

Medicalizing the “Alcohol Problem” in the Ottoman Empire: Expert Networks and Exchanges between Istanbul, Munich, and Zurich*

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ABSTRACTS

This article examines debates on alcohol consumption in the late Ottoman Empire, which were shaped by the relationships between three scientific experts: The Ottoman Armenian physician Haçig Boghossian (1875–1955), the Swiss psychiatrist and leading member of the international antialcohol movement Auguste Forel (1848–1931), and the Ottoman Turkish psychiatrist Mazhar Osman (1884–1951). All three were leading activists within the temperance movement at the beginning of the twentieth century. Their memoirs, correspondences and publications shed light on the role of transnational networks of experts in the process of the medicalization of the alcohol discourse in the Ottoman Empire. The study contributes to a better understanding of the exchange processes between the Ottoman Empire, Switzerland, and Germany and their impact on the modernization policy of the Ottoman state and on processes of Othering the Christian population.

Der Beitrag untersucht die Debatten über den Alkoholkonsum im späten Osmanischen Reich, die von den Beziehungen zwischen drei wissenschaftlichen Experten geprägt waren: dem osmanisch-armenischen Arzt Haçig Boghossian (1875–1955), dem Schweizer Psychiater und führenden Mitglied der internationalen Anti-Alkohol-Bewegung Auguste Forel (1848–1931) und dem osmanisch-türkischen Psychiater Mazhar Osman (1884–1951). Alle drei waren zu Beginn

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des 20. Jahrhunderts führende Aktivisten in der Abstinenzbewegung. Ihre Memoiren, Korrespondenzen und Veröffentlichungen beleuchten die Rolle transnationaler Expertennetzwerke im Prozess der Medikalisierung des Alkoholdiskurses in der Türkei. Die Studie leistet einen Beitrag zum Verständnis der Austauschprozesse zwischen dem Osmanischen Reich, der Schweiz und Deutschland sowie deren Auswirkungen auf die Modernisierungspolitik des osmanischen Staates und Prozesse der Ausgrenzung der christlichen Bevölkerung.

1. Introduction

During the First World War, many issues came to the surface of political debates in the Ottoman Empire that had previously not been discussed publicly, or only marginally. For example, heated controversies arose over the issue of equal citizenship for men and women, the lifting of the veil, the expansion of democratic rights and reforms of the law and state institutions, to name just a few examples inspired by the developments in European countries.¹ One of the topics that has been almost completely neglected in the historiography of the late Ottoman Empire is that of debates surrounding "alcohol". However, the research literature, which has been focused mostly on the European and American context, has emphasized the significance of the topic "alcohol problem" for the history of globalization of science, transnational circulation of ideas, social reform movements, medicine, and networks of experts and their role in pathologizing alcoholism throughout nineteenth and early twentieth century.² The pathologizing of alcoholism was based on scientific explanations and, for each nation state, served as a tool to impose the "moral regulation" of social deviance.³ For implementing policies, this was meant as a combination of bio-political, social hygienic and eugenic measures. The organizational structure of the antialcohol movement is seen as being significant for the transnational circulation of ideas and concepts of "alcoholism".⁴

In recent years, few studies have been conducted on drinking cultures in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. In his recent study, François Georgeon sheds light on the production

1 E. Biçer-Deveci, *Die osmanisch-türkische Frauenbewegung im Kontext internationaler Frauenorganisationen*, Göttingen 2017; S. Çakır, *Osmanlı kadın hareketi [The Ottoman Women's Movement]*, Istanbul 1994; G. Plagemann, *Von Allahs Gesetz zur Modernisierung per Gesetz: Gesetz und Gesetzgebung im Osmanischen Reich und der Republik Türkei*, Münster 2009.

2 See R. Phillips, *Alcohol: A History*, Chapel Hill, NC 2014; M. L. Schrad, *The Political Power of Bad Ideas: Networks, Institutions, and The Global Prohibition Wave*, Oxford, New York, Auckland 2010.

3 J. Tschurennev/F. Spöring/J. Grosse, Einleitung, in: J. Große et al. (eds.), *Biopolitik und Sittlichkeitsreform: Kampagnen gegen Alkohol, Drogen und Prostitution 1880–1950*, Frankfurt am Main/New York 2014, pp. 29–30; D. Heath, *Purifying Empire: Obscenity and the Politics of Moral Regulation in Britain, India and Australia*, New York 2010; I. Tyrrell, *Reforming the World: The Creation of America's Moral Empire*, Princeton 2010.

4 N. Brownlee, *This Is Alcohol*, London 2002; A.-M. E. Szymanski, *Pathways to Prohibition: Radicals, Moderates, and Social Movement Outcomes*, Durham, NC 2003; Große et al., *Biopolitik und Sittlichkeitsreform*; H. Fischer-Tiné/J. Tschurennev, Introduction. Indian Anomalies? – Drink and Drugs in the Land of Gandhi, in: H. Fischer-Tiné/J. Tschurennev (eds.), *A History of Alcohol and Drugs in Modern South Asia: Intoxicating Affairs*, London/New York 2014, pp. 1–25; R. E. Colvard, "Drunkards Beware!" – Prohibition and Nationalist Politics in the 1930s, in: Fischer-Tiné/Tschurennev, *A History of Alcohol and Drugs*, pp. 173–200.

and trade of alcoholic beverages since the origins of the Ottoman culture in Anatolia, stating that, even though proscribed by Islamic religion, drinking alcohol was allowed and alcoholic beverages were circulating as long as they did not threaten the social order.⁵ Malte Fuhrmann examines in particular the emergence of a beer market followed by manufactures and new forms of leisure culture in Western Anatolia during the nineteenth century.⁶ Both Fuhrmann and Georgeon address the drinking culture in the Ottoman region with reference to the global circulation of goods. The emergence of the antialcohol movement is the focus of one of my recent publications.⁷ I highlight here that the issue of alcohol was a concern of the Ottoman state, intellectuals, and scientists since the late nineteenth century, quite simultaneously with the developments in Europe and the US and with reference to the context of the First World War, when the link between the “alcohol problem” and the image of the Christian enemy was created. This link served to legitimize the introduction of a total alcohol ban law, which served as a tool to expropriate the Christian population dominating the alcohol trade.

