-Russian efforts would be respected by the 'yellow ones', and referring to the Tsar as 'morally speaking the master of Peking'.⁹¹

In the late 1890s, two arguments from civilization could be seen as applying to Japan and Asia more broadly. The Japanese elites themselves were trying to show that Japan was now a member of a civilized international community and a benefactor to civilization. This perspective was supported by British and French international lawyers, and can be seen as an important factor in the international rapprochement between Britain and Japan. On the other hand, Wilhelm II and others were arguing against all support for Asian countries on the basis that they were a danger to what the adherents of this argument called European civilization. Notions of civilization were key in both arguments, although the debates on warfare and civilization clearly referred to different concepts. Whereas Wilhelm argued for the importance and uniqueness of European civilization, the proponents of Japan's politics were arguing that it was civilization itself that could, and had been, adopted by other countries; and that to support Japan meant to support civilization.

The Hague Conference of 1899

The Tsar had different civilizational ideas altogether and following decades of Russian rhetoric he

86 Richard Austen Thompson, *The Yellow Peril, 1890-1924* (New York: Arno Press, 1978); Gregory Blue, "Gobineau on China: Race Theory, the 'Yellow Peril,' and the Critique of Modernity," *Journal of World History* 10, no. 1 (1999): 93–139; Stanford M. Lyman, "The 'Yellow Peril' Mystique: Origins and Vicissitudes of a Racist Discourse," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 13, no. 4 (2000): 683–747; Wolfgang Schwendtker, "The 'Yellow Peril' Reconsidered: Western Perceptions of Asia in the Age of Imperialism," in *Cultural Negotiations - Sichtweise Des Anderen*, ed. Cedric Brown and Therese Fischer-Seidl (Tübingen: A. Francke, 1998), 35–49.

87 Heinz Gollwitzer, *Die gelbe Gefahr: Geschichte eines Schlagworts. Studien zum imperialistischen Denken* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), 206. 'a group of women dressed up as Valkyries'.

88 Ibid. 'protect your most holy possessions'.

89 Ibid., 207.

90 Ibid., 211. 'bastion of civilization'.

91 Goetz, *Briefe Wilhelms II*, 207.

announced his plans of a large conference to solve the problems of war and civilization, once and for all. On 24 August 1898, Count Mouravieff, the Russian foreign minister handed a note to all international deputies at St. Petersburg:

The maintenance of general peace, and a possible reduction of the excessive armaments which weigh upon all nations, present themselves in the existing condition of the whole world, as the ideal towards which the endeavors of all Governments should be directed. The humanitarian and magnanimous ideas of His Majesty the Emperor, my August Master, have been won over to this view. [...] In the course of the last twenty years the longings for a general appeasement have become especially pronounced in the consciences of civilized nations. [...] Filled with this idea, His Majesty has been pleased to order me to propose to all the Governments whose representatives are accredited to the Imperial Court, the meeting of a conference which would have to occupy itself with this grave problem.⁹²

Two explanations were immediately offered for the Tsar's behaviour in calling what would later become known as the First Hague Conference.⁹³ The more cynical one suggested that the Emperor had run out of money to support his army and thereby hid behind the explanations of the peace movement. The more idealist hypothesis held that Nicholas II had truly been converted by reading Jan Bloch's book.⁹⁴ Evidence exists for both, and they do not seem to be mutually exclusive either. It is nonetheless certain that the support of the Tsar for the civilizational language of the peace movement and the opponents of militarism was a major boost for their message.

The German public at large, however, and specifically the left questioned the intentions of the Tsar. Social democratic opinion was divided, but the most important German socialists remained violently opposed to any Russian idea of peace. All socialists agreed on the general opposition to

92 "Peace Conference at the Hague 1899: Rescript of the Russian Emperor, August 24 (12, Old Style), 1898," http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/hag99-01.asp, *The Avalon Project*, (n.d.), accessed January 20, 2015.

93 Best, "Peace Conferences and the Century Of Total War," 621–622; Arthur Eyffinger, "Caught Between Tradition and Modernity: East Asia at the Hague Peace Conferences," *Journal of East Asia and International Law* 1 (2008): 10; Dan L. Morrill, "Nicholas II and the Call for the First Hague Conference," *The Journal of Modern History* 46, no. 2 (1974): 296–313; David Alvarez, "The Holy See and the First Hague Peace Conference (1899)," *Archivum Historiae Pontificiae* 26 (1988): 431–38; W. Evans Darby, *The Peace Conference at the Hague: Its History, Work, and Results* (London: Peace Society, 1899); Thomas K. Ford, "The Genesis of the First Hague Peace Conference," *Political Science Quarterly* 51, no. 3 (September 1936): 354; G. H. Perris, ed., *A History of the Peace Conference at the Hague* (London: International Arbitration Association, 1899); A. Pearce Higgins, *The Hague Peace Conferences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909); Klaus Schlichtmann, "Japan, Germany and the Idea of the Hague Peace Conferences," *Journal of Peace Research* 40, no. 4 (2003): 377–94.

94 See Best, "Peace Conferences and the Century Of Total War"; Ford, "The Genesis of the First Hague Peace Conference."

war and militarism and the threat that both of them posed to civilization. As Liebknecht had explained in the early 1890s, the next potential war would be a horrific spectacle, a conflict 'wie ihn die Weltgeschichte niemals gesehen, im Vergleich zu welchem der letzte deutsch=französische Krieg ein Kinderspiel war und der unsere Zivilisation um ein Jahrhundert zurückwerfen muss.'⁹⁵ With an actual proposal for a peace conference on the table, however, major disagreements between socialist opinion leaders started to show. Moritz Adler, the editor of the *Volkswille*, showed himself impressed and merely amused about this surprising turn of events:

die Ehre die Rita des Märchens zu sein, gegenüber der schändlichen Blöße einer entarteten Civilisation – die Ehre überliessen neidlos Monarchien, Republiken, sich “radikal” nennende Parteien voranschreitende Rassen und Nationen einem klar und gross denkenden Jünglinge “der Autokratie und dem inferioren Slawenthum”!⁹⁶

The russophobic leader of the SDP, Bebel, on the other hand, felt nothing but contempt for Russian plans. The social democrats were sceptical about the new peace ideas of the emperor, he told the Reichstag: 'wir haben uns gesagt, wenn der russische Kaiser ein so grossen Bedürfniss nach Humanität besitzt, wie sie seine Friedenskundgebung enthält, dann hat er reichlich Gelegenheit, sie im eigenen Lande, nach verschiedenen Richtungen zu betätigen.'⁹⁷

In non-socialist German newspapers and journals, it was less personal hostility towards the Russian Tsar, that dominated the thinking of old left-wing politicians like Bebel, but concerns about the feasibility of his plans. Even the more balanced *Deutsche Rundschau*, despite arguing that the idea of the conference was an indubitable 'Culturfortschritt', told its readers: 'Wer könnte sich [...] die Schwierigkeiten verhehlen, die der Verwirklichung eines so verlockenden Ideals entgegenstehen.'⁹⁸

95 *Verhandlungen und Beschlüsse des Internationalen Arbeiter-Kongresses zu Brüssel (16.-22. August 1891)* (Berlin: Verlag der Expedition des “Vorwärts” Berliner Volksblatt, 1893), 25. 'as the world's history has never seen, compared to which the last Franco-German war was a breeze, and which must throw our civilization at least a century back.'

96 Moritz Adler, “Nicolaitische Friedensperspektiven,” *Die Waffen nieder! Monatsschrift der Förderung der Friedensbewegung* 8 (1899): 169; Max Kolben, *Wahrheit und Klarheit über die Haager Friedenskonferenz* (Berlin: Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, 1900), 6. 'the honor of being the Rita of the tale, opposing a disgraceful and degenerate civilization - this honor, monarchies, republics, and parties which call themselves radical, progressive races and nations, have left to a young and clear-minded man, to autocracy and the inferior Slavs.'

97 *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstags. X.Legislaturperiode I.Session 1898/1899. Von der Eroöffnungssitzung am 6., December 1898 bis zur 35. Sitzung am 17. Februar 1899* (Berlin: Druck und Verlag der Norddeutschen Buchdruckerei und Verlagsanstalt, 1899), 210. 'We think if the Russian Emperor has such great need for humanity, as his appeal to peace contains, he has plenty of opportunity to apply it in his country.'

98 Julius Rodenberg, ed., “Politische Rundschau,” *Deutsche Rundschau* LXXXXVII (1898): 146–147. 'Who could ignore the difficulties, which stand in the way of such an enticing goal.'

Russia itself was in a constant expectation of war with England, China's role in the future was uncertain, the US would not agree; in other words: the project was almost certainly doomed to fail. For the readers still convinced that the Tsar's plans could be realized, the *Deutsche Rundschau* added a hatchet job by the General-lieutenant, and war-party supporter Albert von Boguslawski.⁹⁹ All in all, as the later German delegate to the Hague Conference Philipp Zorn remembered: 'Kein einziges der grösseren deutschen Pressorgane, auch nicht "Frankfurter Zeitung" oder "Berliner Tageblatt", trat mit Entschiedenheit für die russischen Vorschläge ein.'¹⁰⁰ Nonetheless, German officials immediately accepted the invitation and there were, at least, no officially hostile tones towards it.

In Britain, the Tsar's proposals found slightly more widespread acceptance, even though many were equally sceptical. Again, much of the rhetoric was formulated with recourse to civilization. At the first meeting of Parliament after the Russian proposal, the liberal politician and future Prime Minister Campbell-Bannerman told the house:

there is one event, it seems to me, which stands out from among all the incidents of the past year, [...] and which I am glad to speak of in the first instance because it represents an influence happily brought to bear in favour of goodwill and civilisation throughout the world. I allude, of course, to the Rescript which was issued by the Emperor of Russia.¹⁰¹

The Prime Minister, although very polite about the Russian proposals, shared the doubts of many in Germany:

No one can doubt the purity and grandeur of the motives which have animated the Emperor in making this invitation, and everyone must heartily wish that his anticipations will be realised; but further than that I do not think it is safe to go. The constant increase in armaments which is taking place on all sides at the very time when we are speaking of and prophesying peace is not encouraging to the ideal dreams in which perhaps the Tsar has indulged, and they warn us to prepare for a possible issue less gratifying than that on which he has most naturally and most laudably allowed his mind to dwell.¹⁰²

99 A. von Boguslawski, "Der Abrüstungsvorschlag des Zaren," *Deutsche Rundschau* LXXXXVII (1898): 261–69; Boguslawski, *Der Krieg in seiner wahren Bedeutung für Staat und Volk*.

100 Philipp Karl Ludwig Zorn, *Deutschland Und Die Beiden Haager Friedenskonferenzen*, 1920, 15.

101 HL Deb 07 February 1899 vol.66 cols.89-90.

102 HL Deb 07 February 1899 vol.66 col.33.

As the first meeting of the conference drew closer, more and more problems and concerns started to appear on the horizon, most of them incidentally related to previous political conflicts that had been justified in the name of civilization. There was the old issue of Poland for whose independence in the name of civilization European liberals had been arguing for decades, and that now were adduced as further reason to distrust the Tsar.¹⁰³ A parallel debate had developed concerning the Russian treatment of Finland. Whereas Russian politicians, like the governor of the province of Archangel Engelhardt, explained to the English public that the population of Finland were happily 'assuming the customs and civilisation of Russia', western European writers saw the same events as attempts of forced russification.¹⁰⁴ It was clear, the supporters of Finland argued in international publications, that 'the general interest of civilisation which is to be invested with new forms of public right at the Hague' would be a new settlement of the Finnish question.¹⁰⁵ The problems of civilization were by no means restricted to Russia. For obvious reasons, the Ottoman Empire could not accept Bulgarian participation in the conference, control over which it had lost in after a large campaign by European leaders arguing that the Porte was not civilized enough to control Christian areas. Yet, the largest dispute developed between Germany and Italy on one side, and Russia and the Netherlands on the other and concerned the invitation of the Vatican to the Conference.¹⁰⁶ While Russian and Dutch officials wanted the Vatican to participate in what was after all a peace conference, the post-*Kulturkampf* German foreign office and its Italian pendant, still not reconciled with the Vatican over issues that involved the questions of modern civilization (see chapter 4), refused. After much haggling, the Vatican remained uninvited and the conference went ahead. These open questions, all of which were in some way related to European debates about civilization, clearly showed that the European public sphere was far from any unanimity on the issue.

Germany would soon be in the news about the rapidly approaching actual conference and again, it was an issue that had previously been discussed in civilizational terms: the anthropological questions of war. On the eve of the conference, the German foreign ministry had not only decided not to prepare their delegates for the conference, but to make Professor Stengel from the University

103 *The Cause of Poland in Reference to the International Peace Conference to Be Held at the Hague* (Chicago: Igoda, 1899).

104 Alexander Platonovich Engelhardt, *A Russian Province of the North* (London: Archibald Constable and Company, 1899), 84; Boris Minzes, *Staatsstreich in Finnland und national-russische Eroberungspolitik; Ergebnisse einer Studienreise in Finnland; auch ein Beitrag zur Friedenskonferenz* (Berlin: Verlag von Emil Felber, 1899); L. von Bar, *Der Burenkrieg, die Russifizierung Finnlands, die Haager Friedenskonferenz* (Hannover: Helwing'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1900).

105 *Pro Finlandia, 1899. Les Adresses Internationales a S.M. L'empereur-Grand-Duc Nicholas II* (Berlin: Otto Mertz, 1899), 119.

