

# The Kaiser in Baalbek: Tourism, archaeology, and the politics of imagination

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“Guillaume II a le sens de la représentation. Il voit, dans les actes de sa fonction imperiale auxquels il donne une solennité laborieusement calculée, l’expression d’un symbolisme à la fois mystique et brutal, propre à enthousiasmer non seulement ses sujets, mais les historiens et les philosophes.”<sup>2</sup>

## 1. Introduction

On October 11, 1898, the German Emperor Wilhelm II left his residence in Potsdam for a six-weeks journey that was to lead him to Constantinople, Jerusalem, Beirut, Damascus, and Baalbek. Contemporary observers were impressed by the size and splendor displayed by the Imperial travel party. On its way from Haifa to Jerusalem, 230 tents, 100 coaches, 12 large baggage wagons, 1.300 horses and mules, 100 coachmen, 600 drovers, 6 chief cooks, 6 assistant cooks, 60 waiters, 10 guides, and 12 dragomans were barely enough for the needs of the Kaiser’s court (Turkish hosts and guards *not* included). 30 additional carriages and 95 horses had to be provided by the Sultan. Together with the Ottoman dignitaries and thousands of Turkish troops that accompanied the procession, the length of the Imperial caravan on its way to Jerusalem was said to have reached that of a mobilized division.<sup>3</sup>

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[14] A puzzling blend of contradictory impressions was conveyed to the public:

Although the whole event was designed to emphasize the national presence of Germany in the Middle East, most of the Kaiser’s itinerary in

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<sup>2</sup> Denis Guibert, “De Berlin à Jérusalem”, *Le Figaro*, August 24, 1898.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar im Heiligen Lande im Herbst 1898. Mit Allerhöchster Ermächtigung Seiner Majestät des Kaisers und Königs bearbeitet nach authentischen Berichten und Akten*, Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler 1899, 99.

Palestine, Lebanon and Syria had been organized by the Thomas Cook travel agency in London. The official reason of the journey was the Kaiser's desire to attend the solemn consecration of the Evangelical Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem. Yet, of the 46 days between his departure and his return to Potsdam (October 11 - November 26, 1898) only seven (October 29 - November 4) were devoted to the Holy City and its surroundings, and the Imperial travel schedule barely left time for quiet contemplation and humble prayers. Travel costumes, means of transportation and public speeches during the journey invoked the memory of medieval pilgrimages and crusades. Yet, the most modern technology was used to present them to the mass media: every day, reports of the Kaiser's whereabouts were cabled to Germany's leading news agency, *Wolff's Telegraphisches Bureau*, for circulation in the German press. De facto, the Emperor had been traveling as a peaceful political tourist. Yet, when he returned to Germany, his entrance into Berlin on December 1, 1898, was staged as a triumphal procession worthy of the return of a victorious general from a military campaign.

On the one hand, foreign observers felt fascinated by the spectacular expedition of "that most sensational and most volatile figure in European politics, the German Emperor".<sup>4</sup> According to one of them, "[p]erhaps no higher Christian monarch and mightier historical personage than the present Kaiser of Germany has ever set his foot in the Holy Land since the days of Richard I. of England and Philip Augustus of France."<sup>5</sup> And how much had changed since those days! As a contemporary French commentator remarked, it would have been hard to imagine the president of the Third French Republic, Félix Faure,<sup>6</sup> "partant pour la Syrie, traversant le désert à la tête d'une escorte d'hommes armés et campant sous les têtes aux portes de Jérusalem."<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, there was not much trust in the religious symbolism of the Imperial journey either. The British *Spectator* was convinced that the Kaiser's "desire to visit the holy places [was] [15] not the *causa causans* of his expedition."<sup>8</sup> In fact, up to this very day Wilhelm II's second<sup>9</sup> Oriental journey, one of the most spectacular episodes of political tourism in the 19th century, is primarily seen as part of

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<sup>4</sup> "The German Emperor and his Visit to Palestine", *The Spectator*, August 20, 1898, 233.

<sup>5</sup> "The Kaiser, The Caliph, and the Khedive", *Pall Mall Gazette*, August 31, 1898.

<sup>6</sup> Félix Faure (1841-99), 1895-99 President of the Third French Republic.

<sup>7</sup> Hervé de Kerohant, "Guillaume II à Jérusalem", *Le Soleil*, June 9, 1898.

<sup>8</sup> *The Spectator*, August 20, 1898 (fn. 4), 233.

<sup>9</sup> The Emperor already had visited Constantinople in 1889, and during a Mediterranean cruise in 1905 he disembarked for a few hours in Tangier, Morocco.

the international tug-of-war for the “Baghdad railway”. There is no doubt that advancing Germany’s *pénétration pacifique* of the Middle East was an important aim of the Imperial agenda.<sup>10</sup> However, reducing the Emperor’s journey to a mere cloak of “economic imperialism” would mean missing many of its domestic and symbolic dimensions.

## 2. The “Traveler Emperor”

It is said that since the days of Hadrian no monarch has ever been seen as constantly and indefatigably traveling as Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany.<sup>11</sup> Between his accession to the throne in 1888 and the beginning of World War I, the Emperor used to leave his residences in Berlin and Potsdam for 6-8 months per year.<sup>12</sup> His subjects nicknamed him the *Reisekaiser* (“Traveler Emperor”) and translated his official signature “Wilhelm, I.R.” (Wilhelm, *Imperator Rex*) as *Wilhelm, Immer Reisefertig* (William always-ready-to-travel).<sup>13</sup>

The Kaiser’s critics deplored his long absences from the capital and explained his constant changes of place and scene by his erratic and desultory temper.<sup>14</sup> In fact, there seemed to be an enigmatic contradiction in his [16] restless behavior: precisely the most outspoken proponent of “personal government” (*persönliches Regiment*) in Germany seemed to undermine one of the basic preconditions of autocracy, namely the presence of the ruler at the decision-making center.

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914: Sammlung der Akten des Auswärtigen Amtes*, vol. 12/II, Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte 1923, 578-80; Jan Stefan Richter, *Die Orientreise Kaiser Wilhelms II. 1898: Eine Studie zur deutschen Außenpolitik an der Wende zum 20. Jahrhundert*, Hamburg: Kovač 1997. For a general assessment of Wilhelminian Middle East policy see Wilhelm van Kampen, *Studien zur deutschen Türkeipolitik in der Zeit Wilhelms II.*, phil. Diss., Kiel: Christian-Albrechts-Universität 1968; Gregor Schöllgen, *Imperialismus und Gleichgewicht: Deutschland, England und die orientalische Frage 1871-1914*, München: Oldenbourg 1979; Thomas Scheffler, “The Burden of Geography: Germany and the Middle East, 1871-1945”, *Journal of Arab Affairs* 12 (1993) 2, 125-34.

<sup>11</sup> Adolf Grabowsky, “Der Kaiser”, *Zeitschrift für Politik* 9 (1962) 3, 267.

<sup>12</sup> Nicolaus Sombart, *Wilhelm II. Sündenbock und Herr der Mitte*, Berlin: Volk & Welt 1996, 122.

<sup>13</sup> Birgit Marschall, *Reisen und Regieren. Die Nordlandfahrten Wilhelms II.*, Heidelberg: Carl Winter 1991, 22.

<sup>14</sup> Grabowsky, “Der Kaiser” (fn. 11), 267.

For Wilhelm II and his advisors, however, traveling was one of the most important devices to focus public attention on the person of the ruler: on the level of domestic politics, traveling was an act of political representation, aiming at visualizing the presence of the Kaiser in all parts of the Reich and to foster the personal and symbolic bonds between him and his citizens. Traveling abroad, especially to exotic historical sites that were out of reach for most of his subjects, meant placing the Emperor above the profane normality of everyday life, thus emphasizing his exceptional status and investing him with an aura of romantic momentum and with historical reminiscences reaching back to the roots of European civilization.