Besides this part of the literature, there are only a few Turkish studies that focus on specific topics and provide relevant evidence about the existence of an Ottoman antialcohol movement.⁸ The fragmented literature refers to relations to European countries at the margins. However, the research does not show how relations and exchange emerged at the microhistorical level to understand the circulation of ideas and concepts and the movement of people across borders. The approach of the “Germansphere” focuses the perspective on the microhistorical level of historical actors and can help explain exchange processes within the international temperance movement, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, between the Ottoman Empire and German-speaking countries, as well as across religious boundaries.

To this end, I study biographies of persons who played an important role in the debates on alcohol in early twentieth-century Istanbul and their relationship to each other: Mazhar Osman (Uzman) (1884–1951),⁹ a scientist with great significance for psychiatry and the development of antialcohol movement in the Ottoman Empire; Haçig Boghossian (1875–1955),¹⁰ an Armenian psychiatrist in Istanbul and founder of the Union of Anti-

5 F. Georgeon, *Au pays du raki. Une histoire du vin et de l'alcool de l'Empire Ottoman à la Turquie d'Erdogan (XIVe-XXe siècles)*, Paris 2020; F. Georgeon, *Ottomans and Drinkers: The Consumption of Alcohol in Istanbul in the Nineteenth Century*, in: E. L. Rogan (ed.), *Outside in: On the Margins of the Modern Middle East*, London 2002.

6 M. Fuhrmann, *Beer, the Drink of a Changing World: Beer Consumption and Production on the Shores of the Aegean in the 19th Century*, in: *Turcica* 45 (2014), pp. 79–123.

7 E. Biçer-Deveci, *Turkey's Prohibition in 1920: Modernising an Islamic Law*, in: E. Biçer-Deveci/P. Bourmaud (eds.), *Alcohol in the Maghreb and the Middle East since the Nineteenth Century: Disputes, Policies and Practices*, Cham 2021, pp. 23–42.

8 C. Karakılıç, *Karadeniz Ereğlisi Osmanlı İçki Düşmanları Cemiyeti [The Ottoman Anti-Alcohol Association in Karadeniz Ereğlisi]*, in: *Akademik Bakış Dergisi* 29 (2012), pp. 1–9 (accessed 24 September 2019); Georgeon, *Au pays du raki*.

9 S. Saygılı, *Mazhar Osman*, Istanbul 1998, pp. 9–11.

10 Ş. Etker, *Dr. Haçig Boğosyan ve Türkio Hagalkolagan Ingeragtsityun: [Türkiye Anti-Alkolikler Birliği] [The Union of Antialcoholics in Turkey]*, *Kebikeç: İnsan Bilimleri İçin Kaynak Araştırmaları Dergisi* (2020) 49, pp. 221–234.

Alcoholics in Turkey; and Auguste Forel (1848–1931),¹¹ a Swiss psychiatrist and leading member of the international antialcohol movement. The reason for focusing on these three individuals is their relationship. Osman and Boghossian were both active in the antialcohol movement in Istanbul and had close contact with Forel during his visits in Istanbul in 1910.

Boghossian and Osman were members of the first generation of psychiatrists in the Ottoman Empire with educational backgrounds in Germany and Switzerland.¹² While Auguste Forel's biography is well researched,¹³ his activities in the Ottoman Empire and the significance of his mission in relation to antialcoholism in the Turkish context have never been studied. There is one biographical study by Saygılı on Mazhar Osman published with a collection of his memoirs and lectures.¹⁴ Exploring this, the current study gives an overview of the main stations of Osman during his travel to Germany and provides sources documenting the view of Osman on the "alcohol problem" and how to solve it. Saygılı emphasizes Mazhar's pioneering role in establishing psychiatry as an academic discipline in Turkey, but is neither interested in the narratives about alcohol nor in relationships with local actors, and the European antialcohol movement is neglected. For Haçig Boghossian, I refer to Şeref Etker's article for biographical information because this is the only study on Boghossian available and accessible in Turkish.¹⁵ It is more of a documentation of Boghossian's activities related to the antialcohol movement, but his interpretation and contextualization remain superficial.

Other personalities whose paths crossed are also relevant to study: Emil Kraepelin (1856–1926),¹⁶ a leading figure in research about the effects of alcohol and was respected by the three key figures as a supervisor and antialcohol activist, and Raşit Tahsin (1870–1936),¹⁷ who was taught by Emil Kraepelin and was also the supervisor of Mazhar Osman. With the present study, I show that debates about alcohol can be situated within academic exchange processes that have intensified since the late nineteenth century, mainly with Germany and Switzerland.¹⁸ In the first part, I introduce Osman and his influence

11 F. Spöring, "Du musst Apostel der Wahrheit werden": Auguste Forel und der sozialhygienische Antialkoholdiskurs 1886–1931, in: Große et al., *Biopolitik und Sittlichkeitsreform*, pp. 111–144.

12 Etker, Dr. Haçig Boğosyan ve Turkio Hagalkolagan Ingeragtsityun.

13 See the discussion of literature about Auguste Forel and his works in Spöring, "Du musst Apostel der Wahrheit werden"; N. G. Kamenov, *Global Temperance and the Balkans: American Missionaries, Swiss Scientists and Bulgarian Socialists, 1870–1940*, Cham 2020; H. H. Walser, *Auguste Forel: Briefe, Correspondance; 1864–1927*, Zürich 1968.

14 Saygılı, Mazhar Osman; L. Behmoaras, *Mazhar Osman: kapalı kutudaki fırtına [Mazhar Osman: Storm in a Closed Box]*, Ankara 2001.

15 Etker, Dr. Haçig Boğosyan ve Turkio Hagalkolagan Ingeragtsityun.

16 Saygılı, Mazhar Osman, p. 10. For the biography of Kraepelin and his antialcohol activities, see T. Schmidt, *Emil Kraepelin und die Abstinenzbewegung*, Dissertation. University of München, 1982.

17 M. Şehiraltı, *Mental Diseases Described in „Seririyat-i Akliye Desleri“: A Work of Raşit Tahsin (Tuğsavul)*, in: *Yeni tip Tarihi Arastirmalari (The New History of Medicine Studies)* 7 (2001), pp. 35–44.