106 Alvarez, "The Holy See and the Hague."

of Munich the head of their delegation to the Hague.¹⁰⁷ Stengel was a controversial candidate, mainly because he had just published a pro-war pamphlet, in which he had argued that war was for 'Kulturentwicklung' and 'Verbreitung der Civilisation' 'geradezu unentbehrlich'.¹⁰⁸ As he explained:

Für die Poesie, Malerei, die Bildhauer,- und Baukunst wären manche ihrer schönsten Leistungen gar nicht möglich gewesen, sie alle würden vielmehr auf einen engeren Kreis beschränkt, einseitig geworden und ohne Krieg in ihrer vollen Entwicklung zurückgeblieben sein.¹⁰⁹

In the end, Stengel, the first German delegate at the Peace Conference, declared: 'sind doch alle Friedensbestrebungen zwecklos, um nicht zu sagen kindisch'.¹¹⁰ The supporters of the peace movement naturally protested against Stengel's commission and the *Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft* announced 'sein Befremden und tiefes Bedauern' at the decision to send someone who was clearly persuaded of the positive influence of war.¹¹¹ Even amongst Stengel's new colleagues, support was limited. As Zorn, the other legal expert of the German delegation put it: 'Ob es zweckmässig war, den Vertreter dieser Gedanken als deutschen Delegierten nach dem Haag zu senden, kann dahingestellt bleiben'.¹¹² The scandal surrounding Stengel only confirmed the opinions of those who firmly believed the foreign office to be persuaded by Moltkean ideas of war and of not being interested in the ideas of civilization the Tsar had recently started to subscribe to, and Germany quickly became seen as the main obstacle of peace and civilization in Europe.¹¹³

At the conference, the question of international arbitration caused the greatest problems. The duty to resort to a court of international arbitration before the commencement of hostilities would, as its proponents put it: 'produce fruits in the stability of peace and the honour and development of modern civilisation'.¹¹⁴ The German foreign office violently opposed any sort of international obligation. The Kaiser himself finally budged and agreed to the new principles negotiated, as Zorn remembered nearly twenty years later: 'Es ist heute von der grössten Wichtigkeit, festzustellen, dass

107 Zorn, *Deutschland Und Die Beiden Haager Friedenskonferenzen*, 16.

108 Karl Michael Joseph Leopold von Stengel, *Der ewige Friede*, 2nd ed. (Munich: C. Haushalter, 1899), 12. 'development of culture', 'spreading of civilization', 'indispensible'.

109 Ibid. 'For poetry, painting, sculpture and architecture some of their most beautiful achievements would not have been possible. In fact, they would all have been limited, would have become one-sided and would not have developed fully, without the influence of war.'

110 Ibid., 17.

111 N. N., *Herrn Dr. Carl Freiherrn von Stengels Und Anderer Argumente Für Und Wider Den Krieg*, ed. Bertha v. Suttner (Wien: Verlag der oesterreichischen Gesellschaft der Friedensfreunde, 1899), II.

112 Zorn, *Deutschland Und Die Beiden Haager Friedenskonferenzen*, 18.

113 Best, "Peace Conferences and the Century Of Total War," 622.

114 Perris, *A History of the Peace Conference at the Hague*, 86.

dies grosse Friedenswerk aus der höchstpersönlichen Entscheidung des Kaisers hervorging, im Gegensatz zu der Haltung, die das auswärtige Amt in schroffster Weise zu der Sache eingenommen hatte.¹¹⁵ The Kaiser did agree to the final version, but made his real opinion abundantly clear in the marginalia of a letter by Bülow reminding him of his obligation to his cousin the Tsar. Nicholas II, was, as he noted, a 'knabenhafter Träumer' and although he had supported his ideas at the beginning, the results of the Conference could not be trusted:

Ich habe in Wiesbaden versprochen, dem Zaren zu einer befriedigenden Lösung mein Hülfe (sic) angedeihen zu lassen! Damit er sich nicht vor Europa blamire (sic), stimme im dem Unsinn zu. Aber ich werde in meiner Praxis auch fuer später mich nur auf Gott und mein scharfes Schwert verlassen und berufen! Und sch...auf die ganzen Beschlüsse!¹¹⁶

The Kaiser's personal opinion was unknown to most who could only see a relatively successful end to a conference, and a positive influence on civilization. The result was all the more surprising as the conference had accumulated, as the president of Columbia University and himself an attendant at the Hague put it: 'Powers content to preserve and guard their own individuality in the small domains that are theirs; Powers also that are aggressive factors in the world's life and powers that find the forces of modern civilization in conflict with all that has been characteristic of their national history.'¹¹⁷ Nonetheless, they had reached an agreement that even Germany had consented to. 'The principal outcomes of the Conference', W. Evans Darby, the undoubtedly hopeful secretary of the London Peace Society, explained: 'make it possibly one of the greatest of human agents that have ever existed for the advancement of civilisation.'¹¹⁸ 'The value of the Conference', he added, 'is not confined to its splendid achievements. It will exercise a great moral influence as a witness to the solidarity of civilisation.'¹¹⁹

The solidarity of civilization, however, was, as I have argued, not as clear a concept as Darby would

115 Zorn, *Deutschland Und Die Beiden Haager Friedenskonferenzen*, 38. 'It is today of the utmost importance to note that the great work of peace came about through a personal decision of the emperor, and stood in stark contrast to the stance taken by the foreign office concerning this issue.'

116 Johannes Lepsius, Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and Friedrich Thimme, eds., "Nr. 4320. Der Staatssekretär des auswärtigen Amtes Bernhard v. Bülow an Kaiser Wilhelm II., z.Z. in Kiel," in *Die grosse Politik der europäischen Kabinette, 1871-1914. Sammlung der diplomatischen Akten des auswärtigen Amtes*, vol. 15 (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1924), 305–306. 'I have promised to the tsar to lend my support to a positive solution to this issue. I agree to it, so that he does not embarrass himself in front of all of Europe. But in practice I will continue to trust in god and my strong sword, and s... on all of these agreements.'

117 Seth Low, "The International Conference of Peace. Reprinted from the North American Review" (New York: The North American Review Publishing, 1899).

118 Darby, *The Peace Conference at the Hague*, 54.

119 Ibid., 53.

have hoped. Indeed, as the century drew to a close, very different political ideas could all be associated with civilization. There were those who argued that war was the main protector of civilization, who were in their turn opposed by intellectuals and politicians who emphatically argued for the reduction of war through a rise of civilization. At the same time as these debates were going on, the rhetoric of civilization continued as a means of justification in the international sphere, as Japan went to war against China, in the name of civilization. Japan's association with civilization was opposed in Europe by those who associated the concept purely with the old continent, like the Kaiser, who appealed to the solidarity of civilization against Japan. By the end of the nineteenth century, a confusing, complex, and often incoherent debate on civilization dominated the international sphere, but it is important to stress that it was not a debate that separated Germany from the rest of Europe, but merely different ideas of civilization from each other. As I will argue in the next chapter, this alienation of different ideas of civilization would continue through the turn of the twentieth century, when more and more people started to question not the various definition of civilization, but civilization itself.

Chapter 7. Undermining Civilization at the Turn of the Century

Introduction

The hopes of those who had seen the Hague Conference as a triumph of civilization over war were soon dashed. The year 1899 saw two major international conflicts justified in the name of civilization: the international expedition to suppress the Boxer rebellion in China, and the British war against the Boers in South Africa. The use of civilizational vocabulary to justify a war was certainly nothing new. Previously, however, such rhetoric had only been criticized by clearly defined sections of the European public, like the Catholic Church or socialist parties. This time, and in both cases, civilizational propaganda was greeted with a chorus of disapproval. In Germany, British justifications for the war against the Boers were described as treacherous lies, and the concept of civilization as a mere cover-up for imperialism. Similar voices could be heard in Britain where many, inside and outside of Parliament, found harsh words for the government's actions which they chastised as a colonial and capitalist war against Whites, and which, as the leader of the opposition put it, had 'greatly the character of a civil war'.¹ While civilizational propaganda against the Boers was criticized for racial reasons, the brutal suppression of the Boxer rebellion was seen by many as a crime against a civilization much older than their own. Although China had not enjoyed the best of reputations throughout the nineteenth century, the atrocities that were committed in the name of civilization proved too much for many western commentators, and a coalition of missionaries, socialists, and conservatives protested against the treatment of the Chinese. Remarkably, and much earlier than most have previously suggested, some of them ventured to describe this conflict not as a war for civilization, but as a war between civilizations; the root of which, they suggested, lay in a misunderstanding of Chinese culture.

Throughout both conflicts, I argue, the classic civilizational rhetoric that had dominated the second half of the nineteenth century was severely damaged. The insistence of many on the left that the long history of China showed that there existed not one but several civilizations, weakened potential claims about the singular, as it became impossible to insist on just one type of civilizational progress. As I will show, those who nonetheless claimed the singularity of civilization as a reason for war were quickly criticized as using the word insincerely as a 'masked word' for an imperial and capitalist war. While this anti-imperial criticism had its roots in increasing cultural relativism, the English use of civilization in the Boer war was similarly criticized as imperial in German circles, but for entirely different reasons. There, conservatives and liberals alike alleged that the war against

1 HC Deb 17 October 1899 vol. 77 col. 74.

the Boers and its civilizational rhetoric betrayed England's changed character as a capitalist power willing to trample over small and independent communities. The Boers became an early example of the slowly growing distinction between *Kultur/Zivilisation*, as they defended their land and property against the evil influences of international capitalism and British imperialism; tropes that would later reappear in Germany's First World War propaganda. Germany itself equally became the target of civilizational attacks, as the Kaiser, amongst pronouncements that Germans were protecting civilization in China, called on his troops to ignore the rules of war when facing the Chinese. This speech, the famous *Hunnenrede*, would later serve as the basis of anti-German propaganda, to denounce the empire's anti-civilizational tendencies.

New Wars for Civilization

Late-nineteenth century British imperial politics in South Africa were dominated by a conflict with two small republics of Dutch settlers. The Boers, whose name adequately described their profession, were predominantly farmers, who had been driven north by the expansion of British colonialism on the Cape and had founded two states in a what was to European standards rather uninhabitable terrain. They had always had a difficult relationship with British influence in South Africa, and had previously clashed in what would later become called the First Boer War.² In the 1880s, the rough terrain the Boers inhabited became known for its richness in diamonds and gold, sparking a rush for both materials in larger companies as well as individuals who descended upon the two Boer states, and were known to them as *uitlanders*. Throughout the 1890s, Britain, as well as other states, sought to extend their influence in the Boer areas, with governments arguing that the *uitlanders* from their state should receive rights akin to citizenship, and private individuals trying to topple the Boer government with military means. Most of these interventions proved disastrous failures. The Boer republics managed to protect their independence and to resist the ever increasing wave of imperial pressure. In the process, they developed a reputation of being enemies of progress and civilization.

Throughout the late nineteenth century, as many have previously argued, the Boers became increasingly associated with civilizational backwardness, amongst the British establishment and in Europe more broadly.³ In 1891, Randolph Churchill, father of the more famous Winston, and

2 John Laband, *The Transvaal Rebellion: The First Boer War, 1880-1881* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014).

3 Richard Price, *An Imperial War and the British Working Class: Working-Class Attitudes and Reactions to the Boer War, 1899-1902* (London: Routledge, 2013), 12; Paula M. Krebs, *Gender, Race, and the Writing of Empire: Public Discourse and the Boer War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 75–76; Vincent Kuitenbrouwer, *War of Words: Dutch Pro-Boer Propaganda and the South African War (1899-1902)* (Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 38.

himself at one point chancellor of the exchequer, described the Boer's life in a series of letters to the *Daily Graphic* as 'the most ignoble existence ever experienced by a race with any pretensions to civilization'; a sentiment many in Britain undoubtedly shared.⁴ This style of rhetoric was not unknown to the Boers: their leadership had in previous conflicts with the British insisted on setting the record straight. As a petition to Her Majesty's government in 1881 explained:

The distance at which we live from the centre of political civilisation, and the little knowledge people have of our history, make it very easy to represent our almost hopeless struggle for liberty and independence as an insignificant affair, or even worse, as an inexcusable rebellion of discontented and stupid Boers against an enlightened and humane government.⁵

As war between Britain and the Boer republics became more likely, British utterances about the uncivilized nature of the Boers increased.⁶ In 1899, shortly before the outbreak of hostilities, the adventure writer Rider Haggard introduced the Boers in his best-selling book *The Last Boer War* with expressions previously associated with a more colonial context: 'None of the refinements of civilisation enter into the life of an ordinary Transvaal Boer. [...] His home is but too frequently squalid and filthy to an extraordinary degree. [...] He himself has no education, and does not care that his children should receive any.'⁷ Arthur Conan Doyle, who later travelled to South Africa during the war, expressed similar thoughts, suggesting that even the most sophisticated Boers were 'enervated by prosperity and civilisation'.⁸ Knox-Little, a clergy-man attached to British regiments in South Africa and whose books went through several editions, criticized the Boers in similar language: 'Viewed from the standpoint of civilisation and progress', he argued, the Boer regime was 'one of the most corrupt and injurious of all earthly governments.'⁹ Even amongst those who theoretically supported the Boer cause, questions about the level of civilization in South Africa were raised. W. T. Stead, who would later call the war against the Boers a 'crime against civilisation', and whose pre-war pamphlet *Shall I slay my Brother Boer?* quite clearly put him on one end of the political spectrum, nonetheless noted: 'The residents in West Ham outnumber the white residents in

4 M. van Wyk Smith, "The Boers and the Anglo-Boer War (1899 -1902) in the Twentieth-Century Moral Imaginary," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 31, no. 02 (2003): 429.