Mobile monarchs are not a rare occurrence in history. The new thing about Wilhelm II, however, was the extraordinary amount of time he devoted to peaceful travels *beyond* the boundaries of his Empire.<sup>15</sup> In a not too recent past, the movements of monarchs across the boundaries of their polities had mainly been linked to military campaigns or to political flight. Many of Wilhelm II's ancestors had gone to other countries at the head of their armies. After the successful wars for national unification, however, the Second German Empire, at least according to its first Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, claimed to be a "saturated" power. Between 1871 and 1914, in an era of peace that lacked the thrills of battle and victory, travels to foreign countries thus assumed many features of a continuation of war by other means. Political tourism became a kind of symbolic conquest of a world that had already been distributed among other powers. The Kaiser's tour in Palestine and Syria and above all his triumphalist entry into Berlin on December 1, 1898, conveyed this symbolic connection between *tourism* and *war* to a broader public. Discussing the Emperor's Oriental Journey in the German Parliament, the Liberal deputy Eugen Richter (1838-1906) on December 12, 1898, polemicized against "a certain *Byzantinism* among some circles that would like [17] to present the [Emperor's] happy return from this journey almost as a return from a successful military campaign."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Wilhelm II's travels to foreign countries included 26 cruises to Scandinavia (*Nordlandfahrten*), two cruises around the Mediterranean (1904, 1905), visits to Italy (1893, 1894, 1896), the Ottoman Empire (1889, 1898), and Korfu (1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1914) as well as numerous trips to England, Austria, and Russia. Cf. Marschall, *Reisen und Regieren* (fn. 13), 25.

<sup>16</sup> [Eugen] Richter, *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstags*, vol. 165, December 12, 1898, 25. For a similar comment on the same event see: Bernhard Fürst von Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. 1, Berlin: Ullstein 1930, 269.

Imperial travels and the representation of imperial power were thus densely interwoven.<sup>17</sup> Looked at from a comparative point of view, they were part of a broad range of public rituals that were to legitimize monarchy against the looming specters of democracy, nationalism, and socialism all over 19th century Europe.<sup>18</sup>

### 2.1. Modernizing monarchy: the politics of imagination

“To state the matter shortly, royalty is a government in which the attention of the nation is concentrated on one person doing interesting things.”<sup>19</sup>

Since the French Revolution, monarchy in Europe was an institution at risk. Yet, the “long century” between 1789 and 1914 witnessed not only an inflationary proliferation of “Kingdoms” and “Empires”,<sup>20</sup> but also an unprecedented “cult of monarchy”.<sup>21</sup> Haunted and inspired by the example of Napoleon I, new and old monarchies alike began to develop new modes of public communication and representation that often blurred the line between populist Caesarism and royal authority, fusing the cult of monarchy with the cult of the nation:<sup>22</sup> Splendid monuments, parades, public speeches, travels, coronation ceremonies, celebrations of all kinds, and the display of considerable pomp were used to adapt monarchy to the rising power of public opinion and mass communication.

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Marschall, *Reisen und Regieren* (fn. 13), passim; Sombart, *Sündenbock* (fn. 12), 122-30.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. David E. Barclay, *Anarchie und guter Wille: Friedrich Wilhelm IV. und die preußische Monarchie*, Berlin: Siedler 1995, 32-34.

<sup>19</sup> Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution* [1867], London and Glasgow: Collins-Fontana 1963, 86.

<sup>20</sup> Bavaria, Saxonia, Württemberg, and Hannover became “Kingdoms” in 1806, the Netherlands in 1815, Belgium in 1831, Greece in 1832, Italy in 1861, Rumania in 1881, Serbia in 1882, Norway in 1905, Bulgaria in 1908, Montenegro in 1910. France became an “Empire” from 1804-15 and from 1852-70, Germany from 1871-1918. Queen Victoria of England was proclaimed “Empress” of India in 1877. Members of the Portuguese House of Bragança ruled as “Emperors” of Brazil (1822-89) and the unfortunate Habsburg prince Maximilian became “Emperor” of Mexico (1864-67).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Barclay, *Anarchie* (fn. 18), 23-40; see also Werner K. Blessing, “The Cult of Monarchy, Political Loyalty and the Workers’ Movement in Imperial Germany”, *Journal of Contemporary History* 13 (1978), 357-75.

<sup>22</sup> George L. Mosse, *Die Nationalisierung der Massen: Politische Symbolik und Massenbewegungen in Deutschland von dem Napoleonischen Krieg bis zum Dritten Reich* [1975], Frankfurt/M. et al: Ullstein 1976.

At the end of the 19th century, monarchy seemed to be a success story in many parts of Europe again. Looking at the popularity of Wilhelm II's grandmother, Queen Victoria of England (r. 1837-1901), the British journalist Walter Bagehot (1826-77) even had argued that the power of Monarchy was *strengthened* by the rise of modern society. Although royalty had lost much of its ancient powers and prerogatives to publicly elected bodies, it seemed to have acquired new functions that grew out of the difficulties of the new elites to secure for them majority support in an age of extended suffrage. Monarchy, or so Bagehot argued, had become a symbolic device to reduce the complexity of modern society while at the same time concealing its power structures and, thus, winning implicit allegiance to the real rulers:

“The best reason why Monarchy is a strong government is that it is an intelligible government. ... It is often said that men are ruled by their imaginations; but it would be truer to say they are governed by the weakness of their imaginations. The nature of a constitution, the action of an assembly, the play of parties, the unseen formation of a guiding opinion, are complex facts, difficult to know and easy to mistake. But the action of a single will, the fiat of a single mind, are easy ideas: anybody can make them out, and no one can ever forget them.”<sup>23</sup>

“To state the matter shortly, royalty is a government in which the attention of the nation is concentrated on one person doing interesting things. A Republic is a government in which that attention is divided between many, who are all doing uninteresting actions. Accordingly, so long as the human heart is strong and the human reason weak, royalty will be strong because it appeals to diffused feelings, and Republics weak because they appeal to the understanding.”<sup>24</sup>

For Bagehot, the real rulers of modern England – a “select few” of middle class bureaucrats, businessmen, and politicians – were “... the last people in the world to whom, if they were drawn up in a row, an immense nation [19] would ever give an exclusive preference.”<sup>25</sup> Their appearance and their modes of acting were barely suitable to capture public imagination and to make the “numerous unwiser part” of the population wish “to be ruled by the less numerous wiser part.”<sup>26</sup> Monarchy and the ostentatious splendor of the Royal Court, however, were imbuing the majority with a sense of inferiority and thus rendering it “deferential” towards the *élite*.

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<sup>23</sup> Bagehot, *The English Constitution* (fn. 19), 82.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 248.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 247.