18 See, among others, A. Erdoğan, *Osmanlı'da yurt dışı eğitim ve modernleşme [Foreign Education and Modernization in the Ottoman Empire]*, İstanbul 2016; H. L. Kieser, *Vorkämpfer der modernen Türkei. Revolutionäre Bildungseliten am Genfersee (1870–1939)*, Zürich 2005; M. A. Yalçinkaya, *Learned Patriots: Debating Science, State, and Society in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire*, Chicago 2015.

through Emil Kraepelin and German science. This part serves to understand the connection between the subject of alcohol and ideas of modernization based on European models. With these remarks, I show the influence of German psychiatrists on Osman. Switzerland was part of the realm of experts dominated by German psychiatrists, here through the activities of Auguste Forel. The second part follows Forel's path and relationship with Boghossian. Using the triangular relationship between Osman, Forel and Boghossian, I show the benefits of using the lens of the "Germansphere" in the study of networks and exchange processes and their relevance for medicalizing the "alcohol problem" as well as in creating a link between alcohol and modernization discourse in the late Ottoman Empire.

2. Mazhar Osman in Munich: Exchanges with German Experts

Mazhar Osman studied at the Military Medical Academy in Istanbul. After working for a few years in the psychiatric clinic of the Gülhane military hospital, he travelled to Berlin and Munich in 1908 to study neurology and psychology under the guidance of the German psychiatrist Emil Kraepelin (1856–1926). Upon his return, he became chief physician of the Haydarpaşa Military Hospital, the Department of Psychiatry and Neurology, later rising to the ranks of chief physician of the Mental Hospital in Toptaşı. During his career, he actively campaigned for the recognition of *delilik* (madness) as a mental illness and published about it for the general public.¹⁹ In 1920, together with religious authorities and other scientists, he founded the antialcohol organization the Green Crescent (established in 1920) and its official publication *İçki Düşmanı Gazete* (The Enemy Journal of Alcohol).

Osman's views on addiction and alcohol were profoundly influenced by Emil Kraepelin. When Osman came to Munich, Kraepelin was a respected professor with his research on alcohol and antialcohol activities. In his memoirs, Osman reports on his stay in Munich and describes his impression of Kraepelin:

*If you go through the door of the famous clinic [Psychiatric Clinic of the Ludwig Maximilian University] in Nussbaumstraße in Munich, you see the sign 'Avoid alcohol'. [Kraepelin] doesn't allow you to eat a dessert that has even a drop of alcohol in it. His wife and daughter; they are all followers of temperance.*²⁰

In his memoirs, Osman expresses his admiration for Kraepelin's antialcoholism. This antialcoholism was much stricter than that of Şeyhülislam, the title of the Grand Mufti, according to Osman.²¹ Osman also describes Munich's attraction to international scho-

19 R. Kılıç, *Deliller ve doktorları: Osmanlı'dan cumhuriyet'e delilik* [The Insane and Their Doctors: Insanity from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic], Istanbul 2014, p. 21.

20 Saygılı, Mazhar Osman, p. 69.

21 Ibid., p. 69.

lars and tells of one event where he was overwhelmed for the first time by Kraepelin's influence on his drinking habit:

*At my table came our professor of pathology, Alzheimer. In a low voice he warned me about my greatest vice: "Dear colleague", he said, "Kraepelin will be very sad if he sees a glass of beer in front of you. He keeps talking about you: 'see this Turk, what a strong mind and body, he comes to the clinics at 8 in the morning and leaves at 9 in the evening. Thirteen hours, sometimes he doesn't even go for lunch, that's the benefit if you don't drink alcohol!' When he sees you like this, he will realise he was wrong.' I apologized and said I was conforming to custom and taught that this was the etiquette, then I ordered lemonade.*²²

Osman was not pursuing the ideal expressed in Alzheimer's account, but this is a reference to the ideals associated with abstinence and Islamic nondrinking habits in German views. According to Osman, Kraepelin tried to discourage people from drinking by pointing out living examples, and these people, when taught by Kraepelin, certainly became the enemies of alcohol. "And this hatred and hostility [against] drinking grew in me and my colleagues from year to year", Osman says of Kraepelin's influence. He refers to his students, who later became teetotalers when they attended courses by Kraepelin.²³ Towards the end of the nineteenth century, when it came to sending students to education, German universities were favoured by the Ottoman state.²⁴ Paris, which had been the most popular place for Ottoman students to study, lost the interest of the Sultanate. The reason for this was the political activities of the students in Paris. However, military and political rapprochements with Germany also led to a preference for Munich and Berlin.²⁵ The Ottoman state also commissioned German doctors to modernize the hospitals in Istanbul. Prof. Dr Robert Reider (1861–1913) and Prof. Dr Georg Deycke (1865–1938)²⁶ worked for several years at the military academy for medicine and were instructed to modernize the institution. The shift from the French to German school of medicine was not without conflict. According to Mazhar Osman, the teachers at the academy who had received their education in France resisted the many changes that German teachers wanted to introduce. Because of these conflicts, Rieder was given a budget to open a new clinic at Gülhane, and it was here that Raşit Tahsin served as Rieder's assistant and translator.²⁷

22 Ibid., p. 70.

23 Ibid., pp. 69–70.

24 M. Gençoğlu, Başlangıçtan II. Meşrutiyet'e Osmanlı Devleti Tarafından Tıp Eğitimi İçin Avrupa'ya Gönderilenlerin Modern Türk Tıbbına Katkıları [The Contributions of the Students who were Sent to Europe for Medical Education to Turkish Medicine, from the Beginning to the Second Constitution], *KÖK Journal of Social and Strategic Research* 1 (Spring 2008), pp. 89–115.

25 Kılıç, *Deliller ve doktorları*, p. 14.

26 N. Paksoy, Role of German-speaking Scholars in the Development of Pathology in Turkey, in: *Wiener Medizinische Wochenschrift* 170 (2020) 3, p. 95.