5 Thomas Fortescue Carter, *A Narrative of the Boer War: Its Causes and Results* (London: J. Macqueen, 1896), 181.

6 Price, *An Imperial War and the British Working Class*, 12; Krebs, *Gender, Race, and the Writing of Empire*, 75–76; Kuitenbrouwer, *War of Words*, 38.

7 H. Rider Haggard, *The Last Boer War* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1899), 12.

8 Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Great Boer War* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1900), 82.

9 W. J. Knox-Little, *Sketches and Studies in South Africa*, 2nd ed. (London: Isbister and Company, 1899), 197.

the Transvaal, and probably in civilisation, in homogeneity, and in many of the best qualities of citizenship deserve to rank higher than either Boers or Uitlanders in the scale of humanity.¹⁰

The Boers had chosen to live a life far from civilization and modernity, most claimed, actively turning away from the fate of other western nations. They were not backward by accident, but by choice. As Mr. Newdigate, MP for Nuneaton, explained to Parliament on the eve of the war: 'It has been said that it is very hard to interfere with the Transvaal Boers, who went into the wilderness to escape from civilisation and lead a pastoral life.'¹¹ While those who opposed the Boer cause used this as an implicit argument against their potential opponents, Boer supporters regarded their situation as similarly, if not equally, bleak. The jurist and historian Frederic Harrison, himself a vocal opponent of a potential war in South Africa, argued that the Boers were 'a curious archaic survival' and that it could not be supposed that their society could continue to exist 'in permanent isolation of European civilisation'.¹² Where Harrison and the pro-war supporters parted ways, was the question of whether the British Empire should intervene in this pre-modern drama on behalf of civilization; yet that there was a distinction in civilization few denied. The reason why 'the cause of the uitlanders is the cause of civilisation', as the writer Appleton Lewis explained to his readers, was that the opposition between the British and the Boers represented a clash between two different levels of civilization and time.¹³ The rabidly pro-war writer and journalist Sydney Brooks similarly alleged that the only progress in civilization the Boers had made was to add 'the vices of the nineteenth century to the ignorance of the seventeenth'.¹⁴ This rhetoric of a clash between the seventeenth and the nineteenth century continued throughout the next year, as in the case of the international lawyer Hugh H. Bellot, who similarly dissected the issue in an article in the *Westminster Review* entitled: 'The Problem of South Africa'. The real trouble, Bellot argued, was that in the Boer case 'the industrial civilisation of the nineteenth century came into collision with the agricultural civilisation of the seventeenth century'.¹⁵

The portrayal of China in European sources around the same time shared many of the basic assumptions associated with the Boers. Since the early nineteenth century, China had become used

10 William T. Stead, *The Candidates of Cain. A Catechism for the Constituencies* (London: Stop-the-war Committee, 1900); W. T. Stead, *Shall I Slay My Brother Boer?: An Appeal to the Conscience of Britain* (London: "Review of reviews" Office, 1899), 8.

11 HC Deb 28 July 1899 vol.75 col. 757

12 Frederic Harrison, *The Transvaal Crisis* (London: Reform Press, 1899), 1, 4.

13 Lewis. Appleton, *Britain and the Boers. Who Is Responsible for the War in South Africa* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent and co., 1899), 47.

14 Sydney Brooks, "England and the Transvaal," *The North American Review* 169, no. 512 (1899): 70.

15 Hugh H. Bellot, "The Problem of South Africa," *The Westminster Review* 154, no. 1 (1900): 4.

as a shorthand for backwardness and despotism, with European liberals warning against states that they perceived to be the 'China of Europe.'¹⁶ Liberal economists and thinkers like John Stuart Mill assumed that the Chinese economy, although previously strong, had stagnated and that China seemingly could not progress beyond a certain point.¹⁷ If the case of the Boers was presented as a clash between the seventeenth and the nineteenth century, the situation in China was even bleaker. As W. T. Stead's son, Alfred, explained in his *China and Her Mysteries*, in the Middle Kingdom 'advancement ceased, and civilisation remains to-day where it was two-thousand years ago, absolutely uninfluenced by the discoveries and changes of the outer world.'¹⁸ Although China was not directly comparable to the Boer republics, the perceived insistence on tradition and the superiority of Chinese ways, many Europeans argued, showed a similar disregard for modern civilization. 'The only civilisation the Chinese appreciate', the British inspector general in China, Hart, argued, 'is their own: what we call progress, the majority know little about and care less for'.¹⁹

Where the Boers were hopeless in general, the Chinese elite was arguably split into two groups. Some favoured western ideas of progress, Japan-style reforms of state and economy. Others, not unlike the Boers, wanted to protect tradition, and most important amongst them was the empress Dowager Cixi. In Germany, the evangelical missionary Voskamp spoke of a fight between 'zerstörender' and 'aufbauender Mächte', and in the *North American Review*, the Irish journalist and Sanskrit scholar Charles Johnston later espoused a similar interpretation:

The conservatives, under the lead of this remarkable woman, aspire to keep China as far as possible a forbidden land, a second Tibet, governed on traditional and theocratic lines. The radicals, on the other hand, desire to see China follow the lead of Japan, and put on the whole armor of civilization, as we understand it in Europe and America.²⁰

While such discussions had dominated essays and books about China for at least a decade, an uprising against the western powers in the summer of 1899 turned these theoretical considerations into real political concerns. Following a drought in Shandong province and attempts by the

16 Ernst Rose, "China as a Symbol of Reaction in Germany, 1830-1880," *Comparative Literature* 3, no. 1 (1951): 57-76.

17 Michael Levin, *Mill on Civilization and Barbarism* (London: Routledge, 2004).

18 Alfred Stead, *China and Her Mysteries* (London: Hood, Douglas, & Howard, 1901), 18.

19 Robert Hart, "These from the Land of Sinim." *Essays on the Chinese Question* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1901), 97.

20 C. J. Voskamp, *Zerstörende und aufbauende Mächte in China*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Buchhandlung der Berliner evangelischen Missionsgesellschaft., 1898); Charles Johnston, "The Struggle for Reform in China," *The North American Review* 171, no. 524 (1900): 13-14.

government to reform the Chinese administration along western lines, a revolutionary movement developed that sought to rid China of western influence.²¹ At first the Qing officials were hesitant to show their support for the young men westerners would soon refer to as Boxers. As the force of the movement and tensions between the Western powers and China grew, the courtly elites sympathising with the anti-imperialists prevailed and Empress Dowager Cixi declared war on the western powers. Official Chinese troops laid siege to the legations quarters in Beijing, but failed to capture them over several weeks. Meanwhile an eight-power alliance organized partly at the behest of the Kaiser, whose envoy to China, von Ketteler, had been killed by the Boxers, attacked China. It relieved the legations quarters and suppressed the rebellion in a campaign that was later notoriously known for its mass-executions, atrocities against civilians, and almost systematic breaking of the rules of war, and which was nonetheless described as a 'war for civilization'.²²

While most interpreted the hostilities as a clash between rebels and the conservative elite of China on one side, and reformers and the western powers on the other, some ventured to suggest that this was not merely a fight between old and new, but also between the east and the west. Keeping with old rhetoric, the Prussian military strategist Scheibert would later write about the war as a struggle between 'alter und neuer Kultur'.²³ As the Boxers, like the Boers, represented backwardness and opposition to progress and civilization, such a fight could only have one outcome, as the writer Alexis Sidney Krausse explained to his readers: 'Civilisation, by dint of its superior force and resources, must triumph, and revolting barbarism is destined to lie at the mercy of the nations it has flouted.'²⁴ This was undoubtedly the most popular interpretation, as the Russian East-Asia expert Markoff, explained to the audience of the *Daily News*:

There is commencing a life-and-death struggle between Chinese and Western civilisation. We are very doubtful as to which will eventually prove victorious. [...] In the solution of the Chinese problem, Japan cannot play an important part. One yellow race by itself is

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- 21 Ariane Knüsel, "'Western Civilization' against 'Hordes of Yellow Savages': British Perceptions of the Boxer Rebellion," *Asiatische Studien : Zeitschrift Der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft* 62 (2008): 43–83; Lanxin Xiang, *The Origins of the Boxer War: A Multinational Study* (Oxford: Routledge, 2014); Thoralf Klein, "Propaganda und Kritik," in *Kolonialkrieg in China: die Niederschlagung der Boxerbewegung 1900-1901*, ed. Mechthild Leutner and Klaus Mühlhahn (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2007), 173–80; Mechthild Leutner and Klaus Mühlhahn, eds., *Kolonialkrieg in China: die Niederschlagung der Boxerbewegung 1900-1901* (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2007); Gerd Kaminski, *Der Boxeraufstand - Entlarvter Mythos* (Vienna: Loecker, 2000); Susanne Kuß and Bernd Martin, eds., *Das Deutsche Reich und der Boxeraufstand* (Munich: Iudicium, 2002).
- 22 Thoralf Klein, "Straffeldzug im Namen der Zivilisation. Der 'Boxerkrieg' in China (1900-1901)," in *Kolonialkriege: militärische Gewalt im Zeichen des Imperialismus*, ed. Thoralf Klein and Frank Schumacher (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2006), 145–82.
- 23 Justus Scheibert, *Der Krieg in China 1900-1901 nebst einer Beschreibung der Sitten, Gebräuche und Geschichte des Landes* (Berlin: Verlag von A. Schroeder, 1903), 1–7.
- 24 Alexis Sidney Krausse, *The Far East. Its History and Its Questions* (London: Grant Richards, 1900), 237–238.

formidable enough; two in conjunction would be fatal to European civilisation.²⁵

Three months into the Boxer rebellion and with civilizational debates about it raging in Europe, the Boers attacked the British Empire on 11 October 1899. Although provocations and posturing stemmed from both sides, in the British parliament, most were sure about where to place the blame. The attack of the Boers was, as a conservative member in Parliament put it, an 'uncivilised and barbarous act, such as is scarcely known in the history of civilised nations.'²⁶ Britain had done nothing wrong, as the Irish Unionist MP Colonel Saunderson explained: 'All other civilised parts of the world declare through their Press that our action with regard to the Transvaal is founded on the highest principles of justice'.²⁷ This whole episode was not merely a debate about the justification of the actual war declaration. It questioned civilization more broadly. Britain was on the side of civilization, as the triple-barrelled conservative MP Alexander Fuller-Acland-Hood explained to the House, because: 'The whole of the civilization and wealth of the country is due to us; the most thriving, the most contented population are to be found under British rule; the least cultivated, the most oppressed under Boer rule.'²⁸ As his liberal Unionist colleague Mersey-Thompson added, a war could easily have been avoided, had the Boers known how to live under civilized government.²⁹ Now, most of them added, with British victory merely a question of time, civilized government and civilization itself would start to reign in the backward Boer republics.

Critics of Civilizational Warfare

Not all in Britain harboured negative feelings towards the Boers, with some holding them in higher esteem than their British opponents, and many arguing that a war against Whites in South Africa did not reflect well on the British Empire and its ideas of civilization. The Boers were compared with the Poles, suffering under Russian rule, and, as van Wyk Smith has explored, more republican perceptions existed in Britain about the Boers, with iconoclastic thinkers like Froude arguing that the Boers were the true and admirable descendants of the Roman Republic.³⁰ Examples from antiquity were prominent, with some arguing that the Boers should be seen in similar terms as the inhabitants of Tacitus *Germania*, as holding up a mirror to a corrupted empire.³¹ Yet, the Boers were

25 J. W. Robertson Scott, *The People of China. Their Country, History, Life, Ideas, and Relations with the Foreigner* (London: Methuen & Co., 1900), 168–169.

26 HC Deb 25 October 1899 vol. 77 col. 639

27 HC Deb 28 July 1899 vol.75 col. 728.

28 HC Deb 17 October 1899 vol. 77 col. 65

29 HC Deb 17 October 1899 vol. 77 cc60-160

30 A Diplomat, "A Vindication of the Boers. A Rejoinder to Mr. Sydney Brooks," *North American Review* 169, no. 514 (1899): 362–74; van Wyk Smith, "The Boers and the Anglo-Boer War (1899 -1902) in the Twentieth-Century Moral Imaginary," 430.

31 Donal Lowry, "'The Play of Forces World-Wide in Their Scope and Revolutionary in Their Operation [J.A.

not simply a symbol of the unspoiled polity the British had lost. Some like the liberal politician Bryce argued that because of these characteristics, they were the last hope for civilization in Africa. Whereas Britain was corrupted and morally bankrupt, acting in the name of capitalist interests: 'he alone [the Boer], in this quarter of the globe, can save civilization from the ultimate gulf of bankruptcy.'³² Even those liberals less interested in tales of morality and imperial decline found civilizational arguments odious, not because they were destroying Britain, but because they were breaking unspoken conventions of the international sphere. It was perfectly acceptable to them that an empire should have an imperial and civilizational mission, as long as it was directed to people of colour. The Boers were obviously a different case.³³ Despite the fact that civilizational language had been used against whites previously, many liberals considered it a broken taboo of civilization. Sir Campbell Bannerman, leader of the liberals, opposed British intervention: 'Because a war between white men in South Africa, in addition to all the natural evils of a foreign war, has greatly the character of a civil war.'³⁴ For much the same reason the MP and QC Edward George Clarke fell out with his party, the conservatives, resigned his seat, and announced that he considered the declaration of war against the Boers 'a crime against civilisation'.³⁵

While the critique of the civilizational rhetoric of the Boer war was often based on racial references, the intervention in China was questioned by those who held China's history and culture in high esteem and questioned recent western influence on it. In contrast to previous wars with Chinese involvements, even those critical of China now acknowledged that the Boxer uprising was 'a patriotic movement, having as its main object, the achievement of a policy of China for the Chinese', and was therefore, at least to a certain extent, comprehensible.³⁶ Such an opinion was particularly relevant as China needed to be respected, as the MP Joseph Walton later argued, because it 'had a civilisation of its own while European peoples were still in a barbarous condition'; a stance that was certainly not unique, as guides and history books to China of the period testify.³⁷ 'The civilization of the Chinese, with all its anomalies and abuses, is entitled to the respect – and perhaps to the admiration – of all progressive communities' wrote the journalist Harold E. Gorst in

Hobson]: 'The South African War as an International Event,' *South African Historical Journal* 41, no. 1 (1999): 89.