“In fact, the mass of the English people yield a deference rather to something else than to their rulers. They defer to what we may call the *theatrical show* of society. A certain state passes before them; a certain pomp of great men; a certain spectacle of beautiful women; a wonderful scene of wealth and enjoyment is displayed, and they are coerced by it. Their imagination is bowed down; they feel they are not equal to the life which is revealed to them. Courts and aristocracies have the great quality which rules the multitude, though philosophers can see nothing in it — visibility. Courtiers can do what others cannot. ... The higher world, as it looks from without, is a stage on which the actors walk their part much better than the spectators can.”<sup>27</sup>

“The apparent rulers of the English nation are like the most imposing personages of a splendid procession: it is by them the mob are influenced; it is they whom the spectators cheer. The real rulers are secreted in second-rate carriages; no one cares for them or asks about them, but they are obeyed implicitly and unconsciously by reason of the splendour of those who eclipsed and preceded them.”<sup>28</sup>

Being the most vocal proponent of “personal government” in Germany, Wilhelm II surely would have found it difficult to relate Bagehot’s distinction between “apparent” and “real” rulers to his *Reich*. The Kaiser’s own policy rather used the methods of a “*theatrical show*” to render himself the apparent *and* the real ruler of his Empire. His critics made fun of the fact that he changed his uniforms up to six times a day.<sup>29</sup> However, ridiculing the Wilhelminian era as an age of operetta politics or blaming the Kaiser for having confused the realm of politics with a nostalgic fancy-dress ball means overlooking the very modernity of theatrical politics. While Germany’s foremost sociologist, Max Weber (1864-1920), devoted his academic life to study the “disenchantment” (*Entzauberung*) of the [20] modern world, Wilhelm II (1859-1941) became one of the main actors to stage its re-enchantment. And this because of many reasons:

## 2.2. Germany: *The precarious Empire*

The Second German Empire<sup>30</sup> was far more in need of symbolic forms of political integration than Victorian England. Founded only recently, in 1871, the unity of the new nation state was incomplete and riven by many

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 248.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 249.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Friedrich Hartau, *Wilhelm II.* [1978], Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt 1997, 99.

<sup>30</sup> The “first” German Empire had been the “Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation” (*Sacrum Imperium Romanum Nationis Germanicae*, 962-1806).

fissures. Notwithstanding the booming pathos of German nationalism, the Reich was far from being a monolith. On the level of public law, it was an alliance of twenty-five states which represented different constitutions and historical trajectories, comprising four kingdoms, six grand duchies, five duchies, seven principalities and three city republics.

The Reich's regional particularisms were accompanied and intensified by tensions between Catholics and Protestants and by the rise of the workers' movement. In the pluralist world of the "First Empire" and its petty territorial states, the tensions between Catholics and Protestants had been contained by the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* (1555). In the unified national state of the Second Empire, however, these tensions escalated in the so-called *Kulturkampf* (1872-87) that opposed the German governments and the "indirect power" of the Catholic Church over a broad range of "cultural" issues like civil marriage, public education, political loyalty, governmental approbation of religious officials etc. Even more threatening were the consequences of industrialization and of universal suffrage, namely the rise of social democracy that even Bismarck's anti-socialist law (*Sozialistengesetz*, 1878-90) proved unable to bring to a halt.

The political unity of the Second Empire had been welded "from above" by a series of bloody wars (1864, 1866, 1870/71) and was bolstered by the memory of victorious battles and by the boom years that followed the foundation of the Reich. However, even Bismarck was aware that the enthusiasm of 1870 was doomed to wane with time, and economic prosperity soon became eroded by the "Great Depression" (1873-96)<sup>31</sup>.

The political system that was to deal with all these challenges, was a complicated stalemate between contradictory principles: between monarchy and democracy, confederation and federal state, dynastic and national [21] legitimacy, absolutism and constitutionalism, military and civil rule.<sup>32</sup> Far from possessing a clear-cut hierarchical structure, it sometimes rather resembled a "polycracy" of cross-cutting authorities: the Emperor, the Chancellor, the dynastic kings and princes, the Parliament, the Federal Council, the General Staff, and others.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Hans Rosenberg, *Große Depression und Bismarckzeit: Wirtschaftsablauf, Gesellschaft und Politik in Mitteleuropa*, Frankfurt/M. et al: Ullstein 1976.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Carl Schmitt, *Staatsgefüge und Zusammenbruch des zweiten Reiches*, Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt 1934; idem, *Verfassungslehre* [1928], 8th ed., Berlin: Duncker & Humblot 1993, 53-57, 64-65.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. the discussion in: Gregor Schöllgen, "Wer machte im Kaiserreich Politik? Zwischen 'persönlichem Regiment' und 'polykratischem Chaos'", *Neue Politische Literatur* 25 (1980), 79-97.

The status of imperial monarchy<sup>34</sup> in Germany remained rather fuzzy and open to debate. The constitution of April 16, 1871 provided that the title of “German Emperor” (*Deutscher Kaiser*, not: “Emperor of Germany”!) be conferred to the King of Prussia only in his quality as president of the “Federal Council” (*Bundesrat*) of the twenty-five German states, thus implicitly indicating the latter’s will to retain as much as possible of their sovereignty.

In addition, the consolidation of imperial monarchy was hampered by contradictory foundational myths. Although the Second Empire had been established as an imperial monarchy, the German public considered the “Iron Chancellor”, Otto von Bismarck (1815-98), as the real founding father of German unity. The Empire’s first Kaiser, Wilhelm I (r. 1871-88) had always remained in the shadow of Bismarck’s fame, and the reign of his son, Kaiser Friedrich III (1888) had lasted only 99 days, too short to leave a decisive mark on his people’s memory. The official celebration of Wilhelm I as *Wilhelm der Große* (William the Great) basically remained a cult “from above”<sup>35</sup> while the veneration of Bismarck bore many popular features as a cult of the middle classes and the local aristocracy.<sup>36</sup>

[22] In terms of historical continuity, the Second Empire constituted a rupture. For the first time in German history, a *Protestant* family – the Prussian House of *Hohenzollern* – had become the Imperial dynasty of Germany, thus breaking with the tradition of the (Catholic) “Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation” that had ceased to exist in 1806. Compared to other royal houses, the Hohenzollern were newcomers. They had not been raised to the status of royalty before 1701. Their kingdom was a mosaic of scattered territories that had been acquired rather recently by wars and

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. Elisabeth Fehrenbach, *Wandlungen des deutschen Kaisergedankens 1871-1918*, München-Wien: Oldenbourg 1969; Dirk von Pezold, *Cäsaromanie und Byzantinismus bei Wilhelm II.*, Dissertation thesis, Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaftliche Fakultät der Universität zu Köln 1971, 50-68.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Thomas Nipperdey, “Nationalidee und Nationaldenkmal in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert” [1968], in: idem, *Gesellschaft, Kultur, Theorie: Gesammelte Aufsätze zur neueren Geschichte*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1976, 166-69.

<sup>36</sup> “The German Empire did not succeed in its efforts to turn the Emperor William I into a popularly accepted founding father of a united Germany, nor in turning his birthday into a genuine national anniversary. ... Official encouragement did secure the building of 327 monuments to him by 1902, but within *one* year of Bismarck’s death in 1898, 470 municipalities had decided to erect ‘Bismarck columns.’” (Eric Hobsbawm, “Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914”, in: Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press 1983, 264).

diplomatic marriages.<sup>37</sup> Unlike the medieval monarchies of France and England, they were not supported by any magic aura of “sacred kingship”.<sup>38</sup>

### 2.3. *Wilhelminism and the search for sacred kingship*

“I am the sole master of Germany and my country must follow me wherever I go.”<sup>39</sup>

Wilhelm II (1859-1941, r. 1888-1918) was barely 29 years old when he ascended the throne. Challenged by the tide of constitutionalism and parliamentarism and haunted by the fame of Bismarck as well as by the specter of socialism, the young Kaiser began to invest his rule with an unprecedented cult of “kingship by divine grace” (*Königtum von Gottes Gnaden*).<sup>40</sup> Time and again, he claimed to owe his royal and imperial authority to *divine grace* and, hence, to be accountable only to God, not to ministers or parliaments, nor even to the people.