27 M. (Uzman) Osman (ed.), *Sihhat Almanakı* [Almanac of Health], Istanbul 1933, p. 112.

Osman's transformation into an advocate of abstinence might actually have begun during his study at home when he was a student of Raşit Tahsin (1870–1936).²⁸ Tahsin was one of the students sent by the Ottoman state to Germany to study psychiatry, here with the aim of modernizing the military medical academy in Istanbul. Earlier than Osman, Tahsin was influenced by Kraepelin's teachings on psychiatry and alcohol. Between 1893 and 1896, he studied and worked in clinics and laboratories of psychology, psychiatry and neurology in Germany.²⁹ He developed his methods for diagnosing and categorizing diseases and his theories when in dialogue with German psychiatrists.³⁰

When Osman returned from his stay in Germany in 1909, he gave a public speech in Dedeâğaç (Alexandroupolis), during which he stressed Germany's "technological and cultural superiority".³¹ In his speech, he referred to Europe but actually meant Germany. He considered Germany to be the representative country of European modernity and culture. In his opinion, the drinking habits of Germans reflect their cultural superiority over Turkish society:

*Indeed, many men drink beer or a little wine when they are thirsty; but on the street you do not meet drinkers who shout at people, attack them or insult them. There are even many who find age-old drinking habits repulsive. Many do not drink in their entire lives. For us, alcohol is an example of being civilized and progressing; in Europe, non-drinkers boast of these virtues [of abstinence].*³²

The cultural malaise expressed by Osman was a reason for many intellectuals to critique the backwardness of Ottoman society and argue for the need for reform and modernization of the state along European lines.³³ Indeed, the period from 1878 to 1922 in the Ottoman Empire was characterised by intense intellectual debates on how to save the empire from decline. Notions of modernity were linked to the conviction of the technological and cultural superiority of European culture. This position is referred to in Turkish historiography as auto-orientalism and refers to the critique of one's own culture through orientalist narratives of Western origins.³⁴ Osman used the same framework to condemn drinking habits and maintain the notion of the superiority of German culture. The subject of alcohol was a convenient manoeuvre for him to demonstrate the ability of his profession to solve certain "social problems" and to cure the nation of its supposed degeneration and backwardness. For Osman, the German model of modernity was ex-

28 Şehiraltı, Mental Diseases Described in "Seririyat-i Akliye Desleri".

29 F. K. Gökay, Akliye Seririyatı Çalışma Tarzı ve İhsaiyatı [Works and Statistics of the Psychiatric Clinic], Istanbul 1933.

30 See G. Koptagel-İlal, Son 100 Yılda Türkiye'de Genel Çizgileriyle Psikiyatri ve Psikosomatik Hekimliğinin Gelişimi [Development of Psychiatry and Psychosomatic Medicine in Turkey in the Last 100 Years], in: Cerrahpaşa Tıp Fakültesi Dergisi 12 (1981), pp. 255–372, at 364.

31 M. O. Uzman, Konferanslarım (Medikal, Paramedikal), Istanbul 1940, p. 109.

32 Ibid., pp. 120–121.

33 See S. Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas, Syracuse, NY 2000.

34 See, for instance, B. Bezci/Y. Çiftci, Self oryantalizm: İçimizdeki modernite ve/veya içselleştirdiğimiz modernleşme [Selforientalism: The Modernity in Us and/or Our Internalized Modernization], in: Akademik İncelemeler Dergisi 7 (2012) 1, pp. 139–166.

pressed in drinking habits; he used this term to define an "alcohol problem" in Turkish society.

The connection between alcohol consumption and modernity was self-evident for Osman and other Turkish experts. This was also the case for Tahsin, who participated as a delegate of the Ottoman state in the Fourth International Congress for the Care of the Insane in Berlin in October 1910.³⁵

His speech focused on mental illness and psychiatry in the Ottoman Empire. After his return to Istanbul, Tahsin published his speech in the book *Berlin Emrâz-i Akliye ve Asabiye Kongresi* to share its content with the wider public and state. Even though the congress was about mental illness, the topic of alcohol and drugs seemed to play a central role in Tahsin's speech. According to Tahsin, Muslims suffered less from mental illness than Europeans, and opium addicts were rare in the Ottoman Empire. Other addictions, such as drugs (esrar) and tobacco, were also very rare, he said, but he had noticed that more and more students were consuming beer over the past 15 years.³⁶ After the presentation of the Italian delegate, Professor Augusto Tamburini (1848–1919),³⁷ discussions arose at the congress. Tamburini claimed that the reason for the lower number of mental illnesses in the Ottoman Empire was that Ottoman society had not progressed and that the Islamic religion prevented any progress in civilization and medicine.³⁸ According to him, the situation of the mentally ill in the Ottoman Empire was very bad because of a lack of professional doctors. As he describes in his book, Tahsin reacted sharply to Tamburini's claims, pointing to the existence of several hospitals for mental illness in the Ottoman Empire.³⁹

The relevant point from the discussion at the congress in Berlin is that mental disease was seen as representing the degree of civilization and progress of a nation. This claim was later supported by Fahrettin Gökay, a psychiatrist and board member of the Green Crescent. According to Gökay, modernization exhausts nerves, which is why there has been an increase in mental illness in modern times.⁴⁰ Mazhar Osman also emphasized the nexus between civilization/modernity and mental illnesses. In his publications, he tried to demonstrate the increase in mental diseases that accompanied modernization and referred to Emil Kraepelin. Osman claimed to observe a collective paralysis of the population and related this phenomenon to the increase of alcohol consumption as the

35 J. K. E. Boedeker/W. Falkenberg IV, Internationaler Kongress zur Fürsorge für Geistesranke, Berlin, Oktober 1910: Offizieller Bericht (1911); S. Erkoç/T. Kıtıl, Uluslararası Bir Kongrede Sunulan İlk Türk Psikiyatri Bildirisi: Türkiye'de Ruh Hastalıkları ve Psikiyatri [The First Turkish Psychiatry Paper Presented at an International Congress: Mental Diseases and Psychiatry in Turkey], in: 3 P Dergisi 2 (2001) 9, pp. 295–304.

36 Kılıç, Deliler ve doktorları, pp. 18–19.

37 For the biography of Augusto Tamburini, see A. De Riso, The Italian Psychiatric Experience, Newcastle upon Tyne 2019, p. 33.

38 R. Tahsin, Berlin emraz-ı akliye ve asabiye kongresi [The Congress on Mental and Neurological Diseases in Berlin], Istanbul 1910, pp. 4–5.