32 James Bryce, *Briton and Boer; Both Sides of the South African Question* (New York and London: Harper & brothers, 1900), 109.

33 Krebs, *Gender, Race, and the Writing of Empire*, 117.

34 HC Deb 17 October 1899 vol.77 col. 74.

35 HC Deb 19 October 1899 vol.77 col. 311.

36 Alleyne Ireland, *China and the Powers. Chapters in the History of Chinese Intercourse with Western Nations* (Boston: Laurens Maynard, 1902), 20.

37 Joseph Walton 'Address in answer to her majesty's most gracious speech' H.C. Deb 4s. Col 276; Robert Coltman, *Beleaguered in Peking. The Boxer's War against the Foreigner* (Philadelphia: F.A. Davis, 1901), 3; Robert Hart, "These from the Land of Sinim". *Essays on the Chinese Question* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1901), 81–82, 141.

his concise guide, simply entitled *China*.³⁸ The Chinese were misunderstood, the American Missionary Martin explained in his best-selling book *The Lore of Cathay*: 'Never have a great people been more misunderstood. They are [...] stigmatized as barbarians because we want the breath to understand a civilization different from our own.'³⁹ George Lynch had a similar opinion, in his paradigmatically entitled *The War of Civilisations*: 'But in China the difficulty is to hear the other side; so utterly removed from our scheme of civilisation, so immensely remote is it, so far from the seeing power of our Western eyes, so far from the hearing power of our Western ears.'⁴⁰

Many directly criticized European traders and soldiers who were not representing western civilization well, and were an affront to the people of China, as 'the lives of a number of them in the Treaty ports are an outrage on all the best ideas of the natives and a libel on Western civilization.'⁴¹ Even the idea of modern civilization itself, touted by journalists who saw China 'at war with the world' and standing 'against allied civilisation' was not infrequently criticized.⁴² While the majority opinion was firmly sinophobic, many on the left and in the peace movement questioned European civilizational propaganda. The peace activist Jan Bloch claimed that Europe itself was to blame for the uprising and that the way the West had pushed China into the defensive made a rebellion not particularly surprising.⁴³ Arthur H. Smith, the famous missionary who later claimed to have invented the term 'Boxer', explained in his book *China in Convulsion* that what the west interpreted as civilization was to blame for Chinese misery. Although 'many of the innumerable sufferers from this steady advance of "civilization" into the interior of China' were unaware of the link between foreign trade and their problems, he argued, 'there are many others who know perfectly well that before foreign trade came in to disturb the ancient order of things, there was in ordinary years enough to eat and to wear, whereas now there is scarcity in every direction, with a prospect of worse to come.'⁴⁴

The problems of the relationship between civilization, modern capitalism, and foreign trade also entered the debates about the Boer war, as the involvement and alleged responsibility of British financiers and most prominently those of Jewish descent, were heavily criticized. As the journalist

38 Harold Edward Gorst, *China*. (London: Sands, 1899), 287.

39 William Alexander Parsons Martin, *The Lore of Cathay* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1901), 8.

40 George Lynch, *The War of the Civilisations: Being the Record of a "Foreign Devil's" Experiences with the Allies in China* (London: Longman's, Green, & Co., 1901), ix-x.

41 Z. Charles Beals, *China and the Boxers. A Short History of the Boxer Outbreak, with Two Chapters on the Sufferings of Missionaries and a Closing One on the Outlook* (New York: M.E. Munson, 1901), 135.

42 J. Martin Miller, *China. The Yellow Peril. At War with the World. A History of the Chinese Empire from the Dawn of Civilization to the Present Time* (Chicago: Monarch Books, 1900), 9.

43 Johann von Bloch, "Zur gegenwärtigen Lage in China," *Die Friedens-Warte* 2, no. 45 (1900): 177-80.

44 Arthur H. Smith, *China in Convulsion* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1901), 91.

and writer J.L. Hammond explained in his contribution to *Liberalism and Empire*, the men who had influenced Britain's provocative policy against the Boers in previous years were 'a motley group of marauding financiers, who measure civilization by their fortunes, and select their fatherland as other men select their banks.'⁴⁵ This was undoubtedly 'a capitalist war', as James Keir Hardy, the later founder of the Labour Party, explained and British Patriotism was abused for personal gain.⁴⁶ The Scottish socialist politician John Bruce Glasier even saw British civilization endangered as a whole, and the war driven by capitalist and Jewish interests. 'All our civilisation seems to fall away' he noted in his diary, 'the daily mail and the other great capitalist and Jewish papers have excited madness among them [the public].'⁴⁷ As Hirshfield and Terwey have demonstrated, anti-Semitism was a driving force behind pro-Boer propaganda.⁴⁸ As in previous debates (see chapter 5), prejudices were based on assumptions of a non-British character of Jewish citizens, whose support for Britain was allegedly not based on feelings of nationality but pure self-interest. While the criticism of Disraeli's foreign policy in the 1870s had been based on accusations of his despotic and oriental character, the new British anti-Semitism was founded on a capitalist critique. Since the 1880, left-wing British politicians had warned about the 'Jewish character' of British capitalism.⁴⁹ The fact that the British Empire was now ostensibly defending the interests of the so called 'Randlords' – 'such true-born Britons as Beit, Eckstein, Rothchild, Joel, Adler, Goldberg, Israel, Isaac and Co.' - just served as further proof of their paranoid suspicions.⁵⁰

The most prominent members of the English left, the Fabians, followed the government's line, but the discussions that preceded this decision led to severe splintering. The most famous members of the Fabian circle had expressed their difficult relationship to the idea of civilization previously. George Bernard Shaw was convinced that the future of western civilization was bleak: 'That our own civilization is already in an advanced stage of rottenness may be taken as statistically proved'. His friend, the writer Havelock Ellis, merely mocked the idea of civilization in his *The Nineteenth*

45 J.L. Hammond, "Colonial and Foreign Policy," in *Liberalism and Empire*, ed. J.L. Hammond, Gilbert Murray, and Francis Wrigley Hirst (London: R. B. Johnson, 1900), 184.

46 Lowry, "'The Play of Forces World-Wide in Their Scope and Revolutionary in Their Operation [J.A. Hobson]," 87.

47 Paul Ward, "Socialists and 'True' Patriotism in Britain in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries," *National Identities* 1, no. 2 (1999): 185.

48 Claire Hirshfield, "The British Left and the 'Jewish Conspiracy': A Case Study of Modern Antisemitism," *Jewish Social Studies* 43, no. 2 (1981): 95–112; Claire Hirshfield, "The Anglo-Boer War and the Issue of Jewish Culpability," *Journal of Contemporary History* 15, no. 4 (1980).

49 Hirshfield, "The Anglo-Boer War and the Issue of Jewish Culpability," 621; Susanne Terwey, "British Discourses on 'the Jew' and 'the Nation' 1899-1919," *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History* 3 (2012): 111–28.

50 Terwey, "British Discourses on 'the Jew' and 'the Nation' 1899-1919," 116; A.H. Jeeves, "The Rand Capitalists and the Coming of the South African War 1896–1899," *South African Journal of Economic History* 11, no. 2 (1996): 55–81.

Century: An Utopian Retrospect: 'Civilisation? You surely would not go so far as to call the nineteenth century civilised?'⁵¹ Nonetheless, Shaw and other leading members demanded the Fabians officially support the government and expressed their curious position in their manifesto *Fabianism and Empire*.⁵² The matter, they explained, was simple: 'The state which obstructs international civilization will have to go, be it big or little'.⁵³ Admittedly the long term plans of the Fabians differed enormously from Chamberlain's, but in the short-run they overlapped:

the fact remains that a Great Power, consciously or unconsciously, must govern in the interests of civilization as a whole; and it is not to those interests that such mighty forces as gold-fields, and the formidable armaments that can be built upon them, should be wielded irresponsibly by small communities of frontiersmen. Theoretically, they should be internationalized, not British Imperialized; but until the Federation of the World becomes an accomplished fact, we must accept the most responsible Imperial federations available as a substitute for it.⁵⁴

Similar arguments applied to China, the Fabians claimed, whose reluctance to participate in international and commercial trade the Fabian manifesto condemned as untenable 'from an international socialist point of view'.⁵⁵ Some sections of the manifesto revealed the insecurities of the Fabian position on civilization, as its authors, like so many others, recognized that the application of civilizational discourse with regard to China was a tricky affair. They could not simply condemn Chinese civilization as inferior, and elegantly side-stepped the issue:

Without begging the question whether the Chinese civilization is a lower or higher one than ours, we have to face the fact that its effect is to prevent Europeans from trading in China, or from making railway, and postal, and telegraph routes across it for the convenience of the world in general.⁵⁶

While the manifesto admitted that the intervention was prone to be used 'for piratical conquests', there was no doubt that 'If the Chinese themselves cannot establish order, the Powers must establish

51 Havelock Ellis, *The Nineteenth Century. An Utopian Retrospect* (London: Boston, Small, Maynard & Company, 1901), 2–3.

52 Bernard Shaw, ed., *Fabianism and the Empire: A Manifesto by the Fabian Society* (London: Grant Richards, 1900).

53 *Ibid.*, 46.

54 *Ibid.*, 23–24.

55 *Ibid.*, 45.

56 *Ibid.*, 44.

it for them'.⁵⁷

As Schneider and Thompson have shown, debates among the Fabians about the relationship between imperialism and civilization were hefty and led to the alienation of thinkers like J.A. Hobson and Ramsay MacDonald, who privately and in public, during and after the war, advocated more relativist ideas of civilization.⁵⁸ Hobson wrote about the Boer conflict as a journalist, and his successful columns and ideas were already published during the war with such telling titles as *The Psychology of Jingoism*.⁵⁹ It was in *Imperialism: A study*, that equally emerged from these writings, where he developed a clearer set of ideas specifically concerning questions of civilization. While Hobson's war writings often contained more outrage and anti-Semitism than clear analysis, *Imperialism* had a more analytical bent. As he academically explained: 'Part II. investigates the theory and practice of Imperialism regarded as a 'mission of civilisation', in its effect upon 'lower' or alien peoples, and its political and moral reactions upon the conduct and character of the Western nations engaged in it'.⁶⁰

Hobson's critique of the use of civilization was two-fold. Primarily he doubted what he called the 'phraseology of sham-scientific history, and the talk of the "trend of civilization"' but secondly he questioned whether the idea of civilization had not been hijacked by more sinister financial interests.⁶¹ The first part of his critique was straight-forward cultural relativism. Nobody was to know, Hobson argued, whether 'the slow going civilisation of the Transvaal Boer' was better for the world than the one the 'British wished to foist upon it'. Therefore, any advocacy of a singular idea of civilization was mistaken and insincere. More importantly, one had to ask the question whether the constant talk of civilization did not conceal larger and more economic interests. As Hobson told his readers: 'To what extent Imperialism lives upon "masked words" it is difficult to realise until we turn to the language of diplomacy, the verbal armoury of Imperialism.' 'Effective autonomy' and 'emissary of civilisation' were to him 'ready illustrations of a phraseology devised for purposes of concealment and encroachment'.⁶² In other words, while the British public might have been convinced that it was sending soldiers into a battle for civilization, the real underlying reasons of the war were sinister capitalist and imperialist interests.

57 Ibid., 46–47.

58 Fred D. Schneider, "Fabians and the Utilitarian Idea of Empire," *The Review of Politics* 35, no. 4 (1973): 501–22; Noel Thompson, "Hobson and the Fabians: Two Roads to Socialism in the 1920s," *History of Political Economy* 26, no. 2 (1994): 203–20.

59 J. A. Hobson, *The Psychology of Jingoism* (London: Grant Richards, 1901).

60 J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study* (London: J. Nisbet, 1902), v.

61 Hobson, *The Psychology of Jingoism*, 82.

62 Hobson, *Imperialism*, 219.

The later Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald advocated a similar interpretation of events, one he explored in more detail during the war in a lecture entitled 'The Propaganda of Civilization'.⁶³ What did it mean for a state to spread civilization, MacDonald asked his audience, and he argued that it very much depended on how one defined civilization:

If it is a veneer imposed by law and military force, a routine of life prescribed by authority [...] the question is obviously a very easy one to answer. A free distribution of administrators who have passed examinations in English law and native languages, and of soldiers who have been taught the art and mysteries of Maxims, will civilize the world in a generation.⁶⁴

This was not the right definition of civilization, MacDonald insisted, as all peoples of the world were connected to their past and to their surroundings in an intricate and complex way, and an outsider could neither understand, nor criticize these various forms of civilization. This chain of thought led Macdonald to a striking conclusion:

the distinction so often made between civilization and barbarism is mistaken in so far as it assumes that barbarism is a state of unmade or chaotic nature, a state unilluminated by reason, a state of brutishness characterized by an absence of wise adaptation of institutions to a desirable end. The lowest form of institution is a growth from conditions and shows rational adaptations of man to circumstances and society to tribal history. The lowest barbarian has his civilization.⁶⁵

This instance of cultural relativism was a heavy blow to anyone who held western ideas of civilization to be universal. MacDonald, however, was determined to slay the monster of civilizational imperialism once and for all. Going one step further, he announced that western imperialism was not merely unjust because all societies had a right to their environment and their history, they were also, in some ways, superior: 'It is not only that there are different kinds of civilization, but that every civilization has some political, social and ethical excellence which in that respect may place it superior to the propagandist's civilization itself.'⁶⁶

63 J. R. MacDonald, "The Propaganda of Civilization," *International Journal of Ethics* 11, no. 4 (July 1, 1901): 455–68.