[23] In the Prussian tradition that had been formed by kings like Friedrich Wilhelm I (r. 1713-40) and Friedrich II (r. 1740-86), the source of royal authority rested in the *institution* of kingship, not in the *person* of the monarch. Friedrich II used to present himself as the “first servant” of his state. Wilhelm II, however, cultivated a concept of charismatic imperial authority that rather focused on a mystical relationship between the person of the monarch and divine providence, thus combining features of ancient theocracies with romantic individualism.<sup>41</sup> In a semi-public statement on the *Babel-Bibel-Streit* (the heated controversy on the Babylonian origins of the Old Testament that had been triggered off by the

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<sup>37</sup> In a conversation with the Austrian chancellor Clemens von Metternich in 1842, even King Friedrich-Wilhelm IV of Prussia (r. 1840-1861) admitted that his kingdom were a “thing” without “historical foundation” [*Dieses Ding hat keine historische Basis*] and consisted of an “agglomeration of countries that once did have such a foundation and then lost them”. Cf. Barclay, *Anarchie* (fn. 18), 87.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Barclay, *Anarchie* (fn. 18), 91. On sacred kingship in Europe see Marc Bloch, *Les rois thaumaturges. Etude sur le caractère surnaturel attribué à la puissance royale particulièrement en France et en Angleterre*, Strasbourg: Faculté des lettres de l’Université de Strasbourg 1924; Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1955.

<sup>39</sup> Wilhelm II in a conversation with the Prince of Wales in 1899, quoted in Pezold, *Cäsaromanie* (fn. 34), 218.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Fehrenbach, *Wandlungen* (fn. 34), 116-24; Pezold, *Cäsaromanie* (fn. 34), 87-92; John C.G. Röhl, *Wilhelm II.: Die Jugend des Kaisers 1859-1888*, München: Beck 1993, 289-93.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Fehrenbach, *Wandlungen* (fn. 34), 117-18.

Assyriologist Friedrich Delitzsch in 1902)<sup>42</sup>, Wilhelm II argued in 1903 that God had time and again revealed himself in chosen persons, be it sages, priests or kings in order to guide their peoples and mankind as a whole: “Hammurabi was one of them, Moses, Abraham, Homer, Charlemagne, Luther, Shakespeare, Goethe, Kant, Kaiser Wilhelm the Great.”<sup>43</sup>

This concept of imperial authority deviated from the traditions of the Holy Roman Empire of German Nation as well as from the enlightenment tradition of Prussian kingship. Hence, Wilhelm II had to look for other precedents. His extraordinary interest in history and archaeology was not the least nourished by his desire to collect proofs and symbols of divine kingship and imperial grandeur in antiquity. Throughout his life, he remained interested in studying forms of ancient Oriental monarchy. In 1898, a three-weeks journey of the Kaiser to the sites of Pharaonic Egypt was canceled only at the last minute.<sup>44</sup> He became one of the main sponsors of the “German Orient-Society” (*Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft*), founded in 1898, and in 1901 became its official protector.<sup>45</sup> In 1908, he personally supervised the production of a theatrical performance on the [24] Assyrian king Assurbanipal.<sup>46</sup> In 1936, he edited a chronological compendium on the early history of the Near East, Egypt, and the Mediterranean world.<sup>47</sup> In 1938, he published a book on sacred kingship in ancient Mesopotamia.<sup>48</sup> His treatise on yin-yang symbolism and the cult of the sun (1934)<sup>49</sup> or his

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<sup>42</sup> Friedrich Delitzsch, *Babel und Bibel. Ein Vortrag*, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung 1902. On the debate see: Klaus Johanning, *Der Bibel-Babel-Streit. Eine forschungsgeschichtliche Studie*, Frankfurt/M. et al: Lang 1988; Reinhard G. Lehmann, *Friedrich Delitzsch und der Babel-Bibel-Streit*, Freiburg, CH/ Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1994.

<sup>43</sup> Wilhelm II to Admiral Hollmann, February 15, 1903, in: *Kaiser Wilhelm II., Ereignisse und Gestalten aus den Jahren 1878-1918*, Leipzig and Berlin: Koehler 1922, 184.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Richter, *Orientreise* (fn. 10), 30-37.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Christian Simon, “Kaiser Wilhelm II. und die deutsche Wissenschaft”, in: John C.G. Röhl, ed., *Der Ort Kaiser Wilhelms II. in der deutschen Geschichte*, München: Oldenbourg 1991, 97. See also Wilhelm II., *Ereignisse und Gestalten* (fn. 43), 303.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Kay Kohlmeyer, “Faszination des Orients”, in: *Wiedererstehendes Babylon: Eine antike Weltstadt im Blick der Forschung*, Berlin: Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte 1991, 13-18.

<sup>47</sup> Kaiser Wilhelm II., ed., *Vergleichende Zeittafeln der Vor- und Frühgeschichte Vorderasiens, Ägyptens und der Mittelmeerländer*, Leipzig: K.F. Koehler 1936.

<sup>48</sup> Wilhelm II., *Das Königtum im alten Mesopotamien*, Berlin: de Gruyter 1938.

<sup>49</sup> Kaiser Wilhelm II., *Die chinesische Monade, ihre Geschichte und ihre Deutung*, Leipzig: K.F. Koehler 1934.

booklet on the canopy as a celestial symbol (1939)<sup>50</sup> betray a lasting cross-cultural, yet somehow eclectic interest in the connections between cosmological symbolism and political rule.

The political pendant to Wilhelm II's cult of monarchy was the policy of "personal government" (*persönliches Regiment*)<sup>51</sup> that was designed to concentrate – at least in theory – the effective powers of decision-making in the hands of the Emperor. On the one hand, "personal government" meant the replacement of independent minded ministers by more compliant ones. On the other hand, it was connected to an ambitious foreign policy on a world-wide scale (*Weltpolitik*). Since the realm of foreign policy still was comparatively unrestrained by parliamentary control, it was an ideal platform to present the Emperor as a powerful figure acting on a world-scale and ranking high above domestic parties and quarrels.<sup>52</sup> Imperial travels were an important part of this strategy. "Personal government", "world policy", and the cult of monarchy were thus intimately intertwined. In their purest form they were connected to the appointment of Bernhard von Bülow (1849-1929) as Foreign Secretary (1897) and as Chancellor (1900-1909).<sup>53</sup>

### [25] 3. *Visiting the Ottoman Empire: Theocracy and pilgrimage*

Wilhelm II's second Oriental journey (October 11 – November 26, 1898) was not only part of Germany's newly emerging *Weltpolitik*, it was also the Kaiser's first great foreign journey after Bismarck's death on July 30, 1898. In a way, his famous speech in Damascus on November 8 implicitly marked the final symbolic emancipation from Bismarck's time-honored Middle East policy: according to Bismarck's much cited formula of 1876, there was "no interest" for Germany in the Orient "which would be worth the sound bones of even a single Pomeranian musketeer."<sup>54</sup> Wilhelm II in his Damas-

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<sup>50</sup> Wilhelm II., *Ursprung und Anwendung des Baldachins*, Amsterdam: Allert de Lange 1939.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Isabel V. Hull, "'Persönliches Regiment'", in: Röhl, ed., *Der Ort Kaiser Wilhelms II.* (fn.45), 3-23.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Wolfgang Mommsen, *Großmachtstellung und Weltpolitik: Die Außenpolitik des Deutschen Reiches 1870-1914*, Frankfurt/M.-Berlin: Ullstein 1993, 139.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Peter Winzen, "Zur Genesis von Weltmacht Konzept und Weltpolitik", in: Röhl, ed., *Der Ort Kaiser Wilhelms II.* (fn. 45), 189-222.