39 Ibid., pp. 5–7.

40 Kılıç, Deliler ve doktorları, p. 20.

result of the civilisatory process.⁴¹ Similar to the links between mental illness and modernity that have been made at the Berlin Congress, Osman connected alcoholism to modernity as its side effects. This connection served primarily to show that the Ottoman Empire was a part of the modern world and, thus, was suffering from the same diseases and degenerations that had affected European countries. We can assume that Tahsin was primarily motivated by this view when he took part in the Berlin Congress as an Ottoman delegate.

In contrast to Tahsin, Osman resorted to auto-orientalist rhetoric in his speech in 1909. The contrast with Germany served to justify the profession of psychiatry as an authoritative sphere. The “alcohol question” provided a sphere in which he could resort to scientific knowledge acquired in Germany to request certain normative rules for daily life, for instance, abstinence.

3. Auguste Forel in Istanbul: Building Networks

In 1920, Osman cofounded the Association of the Green Crescent. He attributed the initiative and his antialcohol activities to Auguste Forel. Forel studied medicine at the University of Zurich and wrote his PhD thesis in neuroanatomy at the University of Vienna. From 1878 to 1898, he was a professor of psychiatry in Zurich and director of the psychiatric clinic Burghölzli.⁴² In the passage below, Osman describes Forel’s efforts to spread antialcoholism in his book, but he also mentions others who were motivated to form an antialcohol organization:

It was one year after the Constitution [referring to the begin of the Second Constitutional era in 1908]. The director of the Régie,⁴³ Baha Bey,⁴⁴ and some friends wanted to propagate war against alcohol in our country in the European tradition. The real master of this propaganda was the Swiss Forel. Being the most famous scholar in the world, having served for many years as professor of psychiatry in Zurich, this old man was always an enemy of alcohol, gave lectures against alcohol everywhere, walked around within society at large. [...] Father Forel [Forel baba] was not only active in Switzerland, but he also motivated the world against alcohol. Even in Bulgaria, he managed to form clubs. During the Constitution [1908–1920], he sent his letters to his former students, Drs Boğosyan [Boghossian] and Baha, and to us, announcing that he would take over [the forming of a club] in Istanbul; Forel came to Istanbul, to Galata lycée, the lycée of the

41 M. (Uzman) Osman, *Tababet-i Ruhiye [Psychiatry]*, 3rd edn, Istanbul 1947, p. 254; Kiliç, *Deliler ve doktorları*, pp. 21–22.

42 B. Kuechenhoff, *The Psychiatrist Auguste Forel and His Attitude to Eugenics*, in: *History of Psychiatry* 19 (2008), pp. 215–223.

43 The Régie Company, the Ottoman Tobacco Monopoly (*la Société de la régie cointéressée des tabacs de l'empire Ottoman*). In 1925, the Régie was nationalised by the Turkish Republican State and in 1929 replaced by the institution, TEKEK; see M. Birdal, *The Political Economy of Ottoman Public Debt: Insolvency and European Financial Control in the Late Nineteenth Century*, London/New York 2010, pp. 232–233.

44 Etker, Dr. Haçî Boğosyan ve Türkîo Hagalkolagan Ingeragtsityun, p. 229; Tırnakzade Baha Bey (1868–1934).

*Greek Academy, and he gave very beautiful lectures on anti-alcoholism. I learned from many of his works, and even fell in love with his style of statement; I admired his simple way of explaining the minutiae of medicine to an educated society.*⁴⁵

Auguste Forel was one of the leaders of the international temperance movement and shaped the pathologizing of the "alcohol problem" in Europe. He founded, together with Emil Kraepelin, the Association of Abstinent Doctors (*Verein Abstinenter Ärzte*) in 1896 in Frankfurt.⁴⁶ He was a member of the Independent Order of Good Templars.⁴⁷ This order, founded in 1852 in New York by members of the Methodist Church, was a hub for activists in the field of social hygiene and temperance.⁴⁸ Sections in Europe were soon founded. In 1892, Forel founded the first long-term European lodge in Zurich. The abstinence required by the order involved more than abstaining from alcohol. The Good Templar must make a vow not to consume alcoholic liquors and brewed and fermented drinks; not to take opium, morphine, ether, Indian hemp, or cocaine for stimulants; or make, buy, sell or give them to anyone.⁴⁹ In 1902, the organization added "International" to its name. Members of the Good Templar played a crucial role in forging international networks for prohibitionists and in the transnational circulation of concepts and ideas of social hygiene.⁵⁰ The transnational connections of the Good Templar consisted of communities in science and education, socialist movements and the Blue Cross.⁵¹ In the 1890s, several German and Swiss scientists, including Emil Kraepelin, joined the Good Templar order. At the same time, these members provided scientific arguments and facts for prohibition and campaigns about social hygiene schemes.⁵²

The extent to which members of the Turkish temperance movement were connected to the International Order of Good Templars is still an open question. Forel lists the foundation of several lodges in different areas of Western Anatolia for the struggle against alcohol. Beginning in 1910, Forel travelled to various countries in South-East Europe, Turkey and North Africa to spread his mission of antialcoholism. From 28 March to 29 April of that year, he was in Turkey.⁵³ When he arrived in Istanbul, Dr Haçig Boghossian (1875–1955)⁵⁴ received him and helped him with the organization of the conferences. Before Forel's journey, Boghossian had already sent him a letter in French in which he gives a brief description of drinking habits in the Ottoman Empire:

45 M. Osman, *Sihhat Almanakı*, Cağaloğlu 1933, pp. 776–778. Translated in Biçer-Deveci/Bourmaud, *Alcohol in the Maghreb and in the Middle East*.

46 Schmidt, *Emil Kraepelin und die Abstinenzbewegung*, p. 26.

47 A. Forel, *Der Guttempler-Orden: Ein sozialer Reformator*, Schaffhausen 1900, p. 1.

48 F. Spörring, *Mission und Sozialhygiene: Schweizer Anti-Alkohol-Aktivismus im Kontext von Internationalismus und Kolonialismus, 1886–1939*, Zurich, 2014, p. 101.