64 *Ibid.*, 458.

65 *Ibid.*, 459.

66 *Ibid.*, 459–460.

While Hobson and MacDonald criticized the philosophical ideas that sustained British imperialism, others in the British Empire used the Boer war to implicitly criticize their own, subordinate position. War support tended to be strong in Canada and Australia, but Irish republicans and liberals heavily criticized the war, sometimes drawing connections between the Irish situation and the conflict in South Africa.⁶⁷ Politicians like the Irish republican and MP Michael Davitt who later railed against the Boer war in a book entitled *The Boer War for Freedom*, saw the prejudices of backwardness towards the Irish paralleled in the Boer case, with prominent papers and journalists driving England into an unjust war.⁶⁸ There were respectable British publications, he argued, 'which have poured out columns of falsehoods for months against the Boers and the Dutch race, and which have led, or rather misled, the public into this, the meanest war this country has ever waged against a civilised race.'⁶⁹ Doogan, the MP for East Tyrone, similarly questioned conservative and liberal unionist propaganda: 'It is said that the object of the war was for civilisation, that it was for revenge, that it was the result of conspiracy, and that it was thrust upon us by the Boers. Now, who can believe that countries of the size of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State wished war with this great Empire?'⁷⁰

As one of the Irish MPs put it, with the attack on the Boers, Britain showed 'marked contempt for the opinion of the civilised world', an accusation that would be ever more frequently heard over the next months, in Britain and abroad.⁷¹ The word civilization, when applied in England to the Boers, sounded hollow and insincere, Francis Charmes, a French writer whose views were aired in British publications, argued:

She speaks continually of civilization; but outside of her own boundaries nobody admits that the cause of civilization is interested in the Transvaal war. The high-sounding words with which she disguises her conduct may deceive herself, but abroad they produce a very different effect. It would have been more sincere if she had invoked only her great material interests and the right of the stronger in this affair.⁷²

67 Barbara R. Penny, "Australia's Reactions to the Boer War—a Study in Colonial Imperialism," *Journal of British Studies* 7, no. 01 (1967): 97–130; Carman Miller, "Loyalty, Patriotism and Resistance: Canada's Response to the Anglo-Boer War, 1899–1902," *South African Historical Journal* 41, no. 1 (1999): 312–23; Lowry, "'The Play of Forces World-Wide in Their Scope and Revolutionary in Their Operation [J.A. Hobson]," 98–101.

68 Michael Davitt, *The Boer Fight for Freedom: From the Beginning of Hostilities to the Peace of Pretoria*, 3rd ed. (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1902).

69 HC Deb 25 October 1899 vol.77 col. 618.

70 HC Deb 20 October 1899 vol.77 col. 476.

71 HC Deb 17 October 1899 vol. 77 col. 93.

72 Bryce, *Briton and Boer; Both Sides of the South African Question*, 195.

Charmes was right. Commentators from all over the world started to criticize Britain's use of civilization and questioned British imagery of the uncivilized Boer, even in the generally pro-British US.⁷³ While the US Secretary of State Hay opined that 'the fight of England is the fight for civilization and progress and our interests are bound up in her success', the majority US population, and especially German-Americans, were squarely on the side of the Boers.⁷⁴ In previous years some had alleged that it was obvious that the British wanted to 'treat the Boers to the same kind of civilization' they had inflicted on the Matabele, 'the civilization of the Maxim gun'.⁷⁵ Now that war was firmly under way, important figures like the former Secretary of State John Sherman officially signed petitions against the war, and prominent German-American journalists like Henry F. Urban expressed their disgust with the political use of civilization, arguing that wars "im Interesse der Civilisation und Humanität", wie die Expansionisten den heuchlerischen Engländern gelehrig nachbeten' needed to stop.⁷⁶ The member of the House of Representatives Shafroth called the whole event a 'crime against civilization' and journalists like Howard Clemens Hillegas, who had been sent to report on the Boers, provided the US public with aggressively pro-Boer accounts.⁷⁷ In his *Oom Paul's People*, he described the British as brutal usurpers who had already obstructed Boer progress as 'no civilized race on Earth has been handicapped', and were now driving them from their land.⁷⁸

The most brutal backlash to British arguments happened on the continent, where, hoping for a potential Russo-Franco-German Alliance against the British, even high-ranking politicians did not shy away from criticizing Britain.⁷⁹ There were more or less absurd ways of questioning British propaganda. The famous Italian criminologist Cesare Lombroso argued that it was wrong to see the Boers as civilizationally backward, because this was just a short-term phenomenon. 'It is not the irremediable barbarism of the negro or of the bedouin' that dominated South Africa, but that of the 'Florentines around 1100'. In other words, the Boers would eventually start to be a civilized, Britain

73 Kuitenbrouwer, *War of Words*, 64, 100.

74 William N. Tilchin, "The United States and the Boer War," in *The International Impact of the Boer War*, ed. Keith M. Wilson (London: Routledge, 2014), 109.

75 William Harding, *War in South Africa and the Dark Continent* (Chicago: H.L.Barber, 1899), 238.

76 W. T. Stead, "The United States and the Boers," *War against War in South Africa*, October 27, 1899, 22; Henry F. Urban, "Amerikas Europäisierung," in *Die Zukunft*, ed. Maximilian Harden, vol. 29 (Berlin: Verlag der Zukunft, 1899), 464.

77 Stuart Anderson, "Racial Anglo-Saxonism and the American Response to the Boer War," *Diplomatic History* 2, no. 3 (1978): 219–36; Tilchin, "The United States and the Boer War"; Howard Clemens Hillegas, *With the Boer Forces*. (London: Methuen & Co., 1900); Howard Clemens Hillegas, *Oom Paul's People; a Narrative of the British-Boer Troubles in South Africa, with a History of the Boers, the Country, and Its Institutions* (New York: Appleton and Co., 1899).

78 John F. Shafroth, *The Boer War and the Duty of The United States Relative to the Same* (Washington D.C., 1900), 2; Hillegas, *Oom Paul's People; a Narrative of the British-Boer Troubles in South Africa, with a History of the Boers, the Country, and Its Institutions*, 108.

79 Anderson, "Racial Anglo-Saxonism and the American Response to the Boer War," 219.

on the other hand would decline.⁸⁰ While Britain had been 'the greatest example of civilization and liberty' on its own island, it could not be said that it had 'given those boons to others'; their imperialism was 'Roman in its enormous egoism and arbitrary exercise of power.'⁸¹ In France, many were hoping for a Russia-led alliance against Britain, and again, the concept of civilization played into their interpretation of the new international situation.⁸² In a German publication concerned with the Hague Conference, the French delegate, advocate of international arbitration and later Nobel Peace Prize winner D'Estournelles de Constant, could be found frankly admitting why the cause of civilization used against the Boers was unjustified:

Wie werden derlei ferne Expeditionen gewöhnlich ins Werk gesetzt? In der Regel stellen die Grossmächte einen Grund oder einen Vorwand dazu voran: den der Civilisation; es handelt sich darum die Rothäute, die Neger, die Gelben zu civilisieren. Allein hier könnte man nichts ähnliches behaupten. Es standen sich da zwei Völker gegenüber: die Engländer und die Boers, die Boers, die weit davon entfernt, Wilde zu sein, so viel Anspruch auf die Sympathie der civilisierten Welt haben. Sie sind nicht allein ein civilisiertes, sondern ein Civilisation verbreitendes Volk; sie standen in den ersten Reihen der Pioniere der Kultur.⁸³

German Troubles with Civilization

It was unsurprising that such views were aired in Germany which 'is perhaps the country in which the unscrupulous policy of England has been condemned most vehemently', Francis Charmes claimed.⁸⁴ The sympathy of Germans for the Boers was largely based on a perception of their close ethnic relationship. The fact that the President of the Transvaal, Kruger, had referred to Germany as the motherland of the Boers, who, in turn, would often be called *Niederdeutsche* in German books and pamphlets, made the appearance of several committees and funds for the Boer cause a truly national one.⁸⁵ After all, the Boers were, as the titled of a popular pamphlet would have it, *Der*

80 Cesare Lombroso, "The Ultimate Triumph of the Boers," *The North American Review* 171, no. 524 (1900): 140–144.

81 Ibid., 142.

82 Pascal Venier, "French Foreign Policy and the Boer War," in *The International Impact of the Boer War*, ed. Keith M. Wilson (London: Routledge, 2014), 65–78.

83 *Die Ergebnisse der internationalen Friedenskonferenz im Haag, eröffnet am 18. Mai 1899* (Bern: Buchdruckerei Bächler und Co., 1901), 3–4. 'How do these expeditions normally come about? In general, the great powers advance a reason or an excuse: civilization. It becomes their task to civilize the Redskins, the Negro, or the yellow ones. But here, none of this true. Two peoples were opposing each other, the British and the Boers, who, far from being savages can claim all the sympathy of the civilized world. They are not only a civilized, but a civilizing people. They are in the front ranks and pioneers of culture.'

84 Francis Charmes, "Will the Powers Intervene in the War," in *Briton and Boer*, ed. James Bryce (London and New York: Harper & Brothers, 1900), 187.

85 Harald Rosenbach, *Das Deutsche Reich, Großbritannien und der Transvaal: (1896 - 1902). Anfänge deutsch-britischer Entfremdung* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993).

deutsche Bruderstamm in Südafrika, and as the Germans in Europe, the main cultivators and civilizers of a whole continent.⁸⁶ Their often-critiqued backwardness and distance from civilization had made them the primary civilizers of Africa, as Julius Fessler, lecturer at the University of Munich, tried to explain to the readers of his best-selling reportage. The British had only come to South Africa for gold and diamonds, in other words, for profit. The Boers were the 'eigentlichen und wirklichen ersten Pioniere der weissen Rasse und ihrer Zivilisation in Südafrika'.⁸⁷ The fact that the British were claiming land that nobody had wanted before was a recurring chorus in German descriptions of the war. The British acted parasitically and only wanted the lands, as some put it: 'nachdem die Boeren sie der Zivilisation geöffnet hatten.'⁸⁸ It would not be an exaggeration to say that a real *Bureneuphorie* broke out in Germany.⁸⁹ Suddenly, everything about the Boers became interesting. Several books were published about their history, poems were written for them and legions of pamphlets described the 'Freiheitskampf der Buren' in detail.⁹⁰ Although other voices existed, it is safe to say a vast majority of Germans supported the Boers.⁹¹

Acting on behalf of these organizations, authors like the colonial administrator Wilhelm Vallentin could explore their hatred of British civilizational propaganda and their conviction that the cause of civilization was a mere tool of geopolitical interests.⁹² As Vallentin explained: 'Auf Anregung der Burenfreunde habe ich es unternommen, im vorliegenden Büchlein Englands ruchloses Vorgehen in Süd-Afrika einer kurzgefassten Betrachtung zu unterziehen und Grossbritanniens Lüge: 'Im Namen der Zivilisation und Humanität' etwas näher zu beleuchten.'⁹³ He was joined in such an enterprise by writers like Jenny Schwarz, who, most likely for reasons of gender, had to publish her *Vivat*

86 Hermann Elss, *Die Buren, Der Deutsche Bruderstamm in Südafrika*, 2nd ed. (Bielefeld: Druck und Verlag von Ernst Siedhoff, 1899).

87 Julius Fessler, *Unter Dem Roten Kreuz in Transvaal*, 4th ed. (Munich: Seitz & Schauer, 1902), 93.

88 Francis William Reitz, *Ein Jahrhundert voller Unrecht. Ein Rückblick auf die südafrikanische Politik Englands*. (Berlin: Verlag von Hermann Walter, 1900), 81.

89 Lowry, "The Play of Forces World-Wide in Their Scope and Revolutionary in Their Operation [J.A. Hobson]," 91; Steffen Bender, *Der Burenkrieg und die deutschsprachige Presse: Wahrnehmung und Deutung zwischen Bureneuphorie und Anglophobie, 1899-1902*, vol. 52, *Krieg in der Geschichte* (Paderborn, Munich, Vienna, Zurich: Schöningh, 2009); Dominik Geppert, *Pressekriege: Öffentlichkeit und Diplomatie in den deutsch-britischen Beziehungen (1896-1912)* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007); Rosenbach, *Das Deutsche Reich, Großbritannien und der Transvaal: (1896 - 1902). Anfänge deutsch-britischer Entfremdung*.

90 Johannes Stauffacher, *Für die Buren in Südafrika: Gedichte* (St. Gallen: J. Stauffacher, 1903); Eugen Leopold August Nikolaus Enzberg, *Der Freiheitskampf der Buren, der reiferen Jugend erzählt*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Globus, 1902); Heinrich von Lenk, *Die Wanderungen der Buren, bis zur Gründung ihrer Staaten, 1652-1854* (Leipzig: Verlag von Philipp Reclam jun., 1902); Heinrich von Lenk, *Die Geschichte der Buren, 1652-1899* (Leipzig: Druck und Verlag von Philipp Reclam, 1902).