<sup>54</sup> Otto v. Bismarck, *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Deutschen Reichstags*, vol. 14, December 5, 1876, 585. On the background of Bismarck's declaration see Scheffler, "The Burden of Geography" (fn. 10).

cus speech, however, publicly challenged Russia, France, and Great Britain by assuring the Sultan and the Muslim world of his everlasting friendship.

There was a feeling of affinity between Wilhelm II and the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid II (1842-1918, r. 1876-1909) who in 1877 had dismissed his Wezir Midhat Pasha (1822-84), and in 1878 dissolved the Parliament and suspended the constitution of 1876. According to Bülow who accompanied the Kaiser during his journey, Wilhelm II felt particularly attracted by the unrestrained domestic power of the Sultan.<sup>55</sup> After his return to Potsdam, the Emperor even declared “that Turkey with the unconditional obedience of its inhabitants towards the Sultan whom they are venerating not only as their sovereign but also as their Caliph, i.e., as the governor of God, could be a model for other countries.”<sup>56</sup> The Sultan, on the other hand, expressed his admiration for the Kaiser’s “religious sensitivity” and his “deep understanding of Religion” and emphasized “how much he shared His Royal and Imperial Majesty’s conviction that only Religion were the foundation of obedience and, thus, of peoples’ happiness.”<sup>57</sup>

Devoting so long a journey to the Ottoman Empire was not necessarily popular in Germany in 1898. Many Christians abhorred the massacres of hundreds of thousands of Armenians in 1895/96. Besides, for many Liberals, the Ottoman Empire still was the epitome of backward despotism. The view that the “Sick Man of Europe” was doomed to demise was widely shared.

[26] The Kaiser’s wish to attend the consecration of the Evangelical Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem on October 31, 1898, thus became the symbolic pivot to legitimize the whole undertaking. To build a church for the German Protestant community had been a long-term project of his ancestors.<sup>58</sup> By executing their will,<sup>59</sup> the Kaiser was emphasizing Germa-

<sup>55</sup> Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten* (fn. 16), vol. 1, 242. *Ibid.*, 268-69.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 268-69.

<sup>57</sup> Ambassador Freiherr von Marschall to Chancellor Fürst von Hohenlohe, Pera, November 20, 1897 [report on a conversation with the Sultan on November 19, 1897], in: *Die Grosse Politik*, vol. 12/II (fn. 10), 558.

<sup>58</sup> In 1841, his great-uncle, King Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia, had co-founded the Anglo-Prussian Protestant bishopric of Jerusalem (dissolved in 1886), and on November 7, 1869, his father, Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm, had solemnly taken possession of the site where the church was to be built. On the history of the Anglo-Prussian project cf. Abdel-Raouf Sinno, *Deutsche Interessen in Syrien und Palästina 1841-1898: Aktivitäten religiöser Institutionen, wirtschaftliche und politische Einflüsse*, Berlin: Baalbek Verlag 1982, 16-44; Barclay, *Anarchie* (fn. 18), 128-32; Jürgen Krüger, *Rom und Jerusalem: Kirchenbauvorstellungen der Hohenzollern im 19. Jahrhundert*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1995, 57-59. On the architectural

ny's new role as a protecting power of Protestant Christians in the Muslim world. In addition, by presenting on the same day the recently acquired site of the *Dormitio Sanctae Mariae Virginis* on Mount Zion to the Catholic "German Society of the Holy Land" (*Deutscher Verein vom Heiligen Lande*, founded in 1895), the Kaiser tried to reconcile the German Catholics with Protestant-Prussian hegemony at home while challenging, at the same tune, France's claim to be the sole protecting power of Catholics in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>60</sup>

Besides, presenting the journey as a pious pilgrimage to the Holy Land also served the purposes to celebrate the Emperor as the foremost defendant of religion in Europe and to divert political distrust on the side of foreign observers. In a letter to Czar Nicholas II of Russia, Wilhelm II complained about

"the amount of bash and blarney that is being ventilated in the newspapers of Europe about my visit to Jerusalem! It is most discouraging to note that the sentiment of real faith, which propels a Christian to seek the Country in which our Saviour lived and suffered, is nearly quite extinct in the so called better classes of the XIXth Century, so they must explain the Pilgrimage forcibly by Political motives! What is right for thousands even of your lowest peasants is right for me too!"<sup>61</sup>

[27] Yet, measured in days, the Emperor's pilgrimage to the Holy Land (October 25 – November 4) barely amounted to half of his stay in the Ottoman Empire (October 18 – November 12). More than half of the stay was devoted to other places. Considering that the journey in its entirety (October 11 – November 26) included numerous stopovers in European and German towns on the way to and back from the Ottoman Empire,<sup>62</sup> one cannot escape the conclusion that the journey was overgrown by a multitude of secondary purposes.

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history of the Redeemer's Church see esp. Krüger, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 74-85, 93-97.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Wilhelm II's speech in: *Stenographische Berichte über die Verhandlungen des Reichstags*, vol. 165, December 6, 1898, 3.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. the correspondence in: *Die Grosse Politik*, vol. 12/II (fn. 10), 589-638. See also Richter, *Orientreise* (fn. 10), 155-86.

<sup>61</sup> Wilhelm II to Czar Nicholas II, August 18, 1898, in: Walter Goetz, ed., *Briefe Wilhelms II. an den Zaren 1894-1914*, Berlin: Ullstein 1920, 312.

<sup>62</sup> Originally, the Emperor had planned to sail home from Beirut via Rhodes, Malta, Cagliari, Port Mahon, Cartagena, Cadix, Vigo, Dover, Brunsbüttel, Cf. Bülow, telegram to Auswärtiges Amt, Beirut, November 6, 1898, in: *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes*, Bonn [PAAA], R 3734, A 12851. In his autobiography, Bülow attributed the choice of the long sea route to the Emperor's dislike of returning to the boring bureaucratic routines of government in Berlin (Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. 1 [fn. 16], 265-66).

#### 4. *The Kaiser in Baalbek: an episode and its filiations*

On Thursday, November 10, 1898, shortly before sunset, Wilhelm II, and his wife, Auguste Victoria (1858-1921), coming from Damascus, arrived in Baalbek after a four hours carriage ride from the Mu'allaqah railway station at Zahleh.<sup>63</sup> A tent camp had been pitched up for them and their retinue in the great court of the temple district. At nightfall, lanterns and a fireworks illuminated the ruins.

Even before coming to Baalbek, the Kaiser had had an idea of the site: In November 1869, his father, Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm (1831-88), had passed through the town on his way to the opening of the Suez Canal.<sup>64</sup> In March 1883, a cousin of his father, Prince Friedrich Karl (1828-85), one of Prussia's leading generals in the 1870-71 war, had spent his birthday in Baalbek.<sup>65</sup>

Rising very early on November 11, 1898 (temperature had dropped to 2°C during night-time), the Kaiser watched the famous sunrise of Baalbek and then inaugurated a gift of the Sultan: a richly decorated marble tablet with inscriptions both in German and Ottoman Turkish commemorating [28] the visit of the Kaiser and his wife. Already at 8:00 a.m., the majesties mounted their coaches again and headed back to Mu'allaqah and from there to Beirut. On Saturday, November 12, 6:00 a.m., the Imperial yacht left the port of Beirut. On November 26, the Emperor was back in Potsdam.