49 Forel, *Der Guttempler-Orden*, p. 9.

50 Schrad, *The Political Power of Bad Ideas*, p. 47.

51 Spörring, *Mission und Sozialhygiene*, pp. 101–103.

52 *Schweizer Abstinenter* 6 (1905), pp. 97–98 und 15 (1939), p. 59; Spörring, *Mission und Sozialhygiene*, p. 103.

53 A. Forel, *Rückblick auf mein Leben*, Zürich 2010, p. 303.

54 Etker, Dr. Haçig Boğosyan ve Turkio Hagalkolagan Ingeragtsityun, p. 225.

*It is true that among the people of the country, there is no excessive drinking of alcohol. [...] Among the different nationalities [in the Ottoman Empire], the Greeks drink the most, then the more or less cultivated class. The Turks, who are in the lower class, [drink] considerably more than the Greeks; the non-educated class and the most fanatic Muslims do not drink at all. Among the Armenians, the habit of drinking alcohol had also subsided, but to a smaller degree. Other nationalities in the country are in the same category. Thus, there are certainly many things to do to protect the country from this abominable flow.*⁵⁵

Şeref Etker, who investigated the biography of Boghossian, claims that Boghossian began his antialcohol activities after the arrival of Forel in Istanbul.⁵⁶ However, the letter above indicates that Boghossian had earlier connections to Forel and was informed about the antialcohol movement in Europe, as well as the fledgling one in Istanbul. Etker does not mention any connection between Forel and Boghossian when the latter was an assistant doctor in Cery-Lausanne (Western Switzerland). At this time, the psychiatric profession was a small community entertaining transnational networks whose members knew each other. The Armenian networks of medicine and psychiatry were also engaged in antivice campaigns. For instance, Dr Garabed Han Pashayan (1864–1915),⁵⁷ a member of *Ermeni Ettiba Cemiyeti* (Armenian Association of Physicians), which was cofounded by Haçig Boghossian, founded an antialcohol organization in Tabriz (Iran) in 1903, when he was a court physician to Iran's Shah Muzaferuddin.⁵⁸ At the very least, the connections within this network are signs of earlier antialcohol activities that were part of the programme of medical and psychiatric professional associations in the Ottoman Empire.

Boghossian organized and campaigned for Forel's lectures before his arrival. Boghossian's letter, written in February 1910, indicates that, with the help of his friends (among others, the Régie director Louis Rambert), he planned Forel's stay, lectures and places to visit:

For conference room free of charge, I spoke to the Greek Association of Literary Sylloge, which has promised to arrange their room on your arrival; the board of the administration will allow me to know more in a few days. The language of the conference should surely be French, which most of the population here is knowledgeable of. I saw M. [Louis] Rambert for a few days, and then he left for Egypt, where he must reside for a month. He is entirely pessimistic and believes that you will not have any success because Turks are currently especially busy with the regeneration of their lands.

55 T. Boghossian to Auguste Forel, Constantinople, le 2 II 910, Archiv für Medizingeschichte Universität Zürich Signatur PN 31.02.380.

56 Ibid., p. 224.

57 Ş. Etker, İkinci Meşrutiyetin tabip örgütleri [Associations of Physicians during the Second Constitution], İstanbul 2017, pp. 254, 269; Etker, Dr. Haçig Boğosyan ve Türkio Hagalkolagan Ingeragtsityun, pp. 226–227.

58 R. Matthee, The Pursuit of Pleasure: Drugs and Stimulants in Iranian History, 1500–1900, Princeton, NJ 2005, pp. 187, 200.

*In the meantime, he promised to help you when you arrive by presenting you to his acquaintances. This is the response of M. Rambert; he is very indifferent to this question.*⁵⁹

Louis Rambert (1839–1919), a Swiss lawyer, was tasked by the Ottoman state to direct the Régie Company, the Ottoman Tobacco Monopoly (*la Société de la régie cointéressée des tabacs de l'empire Ottoman*).⁶⁰ This company was formed by the Ottoman Public Debt Administration and European banks in 1883 to pay off the debts of the Ottoman state to European banks and, thus, overcome the state's persistent financial crisis. Forel mentions Rambert in his memoirs as being one of his close friends, facilitating his accommodations and travels.⁶¹ The letter indicates that Forel and Boghossian had common friends in Istanbul and that Boghossian was trying to raise public attention on the arrival of Forel to Istanbul. He mentions in the letter the French daily newspaper, *La Turquie*, intended to publish some of Forel's articles and that he would send Forel's articles to other newspapers, too.⁶²

In the Ottoman Empire, Forel gave a total of 17 lectures on the antialcohol movement in French, though some were simultaneously translated.⁶³ As he explains, "The Tower of Babel of languages in Turkey is terrible. Every ethnic group has its own customs, languages, confessions, squares, or own houses, and I had to form special lodges with appropriate translations."⁶⁴ Probably, Forel was an ideal mediator of the antialcohol movement with his knowledge of French and German.

In the Greek Sylloge (*Ellinikos Filologikos Syllogos*),⁶⁵ Forel founded the Greek Good Templars Lodge Byzance Nr. 2. Boghossian, who introduced Forel to the Greek community, himself founded an Armenian lodge. His friend, Dr Orhan Tahsin (no information found), organized lectures at the medical school at Haydarpaşa and at another school in Istanbul. Forel founded a lodge in Salonika, which was a Jewish Spanish Lodge, Voluntas Nr. 3. In Smyrna, he founded the lodge Persévérance Nr. 5, with the help of the Alliance Française, the Cercle Israélite and the Cercle Italien.⁶⁶ Forel justifies his efforts for the foundation of a lodge in the Ottoman Empire: "In the orient, customs of drinking are spreading to an increasing extent, and they must be combatted through prevention in time."⁶⁷

59 T. Boghossian to Auguste Forel, Constantinople, le 2 II 910, Archiv für Medizingeschichte Universität Zürich Signatur PN 31.02.380.

60 T. David, Louis Rambert, (1839–1919): un Vaudois au service de l'impérialisme français dans l'empire ottoman, in: *Les annuelles* (1994) 5, pp. 105–146.

61 Forel, *Rückblick auf mein Leben*, p. 303.

62 T. Boghossian to Auguste Forel, Constantinople, le 2 II 910, Archiv für Medizingeschichte Universität Zürich Signatur PN 31.02.380.

63 *Ibid.*, p. 303.

64 *Ibid.*, p. 305.