91 Emil Reich, *Audiat et Altera Pars. Die südafrikanische frage in englischer beleuchtung* (Berlin: Verlag von Hermann Walter, 1900); Bender, *Der Burenkrieg und die deutschsprachige Presse*.

92 Hans Ester, "Das poetische Echo des Anglo-Burenkrieges 1899-1902," in *Aufsätze zur Literatur und Kunst der Jahrhundertwende*, ed. Gerhard Kluge, *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur neueren Germanistik* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1984), 396-398.

93 Wilhelm Vallentin, *Hunnen in Süd-Afrika! Betrachtungen über englische Politik und Kriegsführung*, (Berlin: Ernst Hofman & Co., 1902), 5.

Transvaal. Eine Erzählung für die reifere Jugend und das Volk as J. Schwarz, but espoused similar ideas. As she explained to the 'reifere Jugend', 'jene sind nichts besseres als Strassenräuber und Meuchelmörder, wenn sie auch ihre Schurkenthaten mit dem gleissenden Mantel der Zivilisation verhüllen.'⁹⁴ While not everyone described British civilizational ideology in such brutal terms, contempt for the word civilization, used in this context, was very visible and widely shared. The previously liberal and now conservative political commentator Fechenbach-Laudenbach, who published his musings under the dubious pseudonym Fürchtegott Peinlich, was outraged by the British use of civilization, a sentiment he expressed by an excessive use of exclamation marks: 'England sei dies der Civilisation (!!!) [...] schuldig.'⁹⁵ Such an opinion was not only popular on the fringes of the German establishment, but also shared by conservative *Neue Preussische Zeitung*, whose readers were told that the aim of British policy was not 'die Zivilisation, sondern die Bereicherung enger Interessenkreise.'⁹⁶

In certain sections of the anglophobe German public, this was not merely a debate about the misuse of the word civilization. The war had become part of a larger stand-off between the British Empire and the rest of the world. As the Dutch journalist Elout, whose works were translated to great acclaim into German, announced: this was a new 'Kulturkampf'.⁹⁷ Vallentin and other conservatives agreed, calling for a larger coalition against the British:

Denn die Buren kämpfen nun nicht mehr für sich allein, für ihr Transvaal, für ihr Afrika, nein: so wie die Verhältnisse sich gestaltet haben, stehen die Buren in der Bresche; sie kämpfen gegen eine allgemeine Gefahr, gegen ein raubgieriges, unersättliches, aber angefaultes Weltreich den Kampf für die gesammte gesittete Kulturwelt.⁹⁸

Despite the fact that writers like Vallentin or Elout insisted on the merely superficial character of British civilizational propaganda, some of their writing was actually driven by a deep suspicion towards the idea of civilization itself. The Boers could only be the heroes of the 'Kulturwelt', or be

94 J. Schwarz, *Vivat Transvaal! Eine Erzählung Für Die Reifere Jugend Und Das Volk* (Strassburg: Strassburger Druckerei und Verlaganstalt, 1899), 10.

95 Friedrich Karl Fechenbach-Laudenbach, *Gedanken und Erinnerungen an den Krieg Englands gegen die Burenstaaten in den Jahren 1899/1900 von Fürchtegott Peinlich [pseud.]*. (Berlin: F. Luckhardt, 1900), 147.

96 Bender, *Der Burenkrieg und die deutschsprachige Presse*, 52:55.

97 C. K. Elout, *Der Kulturkampf in Süd-Afrika :ein Versuch zur Prüfung der Krüger'schen Kulturpolitik*. (Leipzig: Verlag von Rudolph Uhlig, 1901).

98 Vallentin, *Hunnen in Süd-Afrika! Betrachtungen über englische Politik und Kriegsführung*, 6. 'Because the Boers are now no longer fighting for themselves, for their Transvaal, for their Africa. As the situation is today, the Boers stand in the breach. They fight against a common danger, against a greedy predator, an insatiable, but rotten empire, for the entire cultured world.'

fighting a 'Kulturkampf', because they were opposed to modern civilization and modernity as such. The original German *Kulturkampf* had been fought against the allegedly backward principles of the Catholic Church and for progress and modernity. This time, the sides had switched. As Elout put it in a revealing passage:

Es fehlte den Buren zwar mancher Vorzug, aber auch mancher Nachteil unserer modernen Zivilisation. Sie hatten keine Wissenschaft – aber sie kannten auch den Zweifel nicht. Sie hatten keine Music – aber auch keine “music halls”; keine Maschinen und Fabriken – aber auch weder Pauperismus und Prostitution; keine Banken und Börsen – aber auch keine Schwindler und Spekulanten. Sie besaßen weder Kunst noch Literatur – aber auch weder Pornographie noch ungesunde Sensationsromane.⁹⁹

The Boers thereby became a paradigmatic example of what Chamberlain and others referred to as an opposition between *Kultur* and *Zivilisation*. The struggle of the Boers, to which Chamberlain dedicated a poem of questionable quality, was a fight of a people defending their *Kultur* against a superficial and uprooted conception of civilization.

Germany's liberals, traditionally Anglophile, started to turn away from the Empire. Some of them argued that imperialism had destroyed the upright character of Britain. The *Münchener neueste Nachrichten* reminded its readers that the opponents of Britain had always been the opponents of civilization: 'Wer sich gegen englische Herrschaft und Ausbeutung zur Wehr setzt ist noch stets als Feind der [...] Zivilisation in die Acht erklärt worden.'¹⁰⁰ Yet, more reflective liberal journals like the *Grenzboten* lamented a substantial change in the previously liberal character of Britain and its perceptions of civilization. The colonies, they argued in surprising parallel to British critics of empire, had exacerbated an already materialistic culture and were destroying England from the inside. The English propaganda on civilization differed from German perspectives, because the character of England itself had changed. As the Russian expert Ernst von der Brueggen put it:

So wurde und wird der kaufmännisch harte Volkscharakter des Engländers durch die Kolonien in einer Richtung ausgebildet, die ihn von den Prinzipien einer humanen Zivilisation entfernen. Und es liegt viel Ironie darin, wenn Fürst Bismarck gerade die Engländer beschuldigt 'die Redensarten von Humanität und Zivilisation' bei uns zu

99 Elout, *Der Kulturkampf in Süd-Afrika*, 21–22.

100 Bender, *Der Burenkrieg und die deutschsprachige Presse*, 52:62.

importieren. Es sind das bei uns zum Glück nicht bloße Redensarten, aber in England freilich gehören diese Begriffe zu dem etwas veräußerlichten Moralkultus, mit dem die Engländer vor andern und auch vor sich selbst gern die Wirklichkeit verhüllen. Und wo es nicht Heuchelei bei ihnen ist, da liegt es an der englischen Auffassung von Zivilisation, die weit materieller ist als bei den Völkern des Kontinents.¹⁰¹

While von der Brueggen explored the ironic situation of English ideas of civilization, the real irony of its early twentieth century use was lost on him. As during the high-time of the Yellow Peril around the Sino-Japanese war, Wilhelm explained that the war in the East was uniting all of Europe. This was the time for Europeans 'ihre heiligsten Güter zu wahren' and in the fight all the differences between them, the Kaiser argued, should be forgotten. On 2 July 1900, he reminded the first expedition corps to China: 'Ihr habt gute Kameradschaft zu halten mit allen Truppen, mit denen ihr dort zusammen kommt. Russen, Engländer, Franzosen, wer es auch sei, sie fechten alle für eine Sache, für die Zivilisation.'¹⁰² For the idea of civilization, national European differences had to be put aside, the same way that previous agreements to keep the peace were now irrelevant. He had a similar message for officers he spoke to before their departure at the end of August, and he had even chosen to forget his hatred for the Japanese: 'Im Verkehr mit Offizieren anderer Nationen fallen selbstverständlich alle politischen Gefühle weg. Ob Engländer oder Russe, Franzose oder Japaner, wir kämpfen alle gegen denselben Feind, zur Aufrechterhaltung der Zivilisation.'¹⁰³

The Kaiser's speeches, however, would soon achieve the opposite effect. Wilhelm II, talking himself into a frenzy at Bremerhaven, denigrated the Chinese and, implicitly, his own pronouncements of civilization. The Kaiser announced that when the troops should meet the 'verschlagene' Chinese, they were to remember:

Pardon wird nicht gegeben! Gefangene werden nicht gemacht! [...] Wie vor tausend Jahren die Hunnen unter ihrem König Etzel sich einen Namen gemacht, der sie noch jetzt in Überlieferung und Märchen gewaltig erscheinen läßt, so möge der Name Deutscher in China

101 Ernst v.d. Brueggen, "Wohin gehen wir?," *Die Grenzboten: Zeitschrift für Literatur, Politik und Kunst*, 1900, 59/2 edition, sec. Politik, Kolonialwesen, Heer und Marine, Geschichte, 220. 'The hard, national, business character of the Englishman is transformed by the colonies and slowly removes him from the principles of human civilization. There is a lot of irony, when Prince Bismarck accuses the British of importing phrases of humanity and civilization. With us, they are fortunately not mere phrases, but in England they form part of the purely exterior morality with which the British conceal reality for themselves and others. And if it is not hypocrisy with them, it is their conception of civilization, which is much more materialist than ours.'

102 Wilhelm II., *Die Reden Kaiser Wilhelms II. in den Jahren 1896-1900*, ed. Johs. Penzler (Leipzig: Druck und Verlag von Phillip Reclam jun., 1904), 206.

103 Ibid., 223.

auf 1000 Jahre durch euch in einer Weise bestätigt werden, daß es niemals wieder ein Chinese wagt, einen Deutschen scheel anzusehen!¹⁰⁴

An embarrassed political and diplomatic German establishment made immediate attempts to suppress, at least the most violent parts, of what would soon be known as the infamous *Hunnenrede*.¹⁰⁵ The German foreign minister Bülow showed himself concerned and attempted to change the official version of the speech several times, yet to no avail.¹⁰⁶ As he undoubtedly anticipated, the Kaiser's speech soon turned out to be a massive strain on the eight-power alliance. The *Hunnenrede*, widely reported in Germany and abroad, was not only a direct violation of the freshly signed Hague Convention, but a new reminder of German scepticism towards the rules of war in general.¹⁰⁷ Germany was quickly singled out amongst the powers, and Wilhelm's speech became a trope of Anti-German war propaganda for at least fifty years.

Almost immediately after the hostilities in China started, horrible tales of mass-executions and atrocities committed by Western soldiers reached Europe. Many were quick to blame the Kaiser for the uncivilized behaviour in the name of civilization. During the following weeks, several newspapers printed letters by German soldiers describing the cruelties that to the public would become known as *Hunnenbriefe*.¹⁰⁸ It quickly became obvious that German soldiers were committing massacres and had specifically been told that the Chinese were not part of international law or had excluded themselves through previous behaviour.¹⁰⁹ Anonymous letters horrified the public, and the nonchalance with which journalists like Rudolf Zabel, the correspondent of the *Vossische Zeitung* and the *Ostasiatische Lloyd*, described the German expeditions, came as a shock both to Germans and other Europeans as well. While the Russians plundered and the Japanese

104 Bernd Söseemann, "Die sog. Hunnenrede Wilhelms II. Textkritische und interpretatorische Bemerkungen zur Ansprache des Kaisers vom 27. Juli 1900 in Bremerhaven," *Historische Zeitschrift* 222, no. 2 (1976): 342–58. 'Quarter will not be given! Take no prisoners! (...) Just like when a thousand years ago, the Huns acquired their fame under King Attila, which makes them appear immense in lore and fairy tales even today, just like that, the name of Germans will be known in China for a 1000 years, so that no Chinese will ever dare to so much as look at a German.'

105 Klein, "Propaganda und Kritik"; Bernd Soesemann, "Pardon wird nicht gegeben! Staatliche Zensur und Presseöffentlichkeit zur 'Hunnenrede,'" in *Kolonialkrieg in China: die Niederschlagung der Boxerbewegung 1900-1901*, ed. Mechthild Leutner and Klaus Muehlhahn (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2007), 118–21.

106 Soesemann, "Pardon wird nicht gegeben! Staatliche Zensur und Presseöffentlichkeit zur 'Hunnenrede,'" 120.

107 Susanne Kuß, "Deutsche Soldaten während des Boxeraufstandes in China: Elemente und Ursprünge des Vernichtungskrieges," in *Das Deutsche Reich und der Boxeraufstand*, ed. Susanne Kuß and Bernd Martin (Munich: Iudicium, 2002), 174.

108 Dietlind Wünsche, *Feldpostbriefe aus China: Wahrnehmungs- und Deutungsmuster deutscher Soldaten zur Zeit des Boxeraufstandes 1900/1901* (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2008); Dietlind Wünsche, "Feldpostbriefe aus China. 'Jedem Zehnten mindestens Kopf ab in den aufrührerischen Gegenden,'" in *Kolonialkrieg in China: die Niederschlagung der Boxerbewegung 1900-1901*, ed. Mechthild Leutner and Klaus Muehlhahn (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2007), 153–61.