Measured in hours, the Emperor's stay in Baalbek was only a minor episode, or so it seems. From the 422 pages of the official travelogue, barely seven dealt with his visit to Baalbek as compared to 198 for Jerusalem, 25 for Constantinople, 15 for Damascus, and 7 for Beirut.<sup>66</sup> Yet, placing it at the end of the Kaiser's itinerary invested the visit with a special symbolic status, and, above all, it yielded a result with lasting consequences for

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<sup>63</sup> Al-Mu'allaqah was divided from Zahleh (Zahlah) only by a narrow lane. However, while Zahleh belonged to Mount Lebanon, Mu'allaqah was part of the *vilayet* of Syria (A.C. Inchbold, *Under the Syrian Sun: The Lebanon, Baalbek, Galilee, and Judaea*, vol. 1, London: Hutchinson 1906, 129). – For a description of the Kaiser's stay in Baalbek see *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar* (fn. 3), 370-76.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 376.

<sup>65</sup> Theodor Fontane, *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg: Fünf Schlösser* [1888], Berlin: Aufbau Verlag 1990, 420.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar* (fn. 3), 56-80 (Constantinople), 115-313 (Jerusalem and surroundings), 341-46, 378-79 (Beirut), 355-70 (Damascus), 370-76 (Baalbek).

Baalbek, namely the first systematic excavations of the temple district by two German archaeological expeditions (1898-99, 1900-05).

The hours in Baalbek left so deep an impression on the Kaiser that nearly on the spot, on November 11, he decided to fund and promote the archaeological exploration of the site by German scholars.<sup>67</sup> The Emperor's enthusiasm is reflected by the rapidity of his subordinates in fulfilling the Most High wishes: leaving Beirut on November 12, 1898,<sup>68</sup> the Imperial Ambassador to the Sublime Porte, Adolf Freiherr Marschall von Bieberstein (1842-1912), hastened back to Constantinople to obtain the necessary excavation permits. On November 18 – the Emperor on his long way home just had reached Messina, Sicily – Marschall got the consent of the Sultan<sup>69</sup> and on November 20, he obtained the permission of Hamdi Edhem Bey (1842-1910), the influential director of the Ottoman Museums.<sup>70</sup> On November 20, in a telegram from Messina, Bülow already [30] asked the ambassador on behalf of His Majesty to work towards an arrangement with the Porte that would leave the “originals” or at least casts of the expected finds to the German side.<sup>71</sup> On December 3, the Prussian ministry of culture, in a memorandum to Wilhelm II, proposed to entrust the designed head of the German excavations in Babylon, Robert Koldewey, with a preliminary survey of the ruins.<sup>72</sup> On December 10, the ministry had the Kaiser's approval.<sup>73</sup> On December 12, Koldewey was per-

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<sup>67</sup> Theodor Wiegand, [Preface of January 27, 1921], in: idem, ed., *Baalbek: Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen und Untersuchungen in den Jahren 1898 bis 1905*, vol. 1, Berlin and Leipzig: Vereinigung Wissenschaftlicher Verleger Walter de Gruyter & Co. 1921. – Hermann Winnefeld, “Einleitung. Die bisherigen Publikationen und Berichte und die Arbeit der deutschen Baalbekexpedition”, in: *ibid.*, 1-14 (p. 9), erroneously contends that the Kaiser had ordered the first preparatory steps of the expedition “immediately after his return to Germany” (*gleich nach der Ankunft in Deutschland*). In fact, the diplomatic preparations for the excavation campaign started already during the Kaiser's return journey (see below).

<sup>68</sup> Cf. *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar* (fn. 3), 378.

<sup>69</sup> Marschall, telegram to Auswärtiges Amt, Pera, November 18, 1898, *Bundesarchiv Berlin (BAB)*, R 09.01, 37693, 16; [Undersecretary of state] Richthofen, telegram to Bülow, Berlin, November 19, 1898, *BAB*, R 09.01, 37693, 19.

<sup>70</sup> Marschall, telegram to Auswärtiges Amt, Pera, November 20, 1898, *BAB*, R 09.01, 37693, 20; Richthofen to Bülow, Berlin, November 21, 1898, *BAB*, R 09.01, 37693, 26.

<sup>71</sup> Bülow, telegram to Auswärtiges Amt, Messina, November 20, 1898, *BAB*, R 09.01, 37693, 22.

<sup>72</sup> v. Weyrauch (acting for minister Robert Bosse), Immediatbericht to Wilhelm II, Berlin, December 3, 1898, U IV. 4378 (copy to Ministry of Foreign Affairs), in: *BAB*, R 09.01, 37693, 36-37.

<sup>73</sup> Bosse to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 11, 1898, in: *BAB*, R 09.01, 37693, 44.

sonally received in Potsdam and for one hour instructed by the Kaiser.<sup>74</sup> On the same evening he left Berlin for Baalbek.<sup>75</sup> On December 27, exploratory work in Baalbek began.<sup>76</sup>

The Emperor's decision to excavate the temple ruins raises many questions. Usually, archaeological campaigns in the Middle East required years of careful scientific, financial, and diplomatic preparation. In the case of the famous German excavations in Troy (1870-90), Olympia (1875-81), and Pergamon (1878-86), it had taken years to convince ministries, foreign governments, private sponsors, and the public to support the projects.<sup>77</sup> However, neither the documents of the German Foreign Office on the scientific exploration of the Near East<sup>78</sup> nor its files on the Emperor's journey to the Orient<sup>79</sup> provide any evidence that the Prussian ministry of culture, the direction of the Royal Prussian museums or influential archaeological lobbies had worked on the Kaiser in favor of excavations at Baalbek.

[31] They do, however, contain plenty of evidence that the then archaeological establishment had been busy lobbying for large-scale German excavations in *Mesopotamia*.<sup>80</sup> In Winter 1897/98, an expedition under Eduard Sachau (1845-1930) and Robert Koldewey (1855-1925) had explored possible sites for excavations in ancient Babylonia and Assyria.<sup>81</sup> On January 24, 1898, the "German Orient-Society" (*Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft*) had been founded.<sup>82</sup> Comprising high-ranking officials, aristocrats, scholars and businessmen, the society was designed to support excavations in the Near East (particularly in Mesopotamia) and to sponsor the acquirement of the

<sup>74</sup> Koldewey to Puchstein, December 12, 1898, in: Carl Schuchardt, ed., *Robert Koldewey: Heitere und ernste Briefe aus einem deutschen Archäologenleben*, Berlin: G. Grote'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung 1925, 134. See also: Bosse to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Berlin, December 11, 1898, in: BAB R 09.01, 37693, 44-45.

<sup>75</sup> Koldewey to Puchstein, December 12, 1898, 134. Winnefeld, "Einleitung" (fn. 67), 9.

<sup>76</sup> Winnefeld, "Einleitung" (fn. 67), 9.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Suzanne L. Marchand, *Down from Olympus: Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1996, 80-96, 118-24.

<sup>78</sup> *Bundesarchiv Berlin (BAB): Auswärtiges Amt, Abt. IIIb, Acten betreffend: Die wissenschaftliche Erforschung von Klein-Asien*, R 09.01, 37688-717.

<sup>79</sup> *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Bonn (PAAA): Auswärtiges Amt, Abt. A, Acten betreffend: Reisen seiner Majestät des Kaisers nach dem Orient (Athen, Konstantinopel, Palästina, Egypten pp.)*, esp. R 3729-39.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Richter, *Orientreise* (fn. 10), 199-201.

<sup>81</sup> BAB, R 09.01, R 37692, 41-44.