65 Ş. Etker, İstanbul'un İlk Verem Savaşımı Derneği: Ligue contre la Tuberculose (Phitisie pulmonaire) de Constantinople [The First Association to Fight Against Tuberculosis in Istanbul: Ligue contre la Tuberculose (Phitisie pulmonaire) de Constantinople], in: *Osmanlı Bilimi Araştırmaları* 21 (2020) 2, pp. 225–247.

66 Forel, *Rückblick auf mein Leben*, p. 305.

67 A. Forel, *Reiseindrücke aus dem Orient*, in: *Die Umschau*, 2 July 1910, pp. 537, 538.

Even though convinced of his preventive work for the “orient”, Forel does not provide information about the further existence of these lodges in his memoirs or correspondence. This lack of information indicates the short-lived character of his efforts in the Ottoman Empire. The lodges were mainly situated in areas where non-Muslim communities resided. The short life of these lodges is possibly related to the outbreak of the First World War, during which the majority of the Christian population was forced to leave the country.

A hindrance to establishing a substantial foundation for antialcohol activism can be seen in the views of Forel himself. Soon after his return to Switzerland, he published an essay in the German-language Swiss journal *Die Umschau*, in which he describes his impressions of Ottoman society. His views have strong orientalist overtones and are quite similar to the self-orientalizing critiques of Mazhar Osman:

Almost all Turks are monogamous, but only out of thrift. They indemnify themselves when they have money, through concubinage, prostitution, etc., which, for them, is less expensive.

*This fatal Moslem education is surely the main cause of the terrible chaos. Work is seen as a burden and as a dishonour. A boy grows up with a sense of his male superiority and only works when he must. The Turk is thus an excellent man as a blindly obeying subordinate, but useless as an independent leader. As soon as he gains power, he misuses it for making money, becomes corrupt and does nothing anymore. Also, here, there are exceptions that confirm the rule, but these kinds of ethical Turks suffer deeply under these conditions.*⁶⁸

His impressions of the drinking habits of Turks are reminiscent of the critiques of many reform intellectuals in the Ottoman Empire who accused the society of imitating “Western” vices but not adopting its scientific and technological advancements:⁶⁹ “The reform-minded Turks have taken our vices faster than our virtues. [...] Inwardly, they do not believe in the Quran anymore.”⁷⁰

Forel’s description in the journal *Die Umschau* contradicts the picture of drinking habits in the Ottoman Empire that Boghossian tried to give in his letter, as referenced at the beginning of this part. We can interpret this as Forel deliberately using orientalist interpretative patterns in his article for the public to assert the relevance of his antialcoholism mission. In the same article, he mentions his efforts for the foundation of a lodge to explain his reasons for travelling to the Ottoman Empire. It is safe to assume that Forel held more than just an orientalist view and that an unspoken agenda can be seen in his style of writing. He describes the opportunities for a struggle against alcohol, even in a country that is backward and lazy, thereby strongly suggesting that more effort should be made in Switzerland, which, in his view, represents a European and hardworking country, hence the opposite of Ottoman society.

68 Ibid., p. 536.

69 S. Mardin, *Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, Albany 1989.

70 Forel, *Reiseeindrücke aus dem Orient*, p. 536.

4. Mazhar Osman and Haçig Boghossian: A Forgotten Alliance?

Over the course of the First World War, when the Armenian population was forced to leave the country and had to face genocidal massacres by the Turkish Army, Haçig Boghossian was forced into exile in 1915, which came during his military service in the Turkish Army. Then, in the same year, he was recalled by the Ministry of the Interior to serve as a physician in Aleppo and Damascus. Two years before his exile, in 1913, he founded an Armenian antialcohol organization, *Turkio Hagalkolagan Ingeragtsityun* (Union of Anti-Alcoholics in Turkey) and the publication *Huys* (Hope), for the propagation of struggles against alcohol.⁷¹ The title of the first issue shows a portrait of Auguste Forel and refers to Forel’s leading position in the antialcohol movement. The organization and journal ended that same year.

Based on the fact that both Boghossian and Osman were in contact with Auguste Forel and were living at the same time in Istanbul and active in the issue of alcohol, we can assume that they were in touch with each other. The silence in sources about their interaction can be interpreted as a deliberate oblivion in the context of increased tensions between the Christian and Muslim populations of the Ottoman Empire. A striking point is the contrast in the rhetoric of both psychiatrists in describing the drinking culture in the Ottoman Empire. In his letter in February 1910, Boghossian tries to give Forel some information about drinking habits, mentioning that Turks drink the most, even more than Greeks. Ten years after this letter, when the Green Crescent was founded, Osman presented drinking as alien to Muslim culture. In his opening speech, he emphasizes the religion of the country:

*The obligation of the Green Crescent is the fight against alcohol and other intoxicating substances, which are the enemies of this country ruled by the Mohammedan religion. To ensure that this fight is honest, serious and possible, to expel this falsehood [drinking and intoxicating substances] from our country [and] to save those who are on this way – especially the younger generation – from this plague, the association has begun its activities.*⁷²

Osman describes drinking as alien to Muslim Turkish society, which, in his conviction, was essentially an abstinence culture. The emphasis on religion appears in Osman’s several other publications. Other founding members, such as Milaşı İsmail Hakkı Bey and the parliamentarian Ali Şükrü, who initiated the total alcohol ban in Turkey, used the same framing and accused the Christian population of having “poisoned” Turkish fami-

71 Etker, Dr. Haçig Boğosyan ve Turkio Hagalkolagan Ingeragtsityun, p. 225; HUYS: ԾՌՅԱ/Houyys. Barperatert aroğcabahagan, kidagan, hagalkolagan [Hope. The Journal for the Science of Anti-alcoholism and Hygiene], Turkio Hagalkolagan Ingeragtsityun yayın organı [The Publication Organ of the Union of Anti-Alcoholics in Turkey]. İstanbul, Number 1, June 1913.

72 M. Osman, Hilal-i Ahdar [The Green Crescent], in: Sebilürreşad, 1 Nisan 1336 (1 Nisan 1920), pp. 235–236.

lies through alcohol.⁷³ Milaslı İsmail Hakkı (1870–1938)⁷⁴ blamed Greek doctors for the “degeneration” of families living in Anatolia.