109 Klein, "Propaganda und Kritik," 142; *ibid.*, 176.

'zivilisiert tun', Zabel argued, the Germans were the exemplary representation of civilization.¹¹⁰ If the culprits could not be found in a 'Strafexpedition', Zabel explained, the elders are executed in their stead and 'die männliche Bevölkerung des Ortes wird, wenn möglich, gezwungen der Exekution beizuwohnen'.¹¹¹

Although similar behaviour was soon reported in other troops as well, Germany was quickly singled out as the worst offender. Its national characteristics and the Kaiser's rhetoric that were found to be to blame. As the writer Alexis Sidney Krausse explained: 'Germany has indulged in her national characteristic of bullying to such a degree as to cause the celestials to regard her with a hatred even greater than that with which they view Russia [...] Germany's whole relations have been tinged by an attitude of brutality.'¹¹² The British writer and journalist George Lynch, whose surprisingly relativist *The War of Civilizations* was published shortly after the hostilities, argued that the brutality of the Boxers had rhetorically and practically only been matched by the Germans:

The cry of Sha Sha (kill, kill), which the Boxer mob shouted outside the Legations, has been answered from Europe by the German Emperor's speeches for 'Vengeance, vengeance,' and in paying a visit to the house of the prefect of the German section, the effect of the speeches was everywhere apparent.¹¹³

The behaviour of German troops has often and explicitly been portrayed as a clear antecedent of things to come. While the German military and its practices are certainly to blame, the German chain of command was not altogether homogeneous. In the work of Kuss and Hull, a clear line runs between the announcements of the Kaiser and the behaviour of German soldiers and later speeches by Hitler and atrocities of the *Wehrmacht*.¹¹⁴ While these parallels undoubtedly exist, one should be careful not to conflate the two events. During the Boxer uprising, several people, among them the foreign minister himself, were actively engaged in damage control. Bülow, who had already tried to suppress the crasser parts of the Kaiser's speeches, was doing his best to make German policy seem more acceptable abroad. In several notes, he blamed the behaviour of German soldiers on individual

110 Rudolf Zabel, *Deutschland in China* (Dusseldorf: August Bagel, 1902), 290.

111 Ibid., 293.

112 Krausse, *The Far East. Its History and Its Questions*, 238–242.

113 Lynch, *The War of the Civilisations*, 143.

114 Kuß, "Deutsche Soldaten während des Boxeraufstandes in China: Elemente und Ursprünge des Vernichtungskrieges"; Isabel V. Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 147–148.

acts and was very clear on where he stood with regards to various reports of executions and their relationship to civilization. He explained the official position in a note to the German allies on the 18. September 1900: 'Massenexekutionen widerstreben dem civilisierten Gewissen'.¹¹⁵

The Aftermath of the Wars for Civilization

The rhetoric of the Kaiser during the war and the behaviour of German soldiers made the attempts of the Kaiser and Bülow to sell the events in Asia during the summer to the German parliament as being done in the name of civilization, rather difficult. The Kaiser announced in the *Thronrede*, that opened parliamentary debate in Germany:

Die Ereignisse im fernen Osten haben unter allen gesitteten Völkern tiefe Erregung hervorgerufen. Fanatischer Hass und finsterer Aberglaube, angestachelt von gewissenlosen Ratgebern des Pekinger Hofes, hatten missleitete Massen des chinesischen Volkes zu Greuelthaten getrieben gegen die friedlich unter ihnen weilenden Vorposten abendländischer Zivilisation und christlicher Kultur.¹¹⁶

This was a perspective supported by Bülow, who, advanced to being the chancellor over the summer, argued that Germany was a part of a larger European civilization that was at stake in China. Rhetorically asking the *Reichstag* what German aims were in China, he answered himself: 'Wir wollen dass die europäische Kulturbewegung und die europäische Zivilisation in China nicht gehemmt wird, und das Deutschland innerhalb dieser Bewegung den ihm zukommenden Einfluss ausübt.'¹¹⁷

Almost immediately, these positions were ridiculed both by the social democrats and by members of the House one could have expected to be more courteous towards the government. Lieber, from the Centre party, expressed: 'Bedauern [...] über beklagenswerte Erscheinungen die einen sehr nachdrücklichen Ausdruck geben: das sind die Nachrichten über Grausamkeiten in der Kriegsführung, über Massenmorde durch untergeordnete Organe und ohne ordentliches Verfahren.'¹¹⁸ Rickert, a member of the *Freisinnigen*, argued that Germany's attempt to push

115 Wolfgang. Heinze, *Die Belagerung Der Pekinger Gesandtschaften: Eine Völkerrechtliche Studie* (Heidelberg: C. Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1901), 274.

116 Wilhelm II., *Die Reden Kaiser Wilhelms II. in den Jahren 1896-1900*, 211.

117 *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstags. X.Legislaturperiode. II. Session 1900/1902. Von der Eröffnungssitzung am 14. November 1900 bis zur 35 Sitzung am 28 Januar 1901*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Druck und Verlag der Norddeutschen Buchdruckerei und Verlagsanstalt, 1901), 12.

118 Dr. Lieber in *Ibid.*, 1:17.

Weltpolitik to another level had been nothing but an embarrassment, with horrendous costs.¹¹⁹ The Kaiser received the worst beating from Bebel, who, in several speeches, some of them four hours long, read the letters of German soldiers aloud and denounced the crimes against civilization.¹²⁰ The Kaiser, Bebel claimed, was personally responsible for the brutalities and his speeches had driven German soldiers to the excesses that were now widely reported in the international press.¹²¹ The hatred for the Chinese, the emperor was known for, and the pretences of *Weltpolitik* made for a bad combination, Bebel argued, and expressed enormous apprehension about the future of German foreign policy.

Similar horror was expressed by various politicians and writers in Britain, who also discussed the far-Asian events after the summer. Many of them not only argued that crimes against civilization had been committed, but that the whole event would hold back civilization in the future. Already in August, when only rudimentary reports of atrocities had reached Europe, the conservative MP Ashmead-Bartlett expected the worst:

The tales of what took place at Tientsin are bad enough; but Peking, with its million of inhabitants exposed to the licence of five or six different armies, might easily offer scenes of horror that would be a disgrace to our so-called civilisation, and would consolidate Chinese resistance to Western progress and Christianity as nothing else could do.¹²²

Mr. Broderick, the MP for Guildford, agreed with the statement, and he suspected even worse. The Chinese would be outraged, and the whole globe would suffer from the excesses of European troops. As he explained: 'no one can tell whether the result of what has occurred may not put back the clock of civilisation for forty or fifty years'.¹²³ Outside of parliament, the writer George Lynch was afraid his eyewitness accounts would be too horrible for the British public: 'There are things that I must not write, and that may not be printed in England, which would seem to show that this Western civilisation of ours is merely a veneer over savagery.'¹²⁴ He was certain that that same civilization, 'mistaking speed for progress, is propelling us, like a heard of Gadarene swine over an

119 Klein, "Propaganda und Kritik," 166.

120 Klein, "Propaganda und Kritik"; Ute Wielandt and Michael Kaschner, "Die Reichstagsdebatten über den deutschen Kriegseinsatz in China: August Bebel und die Hunnenbriefe," in *Das Deutsche Reich und der Boxeraufstand*, ed. Susanne Kuß and Bernd Martin (Munich: Iudicium, 2002), 183–201.

121 Klein, "Propaganda und Kritik," 66.

122 HC Deb 08 August 1900 vol 87. cols. 983-984

123 HC Deb 08 August 1900 vol 87. col. 492

124 Lynch, *The War of the Civilisations*, 142–143.

abyss of God knows what.¹²⁵

In German papers and books, questions were immediately raised about the hypocrisy that characterized the German use of civilization at the turn of the century. Civilization, many explained, was merely a word of propaganda for Europeans. As the social democratic sympathizer and writer Seifarth put it: 'Leider gibt es auch unter den Deutschen so bedauernswerthe Köpfe, die denken: Ein Chinese tötet einen Europäer – das ist ein Verbrechen! – Die Europäer töten die Chinesen – das ist ein Werk der Civilisation!'¹²⁶ Some publications went so far as to try and attempt German rhymes with *Civilisation*, finding only the unfortunate *Mongolensohn*. The message was nonetheless very clear:

Doch will der gelbe Mongolensohn
seine Unabhängigkeit wahren
Dann klafft die Civilisation:
Tod über die Barbaren!¹²⁷

Unsurprisingly, none of these pronouncement managed to change the official story of western intervention. The Boxer protocols, that marked the end of this unfortunate episode of European imperialism, clearly stated where the blame was to be found. As a joint note written by the representatives of the eight powers, Belgium, Spain and the Netherlands specifically stated that:

During the months of May, June, July, and August of the present year serious disturbances broke out in the northern provinces of China and crimes unprecedented in human history – crimes against the law of nations, against the laws of humanity, and against civilization – were committed under particularly odious circumstances.¹²⁸

Needless to say, these crimes had been Chinese crimes and not western ones, but, as I have shown, large sections of the western public had become deeply suspicious of such civilizational claims.

125 Lynch, *The War of the Civilisations*, 317.

126 F. Seifarth, *China: Schilderung von Land und Leuten, Kultur, Religion, (Missionswesen), Sitten und Geschichte, Mit kurzer Berücksichtigung der jüngsten Ereignisse und Deutschlands Handelsinteressen* (Berlin und Leipzig: Verlag von Freidrich Luckhardt, 1900), 15.

127 "Zopf ab" *Die chinesische Affaire im Lichte der europäischen Karikatur* (Berlin: Verlag von Dr. Eysler und Co., 1900), 34.

128 "Joint Note Signed by the Diplomatic Representatives at Peking of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Spain, The United States, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, and Russia, Embodying Conditions for Reestablishment of Normal Relations with China," *The American Journal of International Law* 4, no. 4 (1910): 300.

With the Boxer rebellion and the Boer war, I argue, the classic period of European civilizational rhetoric came to an end. This does not mean that civilization stopped to be employed as a tool of politics, indeed it would feature widely in the First World War, but that the original confidence in the singular of civilization, and in a liberal and European idea of progress had ended. With the insistence on the existence of several civilizations, and the heavy criticism that was levelled at civilization as a word of imperialism, its previously positive connotations had suffered dramatically. The new enemies of civilizational vocabulary were no more the Catholic Church or conservative Europeans, but instead the new representatives of a politics of progress, left-wing liberals and socialists. In this new debate, civilization stood for the politics of old, for capitalism, and imperialism, and had become the language of those in power and not those opposing it, and although it was still heavily employed, its purpose and effectiveness had changed beyond recognition.

Conclusion

The Boer war was not forgotten in Germany, where the next civilizational confrontation with Britain, the First World War, was quickly described as merely another episode of British civilizational propaganda against small and independent nations. Ernst Reventlow explained in his *Der Vampir des Festlandes* that 'in Grossbritannien' one had already in 1899 spoken about the 'Notwendigkeit, dass die britische Kultur und Zivilisation über die burische Rückständigkeit und Unkultur siege.'¹ 'Die erbarmungslose Zermalmungstaktik der Engländer im Burenkriege ist noch im frischen Andenken', Friedrich Meinecke added, but Germany was suffering even worse from this 'Barbarei, die unter der Decke einer äusserlichen Zivilisation brütet.'² The real disappointment for German liberals, just as during the Boer war, was that British writers denigrated Germany and presented Britain as the 'Verteidiger des Rechts, der Zivilisation, der Bildung und der Freiheit', apparently proving that these had merely become propaganda slogans.³

The First World War, to them, presented another instance British imperialism, that Germans had not recognized early enough. The theologian Fritz Wilcke was devastated: 'Zu spät erkennt das einfache, kindliche Denken, dass der glatte Verkündiger von Humanität und Zivilisation ein falscher Freund war, dem nicht das Wohl des Landes, sondern nur sein eigener klingender Vorteil am Herzen lag.'⁴ In Kurt Engelbrecht's plea for Germany to understand the lessons of the past, *Deutschland lerne!*, the tale of the Boers became a warning example of what could happen to Germany.⁵ England was leading the war 'als einen *business war*, als einen Geschäftskrieg [...] ebenso frivol wie es einst Cecil Rhodes tat, gegen die Buren'. In the *Kulturkrieg* of 1914, German officials presented their country as a bulwark of anti-imperialism, which in the curious propaganda that preceded and accompanied the conflict was amalgamated into a larger spectre of western dangers, ranging from capitalism to western ideas of democracy. As Thomas Mann famously explained in his *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*: 'Der Unterschied von Geist und Politik enthaelt den von Kultur

1 E. Reventlow, *Der Vampir des Festlandes. Eine Darstellung der englischen Politik nach ihren Triebkräften, Mitteln und Wirkungen*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Ernst Friedrich Mittler und Sohn, 1915), 112. 'The necessity that British culture and civilization win over Boer backwardness and unculturedness.'

2 Friedrich Meinecke, *Die deutsche Erhebung von 1914: Vorträge und Aufsätze*, 2.-5. ed. (Stuttgart: J.G.Cotta'sche Buchhandlung Nachfolger, 1914), 69. 'We still remember the merciless "squash tactics" of the English in the Boer war, but Germany is suffering even more from this barbarism under the cover of a superficial civilization.'

3 P.D. Fischer, *Der internationale Nachrichtenverkehr und der Krieg* (Leipzig: S.Hirzel, 1915), 30. 'The defender of right, civilization, culture, and civilization.'

4 Fritz Wilke, *Ist der Krieg sittlich berechtigt?* (Leipzig: Dieterich'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1915), 93. 'The simple and child-like mind realizes too late that the smooth preacher of humanity and civilization was the wrong friend, who was not concerned with the best for the country, but only with his personal gain.'