<sup>82</sup> Kohlmeier, "Faszination des Orients" (fn. 46), 11-12.

finds for German museums. In summer 1898, the Assyriologist Friedrich Delitzsch (1850-1922) in his *Ex Oriente Lux* reminded the German public of the international competition between French, British, American, and German archaeologists, and declared the promotion of German excavations in Mesopotamia a national duty.<sup>83</sup> In a memorandum to Wilhelm II on October 7, 1898, the Prussian minister of culture<sup>84</sup>, Robert Bosse (1832-1901), argued that excavations in Mesopotamia might correct the old view that considered the Greeks as the creators of European art and science, the Romans as the creators of European law and the Jews as the creators of “our Religion”. To a certain degree, or so Bosse argued, Jews, Greeks, and Romans might now rather be seen as transmitting and developing instances (*Überlieferer und Fortbildner*) of a far older Near Eastern and Egyptian culture. Hinting to the ongoing competition with French and British museums, Bosse asked the Kaiser to use his imminent visit to Constantinople to promote German excavations in Babylonia.<sup>85</sup>

Compared to the high expectations that accompanied the German plans to excavate ancient Babylon or Assur, the exploration of temple structures that dated back “only” to the late Roman period was not necessarily a top priority. It is, thus, the Emperor’s personal links to his visit to Baalbek that we have to explore.

#### [32] 4.1. Baalbek and the Kaiser’s itinerary

Originally, the Kaiser’s stay in Baalbek had been part of a far more ambitious tourist program. As late as August 1898, the Emperor had planned to round off his pilgrimage to Palestine not only by a trip to Syria and Lebanon but also by an additional three-week excursion to Egypt (November 17 - December 9, 1898) that was supposed to lead him up to Assuan.<sup>86</sup> Carried out as planned, the journey would have lost much of its “Christian” patina: The Kaiser would have traveled from Saladin’s tomb in Damascus to the temples of the Roman Emperors in Baalbek, and from there first to Alex-

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<sup>83</sup> Friedrich Delitzsch, *Ex Oriente Lux! Ein Wort zur Förderung der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft*, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung 1898. On June 16, 1998, a copy of Delitzsch’s booklet was sent by the Foreign Office to Chancellor Fürst von Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst (cf. BAB, R 09.01, 37692, 78).

<sup>84</sup> Official title: “Minister for religious, educational and medical affairs” (*Minister der geistlichen, Unterrichts- und Medizinalangelegenheiten*).

<sup>85</sup> Bosse to Wilhelm II, October 7, 1898, BAB, R 09.01, 37692, 35-40.

<sup>86</sup> *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar* (fn. 3), 376. For the draft schedule of Wilhelm’s journey to Egypt (as planned in August 1898) see PAAA, R 3730, A 9700.

andria, the city of Alexander the Great, and then up to the Pyramids, temples and tombs of the Egyptian Pharaohs. Carried out in its original proportions, thus, a much greater part of the Emperor's stay would have been devoted to sites of non-Christian sacred rulership. All in all, it would have become a journey back in time to the historic roots of sacred kingship.

It was not before early October, 1898, that his visit to Egypt was canceled:<sup>87</sup> There had been rumors that Italian anarchists had infiltrated into Egypt to assassinate the Kaiser. In addition, the latter's advisors were worried that too long an absence of the Emperor from Berlin might unduly delay the opening of the newly elected parliament and deprive the Reich of its leadership at a moment when, in the wake of the Dreyfus- and Fashoda-crises, French politics might take an unexpected turn. On October 8, 1898, *Wolff's Telegraphisches Bureau* reported that the Kaiser had waived his trip to Egypt.<sup>88</sup> As a result of this decision, Baalbek became the final chord of his Oriental journey.

#### 4.2. From Damascus to Baalbek

All the available evidence suggests that the Kaiser arrived at Baalbek in a mood of utmost enthusiasm. Sure, the official purpose of the whole journey had been the consecration of the Evangelical Redeemer's Church in Jerusalem. Yet, like many contemporary travelers to the Holy Land, the Emperor had been rather disappointed by what he saw in Palestine. According to a letter he wrote to the Russian Czar from Damascus on November 9, 1898, the Kaiser had found the Holy Land "simply terrible in its arid dryness and utter want of trees and water". The cult at the Christian sanctuaries reminded him of "Fetish adoration" and he deeply resented the inter-Christian quarrels of the local clergies "who have a pleasure in intrigues and political designs fostering hatred instead of love, and leading to free fights and battles in the churches instead of Psalms and friendly intercourse."<sup>89</sup>

"My personal feeling in leaving the holy city", he admitted, was "that I felt profoundly ashamed before the Moslems and that if I had come there without any Religion at all I certainly would have turned Mahometan! ... I return home with feelings of great disillusion and with the firm conviction that our Sav-

<sup>87</sup> For the reasons cf. Richter, *Orientreise* (fn. 10), 30-43.

<sup>88</sup> Wolff's Telegraphisches Bureau, no. 4449, Berlin, October 8, 1898, in: PAAA, R3731.

<sup>89</sup> Wilhelm II to Czar Nicholas II, Damascus, November 9, 1898, in: Goetz, ed., *Briefe* (fn. 61), 316-17.

our's grave quite certainly *is not beneath* that Church of the Saint Sepulchre, which in its appearance and decoration compares very badly with the Mosque of Omar in its simple and inspiring grandeur!"<sup>90</sup>

Compared to his visit to the Holy Land, his trip from Beirut to Damascus and back to Beirut via Baalbek (November 5-12, 1898) was a *crescendo* of elevating impressions. The Emperor was impressed by the "lovely villas, gardens and glades" of Beirut and, above all, by the "Magic" of Damascus where "[t]he great river Barader gives life and coolness and fosters vegetation of the finest description".<sup>91</sup>

The cheers of the Beirutis, too, had been more impressive than the ones by which he had been welcomed in the Holy Land – a fact that the official travelogue connected to the suggestion that a considerable part of the Beirutis had adopted the vivacious and noisy manners of "South Europeans" and that "the Muslims with their measured composure" were not as numerous in Beirut as they had been in Palestine.<sup>92</sup>

However, his triumphal entrance into Damascus on November 7, 1898, outshone even the cheers of Beirut. "Our reception here is simply astounding", the Kaiser noted in Damascus, "never has a Christian – Giaur – Mon[34]arch been so fêted and received with such unbounded enthusiasm."<sup>93</sup> German newspapers spread his remark "I really would like my Berliners to see how they are receiving a ruler here" (*Ich möchte doch, daß meine Berliner mal sähen, wie hier ein Herrscher empfangen wird*).<sup>94</sup>

Overwhelmed by the enthusiastic welcome, the Emperor had been carried away on November 8 into publicly assuring "his Majesty, the Sultan, and the 300 million Muslims who – living dispersed in the world – are venerating him as their Caliph" of his everlasting friendship<sup>95</sup> – all this much

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 316.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 316-17.

<sup>92</sup> *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar* (fn. 3), 343. According to Bülow, the enthusiasm of the Beirutis was "the more remarkable" as Beirut had hitherto been considered as "the center of French influence" (Bülow, telegram to Auswärtiges Amt, Beirut, November 6, 1898, PAAA, R 3734, A 12853). On the Kaiser's reception by the local population see also Richter, *Orientreise* (fn. 10), 77-86.

<sup>93</sup> Wilhelm II to Czar Nicholas II, Damascus, November 9, 1898, in: Goetz, ed., *Briefe* (fn. 61), 317.

<sup>94</sup> Quoted in: Wilhelm Schröder, ed., *Das persönliche Regiment. Reden und sonstige öffentliche Äußerungen Wilhelms II.*, München: Birk 1907, 127.