The speech of the physician at the founding of the Green Crescent illustrates the leverage it had. It is also an example of the instrumentalization of the concept of the Christian enemy in asserting certain normative rules in daily life, in this case, a ban on alcohol:

I found that a group of Greek doctors claimed that alcohol is very healing and suggested them to start drinking two glasses. In this way, they slowly led them to drink cognac and raki. The neural system was affected, and as a result, they had degenerated. In short, it is the lack of respect towards religion in those who introduce alcohol among Muslims and also the intention of some doctors, particularly Greek doctors, who spread the idea of healing through alcohol.⁷⁵

By using the concept of the Christian enemy, Milaslı pre-empted one of the arguments for the alcohol ban law in the Turkish National Assembly. The parliamentarian Ali Şükrü (1884–1923)⁷⁶ argued about Armenian hostility, using alcohol to “poison” Turks and enrich the “enemies”.⁷⁷

The contradiction of this rhetoric to the statements in the letter of Boghossian reflects the increased tensions between Muslim and Christian populations during the First World War. The issue of alcohol served to nourish these tensions through moralizing the alcohol trade and consumption. The concept of the Christian enemy has become a powerful element within antialcohol debates in the Ottoman Empire, which explains the reason for the fact that neither the official publication of the Green Crescent nor leaders within the association, such as Mazhar Osman and Fahreddin Kerim Gökay, mention any campaigns or collaborative work with Armenian communities or with Boghossian. The deliberative oblivion may be due the increased tension between different ethnic and religious groups in the face of nationalist movements and the violence that occurred during the years of war.

The use of the concept of the Christian enemy in alcohol debates paralleled the politics of the Turkish state of expropriation, deportation and genocide of the Christian population. With their antialcohol activities, intellectuals and scientists contributed to the legitimization of minority politics, particularly to the dispossession of Christian alcohol traders and handing the alcohol market to the Turkish state as a representative of Muslim Turkish society, all of which explains the lack of references to Christian antialcohol

73 See for example İ. H. Milaslı, İçkilerin Menine Çalışmak Lüzumu [The Need to Work for an Alcohol Ban], in: Sebilürreşad, 8 Mayıs 1333 (8 May 1919), pp. 412–413.

74 R. Çatalbaş, Milaslı Dr. İsmail Hakkı'nın Hayatı, Eserleri ve İslâm ile İlgili Görüşleri [Life, Works and Views on Islam of Milaslı Dr. İsmail Hakkı], in: Artuklu Akademi 1 (2014) 1, pp. 99–129.

75 Milaslı İsmail Hakkı, Doktor Milaslı İsmail Hakkı Beyefendi'nin Nutku [The Speech of Doctor Milaslı İsmail Hakkı Beyefendi], in: Sebilürreşad, 1 Nisan 1920 (11 Recep 1337); quotation translated in: Biçer-Deveci, Turkey's Prohibition in 1920, pp. 32–33.

76 For the biography, see K. Mısıroğlu, Ali Şükrü Bey, İstanbul 1978.

77 TBMM, ZC, 13.9.1336: 117.

groups in the publications and memoirs of Mazhar Osman and other members of the Green Crescent.

5. Conclusion

With the focus on the triangular relationship between Osman, Forel and Boghossian, I have used the perspective of the "Germansphere" to interpret the exchange processes between the Ottoman Empire, Germany and Switzerland at a microhistorical level. One of the results is belonging to a professional community of psychiatrists, which was, at the turn of the twentieth century, a transnational community and pivotal in the circulation of concepts between the Ottoman Empire and German-speaking countries, as well as across religious boundaries.

The antialcohol activities of psychiatrists in the Ottoman Empire existed earlier than 1910 but were not organised, so it is difficult to find records about any group activities during this period. An important difference in the antialcohol activities of expert communities in Europe, particularly Germany, should be highlighted. Here, Auguste Forel tried to defend the issue of alcohol as a legitimate field of action through intensive research, publications and large campaigns. In contrast, Mazhar Osman—and most probably Haçig Boghossian—saw antialcohol activities as a self-evident part of their professional lives which may be because their scientific knowledge was borrowed from German schools.

In the context of modernizing efforts in the late Ottoman Empire, Osman tried to demonstrate the capability of the new profession to solve certain "social problems" and heal the nation from its perceived degeneration and backwardness. The "alcohol problem" was also a constitutive part of modernization. Mental diseases were seen as a sign of suffering from "modernization". Related to this interpretation, the increase in alcohol consumption was an important element to show how the Ottoman Empire was a part of the modern world and suffered from the same illnesses.

Auguste Forel, as did Emil Kraepelin, contributed to the medicalization of the issue of alcohol. Through mediators such as Mazhar Osman, who were part of the scientific community of psychiatrists, the medicalized discourse on alcohol was translated into the Turkish language and nurtured through Islamic and war rhetoric. However, the orientalist views of Forel presented in the articles he wrote for a Swiss journal may have hindered him from establishing a substantial infrastructure through the formation of lodges. The short lives of these lodges are possibly also related to the outbreak of the war, during which the Christian population was forced to leave the country. At the same time, we must consider the possibility that Forel deliberately used orientalist elements in his articles for the Swiss public with the aim of emphasizing the relevance of his activities vis-à-vis his home audience.

The benefit of the perspective of the "Germansphere" lies furthermore in its reconstruction of a relationship between Osman and Boghossian, which has been documented so far neither in sources nor in the literature. The understanding between members of dif-

ferent religious groups in the context of increased tensions can be seen in the uncovering of Forel's interactions in Istanbul. This oblivion in the sources indicates the increased tensions between ethnic and religious groups and the importance of the alcohol question as a framing of these conflicts. This finding leads us to see the "alcohol problem" in the late Ottoman Empire as entangled with minority politics. As we have seen, the concept of the Christian enemy was prominent in public debates and paralleled the politics of the Turkish state of expropriation, deportation, and genocide of the Christian population. The issue of alcohol served to provide a quasi-scientific frame legitimizing nationalist policies and politics of hostility towards non-Muslim groups in the Ottoman Empire. German concepts of alcoholism, mostly shaped by Kraepelin and Forel, were influential in the construction of the image of the Christian enemy and in the Ottoman discourse of modernization.