5 Kurt Engelbrecht, *Deutschland lerne! Ein Ruf an das deutsche Gewissen*. (Berlin: Concordia Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1915), 65. 'England was leading the war as a business war (...) as frivolous as Cecil Rhodes did against the Boers.'

und Zivilisation, von Seele und Gesellschaft, von Freiheit und Stimmrecht, von Kunst und Literatur; und Deutschthum das ist Kultur, Seele, Freiheit, Kunst und nicht Zivilisation, Gesellschaft, Stimmrecht und Literatur.⁶

While German intellectuals, as I have explored in the first chapter, were grappling with the political meaning of civilization during and after the First World War, the concept was also questioned amongst British thinkers. The veneer of civilization still covered the sacred trust that now ruled over a large mandate system, but in the inter-war period, the seeds of civilizational doubt that MacDonald, Hobson, and others had sown, started to sprout. It was the Bloomsbury members, Clive Bell and Leonard Woolf, who wrote most specifically about the word and meaning of civilization, whose political implications they heavily criticized. While Bell expressed an interest in British First World War propaganda, which he chastised, Woolf had turned to an analysis of the League of Nations and to the study of imperialism more broadly.⁷ In *Imperialism and Civilization*, he analysed the history of the phenomenon through several centuries and argued that while the sacred trust of civilization was arguably to be seen as progress, it could not be said to have much to do with any real idea of civilization.⁸ Under the cover of the League of Nations and the concept of civilization, imperial interests were still being pushed, as they had been for decades.

Civilization was not just the target of philosophers and social theorists like Woolf, but in the books of his more famous wife, Virginia, in the works of D.H. Lawrence and James Joyce the matter of civilization was frequently discussed.⁹ As Shaffer has demonstrated in his brilliant *The Blinding Torch: Modern British Fiction and the Discourse of Civilization*, modernist writers in the early twentieth century were obsessed with civilization, and its complicated and mixed blessings.¹⁰ While civilization had epitomized an incontestable idea of progress for many liberal writers during the nineteenth century, it was now seen, Shaffer argues, as a blinding torch, illuminating and concealing at the same time. Most famously, these issues were addressed in Freud's best-selling *Civilization and its Discontents*, concerned, above all, with the intellectual strains and difficulties humans suffered living in civilization. Shortly after the publication of this book, so deeply influenced by the

6 Thomas Mann, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1919), xxxiii. 'The difference between spirit and politics contains the difference between culture and civilization, of soul and society, of freedom and the right to vote, of art and literature; and germaness is culture, soul, freedom, art, and not civilization, society, the right to vote and literature.'

7 Clive Bell, *Civilization. An Essay* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928).

8 Leonard Woolf, *Imperialism and Civilization* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1928).

9 Christine Froula, *Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Avant-Garde: War, Civilization, Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

10 Brian W. Shaffer, *The Blinding Torch: Modern British Fiction and the Discourse of Civilization* (Univ of Massachusetts Press, 1993).

horrors of the Great War, Freud had to emigrate to Britain where he died three weeks into Europe's next catastrophe. The Second World War, whose impact Freud saw no more, once and for all ended European pretensions to a higher or perhaps any civilization.

The end of the Eurocentric world-system also ended the career of civilization as an international concept, and it would soon be replaced by another word: culture. It should not be surprising that the UN, founded to replace the failed League of Nations should instead of a sacred trust of civilization have an organization dedicated to the world's education, science and culture: the UNESCO. Inevitably, as had happened with civilization before, the sudden prominence of culture as a word of politics drew an academic crowd. In England two men on opposite sides of the political spectrum prominently turned to its examination. While T.S. Eliot commenced his *Notes towards a Definition of Culture* with a quotation from the newly founded UNESCO, the Marxist intellectual Raymond Williams started his *Keywords* with the observation that immediately after the war, he found himself preoccupied by a single word: 'culture, which it seemed I was hearing very much more often: not only, obviously, by comparison to the talk in an artillery regiment, or of my own family but by direct comparison within the university over just those few years.'¹¹ Williams was right as over the next years and decades, culture, partly driven by the rise of the teachings of American anthropologists like Kluckhohn and Kroeber, started to be the most dominant concept in western social sciences, and arguably remains until today.¹²

For most social and political scientists after the Second World War, culture was the main concept with which to analyse anthropological and social phenomena, and civilization was a ghost of a long-forgotten past. They were shocked, as I have described in the first chapter, when civilization returned to the international sphere, first in the writings of Huntington and then as a cry of politics. The critique that the concept of civilization was quickly the target of was one shaped by the reading of Hobson and those who had criticized it in the early twentieth century. It is difficult not to think of Hobson's 'masked words' of imperialism, for example, when reading Brett Bowden's description of the purposes of civilization in selling the imperial mission, throughout history:

While this suggests that the [...] primary motivation for venturing into the affairs of empire were economic benefit, this does not necessarily mean that the “mission of civilization”

11 T.S. Eliot, *Notes Towards a Definition of Culture* (London: Faber & Faber., 1948), 13; Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 12.

12 A.L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (New York: Vintage Books, 1952).

aspect is unimportant in justifying and “selling” such adventurism to domestic constituencies, to the colonized, and even in the minds of policy makers themselves.¹³

There was, however, a crucial difference between Hobson and those who examined the term civilization in the early twenty-first century. While Hobson had believed in an idea of civilization and had merely argued that the word had been abused for political interests, contemporary writers saw the imperial aspect of civilization as its main defining feature. For those writing not only after Hobson, but also after Freud, and two world wars, the concept of civilization had lost most positive characteristics and was merely reminiscent of older and more horrible times.

Yet in the early 2000s, it looked to some as if the past, and its dreadful association with civilization, had returned. A wave of what critics would soon refer to as neoliberalism had swept over the western world since the 1980s, and with the end of the Soviet Union it seemed as if this new form of liberalism would start to rule the world once more. Undoubtedly, there were many similarities between the international politics of the late nineteenth and the early twenty-first century. As Porter has provocatively argued in the re-edition of *Critics of Empire*, it sometimes suffices to replace the word gold with oil and the critique of the Boer war and modern US engagements start to look very similar.¹⁴ With the rhetoric of civilization added, the farce could be seen as following the tragedy. How different were Huntington's pronouncements about the 'bloody borders' of civilizations from the writings of those who had held the Boxer rebellion to be a war between civilizations, and were George W. Bush's ideas of civilization not a mere reincarnation of Joseph Chamberlain's? Carefully ignoring the many differences that separate the late nineteenth century from our time, those who started to be concerned with civilization interpreted what they saw as an eerie repetition of previous centuries.

Given these similarities and the recurrence of civilization as a word of politics, it was an easy step to interpret it as one of the main culprits of the new international situation. Following a whole swath of literature dedicated to western orientalism and the rhetoric of empire, civilization became seen as the fixture of an ever similar international sphere, dominated by western imperialism. There were several problems with these assertions. Firstly, cause and effect can be said to have been confused, as civilization, in some descriptions, served both as a cover-up as well as the cause of imperial

13 Brett Bowden, *The Empire of Civilization: The Evolution of an Imperial Idea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 155.

14 Bernard Porter, “Preface,” in *Critics of Empire: British Radicals and the Imperial Challenge* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2007).

expansion. In other words, it was simultaneously the driving force behind an imperial ideology and a 'masked word' to protect its true intentions. Secondly, assuming the similarity of civilization over several centuries, its critics asserted a unified character. European imperialism stretched through centuries, and equally must have the inevitably connected concept of civilization. From those who lived long before the term civilization was invented, like Francisco de Vitoria, to those who first used it in an entirely different context, like the philosophers of the Enlightenment, all started to be complicit in the larger drama of civilization. Civilization was de-contextualized, taken out of previous debates, and left to stand for itself as an ever-imperial term, which dominated the international sphere for centuries.

As I have shown, this is a gross oversimplification of the long and complex history of the use of the word civilization in international relations. The concept of civilization, as I have argued in the second chapter, did not rise to prominence as an imperial term. Instead, it was the liberals of early nineteenth century Europe, who, associating progress, nationalism, and civilization first advocated it as a concept of international politics. They were for the most part not interested in imperialism, but precisely the opposite, as they argued for a national and civilized state to follow the dynastic empires of Europe. The original, liberal meaning of civilization was an anti-imperial one, used to overthrow oppression, not to justify it. Through the propaganda of Europe's liberals, civilization became the watchword of revolution, and before and throughout 1848 it was a term widely associated with those who demanded the overthrow of the old order. In the Crimean War, as I have shown in chapter three, a coalition of western powers went to war against Russia and it was soon clear that it would be the first war for civilization. As a coalition of France and Britain, or as many conservatives saw it, a coalition of the friends of the revolution, opposed Russia, the word civilization entered the discussions of international relations for good. In the British, as well as in the Prussian parliament, the war was debated with civilizational vocabulary, which remained associated with those who wanted Europe to move towards a more nationalist future.

In a series of wars of nationalism that shook Europe from 1859 to 1871, the language of civilization formed part of the arsenal of those who wanted to see the downfall Austria and the foundation of Germany and Italy. Nationalists and liberals were not just opposed by Austria and other conservative powers, but also by the Catholic Church, which opposed the national unification of Italy and all ideas of modern civilization and nationalism. The deep religious conflicts within Europe are often forgotten when we talk about the three C's of commerce, Christianity, and Civilization that allegedly dominated the nineteenth century in unison. Christianity was not a

unifying element in the discussions of the mid-nineteenth century, as Protestantism became associated with modern civilization, and Catholicism with the old order, the Jesuits, and Catholic civilization. It is again important to stress that these conflicts were not imperial. In the wars of the 1860s, whose propaganda relied on civilizational language, Europeans opposed each other, and the different ideas of civilization were what these wars were partially about.

What emerged from and with them was the idea of a liberal and civilized state, that formed the opposite of a dynastic and illiberal one and not, as one might think, of a savage or barbarian state. Indeed, it is important to see the civilized state as an inner-European and liberal construction, not as an imperial and chauvinist tool of international relations. The original, liberal ideas of progress associated with the civilized state, which was meant to stick to the rules of civilized warfare and to guarantee liberal government, were not yet infused with the spirit of conquest and domination late nineteenth century liberalism is generally associated with. And even when these tendencies of associating civilization with racist and imperial fantasies started to show, they were never exclusively geared towards the rest of the world, but equally applied to Europe. As I have argued in the chapter concerned with the 1870s, debates about race and civilization dominated not just the Russo-Turkish war and the propaganda that preceded it, but also British domestic debates, where the relationship between Britain's first Jewish prime minister and an English idea of civilization was discussed. On top of that, inner-European debates about civilization, so prominent in the 1860s had far from gone away. As Germany embarked on a civilizational struggle against the Catholic Church, and Gladstone chastised the pope as an enemy of modern civilization, it must have been obvious to most Europeans that they were not living in a time of civilizational unanimity.

Such unanimity is nonetheless often associated with the European imperial project and the civilizing mission, which, as I have argued, also has its roots in the 1870s. Yet, as I have shown in chapter six, we should not let official civilizational rhetoric about the European civilizing mission fool us into believing that it represented a general European trend in the appreciation of civilization. In contrast to previous interpretations of the 1880s, I have shown that a new scepticism towards older positivist liberal conceptions of civilization started to grow in Europe, making the civilizational landscape of the 1880s a highly contested one. While the philosophy and the ideas of liberal civilization were criticized by intellectuals and thinkers on the left, the international mission for civilization was highly disputed for different reasons. Claims by the Portuguese government to civilize Africa, were quickly ridiculed by British liberals and the ensuing dispute over who was to bring which type of civilization directly led to the Conference of Berlin in 1885. While an

international dispute over civilization was the original reason for a conference that has become synonymous with a one-sided European idea of civilization, such an interpretation of civilization was actively disputed behind closed doors. As I have shown through a close reading of the Conference protocols, the representatives of various European states and the Ottoman Empire disagreed over the exact formulation of the articles containing civilization, and the final result, I argue, owes its confusing character to an attempt at compromise.

The 1890s, as I have argued in chapter seven, continued to be dominated by civilizational language, which split Europe into a pro-war and anti-war party. The perceived rise of militarism led to large discussions about the future of Europe and the world, in which the word civilization played a crucial role on both sides of the argument. It did however not, as I have shown, separate Germany from the rest of Europe, as has so often been argued, but merely the different conceptions of civilization from each other. While the German emperor heavily opposed Japanese claims to civilization, the British government moved ever closer to an alliance with Japan. The different perceptions of the East, as a 'Yellow Peril' or as another addition to the future of civilization was what separated much of German and British discourse, although arguments in both countries relied heavily on civilizational tropes. These debates continued throughout the 1890s, as I have shown in the last chapter, and finally led to the downfall of classic civilizational rhetoric in the singular. As the western powers intervened in China to suppress the boxer rebellion, many in Europe started to speak not of a war for civilization but as a war between civilizations. While this rhetoric started out as pro-war propaganda, it was quickly adopted by those who saw Britain and other western powers engaged in a capitalist war that sought to undermine different traditions of civilization. Similar tropes could be found in the contemporaneous Boer war, in which, what Hobson called 'the slow-going civilization of the Boer' was often described as equal or even superior to the singular idea of liberal, international civilization propagated in Europe.

As I have sought to argue, many of those interpreting the use of the concept of civilization today are doing so through a lens shaped by these late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century debates and we need to be careful not to apply the analysis of the past to our time. The word civilization, I have argued, does not have a fixed place in the history of the international sphere. Indeed, its rise and fall throughout the second half of the nineteenth century describes a dramatic curve, in which it rose to prominence on the back of liberal politics and declined as the optimistic beliefs in progress turned sour. Yet, civilization should also not be reduced to a liberal concept, as it was employed for many different, unexpected, and often contradictory political purposes and, should its use remain

popular over the next decades, it will do so again. While there are therefore few lessons from the past, especially from such a chameleon-like word of politics as civilization, what we can do is not to take its character for granted, and to explore its history in an unbiased way.

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