<sup>95</sup> "Möge Seine Majestät der Sultan und mögen die dreihundert Millionen Mohammedaner, welche, auf der Erde zerstreut lebend, in ihm ihren Khalifen verehren, dessen versichert sein, daß zu allen Zeiten der deutsche Kaiser ihr Freund sein wird." (Bülow, tele-

to the dismay of his more cautious Foreign Secretary, Bernhard von Bülow, who in vain had tried to publish a mitigated version of this speech which – in the Kaiser’s original phrasing – was likely to provoke anger and distrust on the side of France, Russia, and Great Britain.<sup>96</sup>

By adding in the same speech an eulogy on “one of the most chivalrous rulers of all times, the great Sultan Saladin” (1137-93) and by laying a wreath on Saladin’s tomb on November 9, 1898, Wilhelm II projected his vision of Muslim-German friendship on a Muslim ruler whose generous behavior towards the vanquished crusaders, particularly after the reconquest of Jerusalem, had made him a figure of respect and later on also a model of interreligious tolerance in European literature.<sup>97</sup>

[35] All in all: whilst the Kaiser’s travel to Palestine had been staged as a symbolic blend of pilgrimage and peaceful crusade, his tour in Lebanon and Syria rather invoked the imaginary of a mighty and self-confident monarch being above the confessional fault-lines of his times. In this respect, the Emperor’s visit to Baalbek was a symbolic peak. As the official travelogue put it:

“The last and final point of the great journey to the Orient had been reached here, in ancient Heliopolis: amidst the ruins of the largest temple buildings bequeathed to us by antiquity, the Imperial couple reposed during its last night on Syrian soil. During the previous rides and rests [of the journey], memories of the Savior’s mortal life, of ... pilgrims and crusaders had moved the soul ... — Those hours in the ruins of Baalbek, however, added to all these

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gram no. 116 to Auswärtiges Amt, Damascus, November 9, 1898, PAAA, R 3734, A 12953 [orthography corrected, TS]).

<sup>96</sup> In a first telegram on November 8, 1898, Bülow had dispatched a mitigated version to Berlin that did not imply open support for the Pan-islamist claims of the Ottoman Caliphate: “Möge seine Majestät der Sultan und mögen alle Mohammedaner überzeugt sein, daß der Deutsche Kaiser stets ihr Freund sein wird” (Bülow, telegram no. 114 to Auswärtiges Amt, Damascus, November 8, 1898, PAAA R 3734, A 12939 [orthography corrected, TS]). On request of the Kaiser, the press release of the first telegram was halted and a second telegram [no. 116, see above, fn. 95] was dispatched on the morning of November 9, 1898, containing the authentic text of the speech (cf. Bülow, telegram no. 117 to Auswärtiges Amt, November 9, 1898, *ibid.*, A 12951). – In his *Denkwürdigkeiten* (vol. 1 [fn. 16], 258), Bülow later claimed that he had tried to stop the press release of the authentic speech, but that the text had already been cabled to Germany on request of the Imperial Ambassador at the Sublime Porte, Freiherr von Marschall.

<sup>97</sup> See, e.g., Saladin’s portrait in Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s *Nathan der Weise* (Nathan the Wise, 1779). The symbolic pivot of Lessing’s “dramatic poem” was the parable of the “three rings” symbolizing the three monotheistic religions.

impressions the memory of the splendor and power of classical culture which the era of the Roman emperors once had extended to these regions.”<sup>98</sup>

#### 4.3. *Wilhelm II and the Roman emperors*

Rehabilitating the memory of the Roman emperors had been one of Wilhelm II's favorite projects in the 1890s.<sup>99</sup> For him, popularizing the concept of imperial monarchy in Germany meant changing the politics of memory, too. Anybody who was looking for historical models to revive the spirit of sacred kingship in 19th century Europe had to face the uncomfortable fact that large parts of the West's so-called “classical” Greco-Roman heritage were not particularly supportive of monarchy. At least the textual heritage of antique historians, philosophers and orators was more or less indebted to the norms and problems of the Greek *polis* and the Roman *republic*. Especially since the French Revolution and the Philhellenic euphoria of the Greek liberation war (1821-30), enthusiasm for Greco-Roman antiquity in Europe had often been allied to political liberalism.<sup>100</sup>

Wilhelm II not only distrusted the subversive components of Europe's Greco-Roman heritage – he also had been traumatized by the pedantic Greek lessons of his school days and ever since maintained a critical distance towards classical philology<sup>101</sup>. In 1890 he exhorted the German secondary schools to educate their pupils to “young German patriots and not to young Greeks and Romans”,<sup>102</sup> and in 1897 he deplored that history classes in German schools were devoting too much time on Athens and the Roman republic at the expense of more important events in the Roman Imperial monarchy.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>98</sup> *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar* (fn. 3), 371 (my translation).

<sup>99</sup> Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. 1 (fn. 16), 171-72.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Regine Quack-Eustathiades, *Der deutsche Philhellenismus während des griechischen Freiheitskampfes 1821-1827*, München: Oldenbourg 1984; Christoph Hauser, *Anfänge bürgerlicher Organisation: Philhellenismus und Frühliberalismus in Südwestdeutschland*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1990.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Simon, “Kaiser Wilhelm II. und die deutsche Wissenschaft” (fn. 45), 98-99. See also Marchand, *Down from Olympus* (fn. 77), 79, 135-36.

<sup>102</sup> Elisabeth Erdmann, *Die Römerzeit im Selbstverständnis der Franzosen und Deutschen: Lehrpläne und Schulbücher aus der Zeit zwischen 1850 und 1918*, Bochum: Brockmeyer 1992, 79.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Gerhard Schneider, “Der Geschichtsunterricht in der Ära Wilhelms II.”, in: Klaus Bergmann and Gerhard Schneider, eds., *Gesellschaft, Staat, Geschichtsunterricht: Beiträge zu einer Geschichte der Geschichtsdidaktik und des Geschichtsunterrichts von 1500-1980*, Düsseldorf: Schwann 1982, 153. – Although not all of the Kaiser's dreams concerning a revision of German school curricula became true, it was not the least at his instigation that the new

Late Roman temple structures like the ones of Baalbek – the ancient Heliopolis – conveyed a striking *visual* impression that no classical textbook collection could provide: They demonstrated that even a declining imperial monarchy had been capable to create monuments of a size unparalleled by Athens' Acropolis or the temples of the Roman republic.

The Protestant theologian, politician and writer Friedrich Naumann (1860-1919) who visited Baalbek in October 1898, a short time before Wilhelm II, noted in his diary-travelogue “Asia” that exposing the Kaiser to the sheer monumentality of the temple ruins might appeal to his desire for greatness and, hence, turn out costly for the German taxpayers:

“What will be the impression of these stones on Wilhelm II whose very nature is already inclined to such majestic structures! ... If we had no modern public administration with no parliamentary control of the budget, that night in Baalbek might easily turn out to be expensive, for a princely fantasy will surely be enormously inspired by witnessing such remains of ancient rulers' greatness.”<sup>104</sup>

As it seems, Wilhelm II was particularly fascinated by the Roman emperor *Antoninus Pius* (r. 138-61 AD) on whose orders – according to a sixth-century AD chronicle of Ioannes Malalas – the temple of Jupiter in Baalbek had been built. Being the adopted son of Hadrian (r. 117-38) and adoptive father of Marcus Aurelius (r. 161-80), the divinized Antoninus Pius was considered one of the most peaceful and popular rulers of the Roman Empire.

Already in the 1870s, Wilhelm and his father had participated in the excavations of the *Saalburg* near Bad Homburg in the Taunus region, a Roman castle that had been attributed to the reign of Antoninus Pius.<sup>105</sup> In 1897, he had promised to sponsor the restoration of the Saalburg.<sup>106</sup> In March 1900, he even commissioned a bronze statue of Antoninus Pius. De-

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Prussian curricula of 1901 provided for a more extensive coverage of the Roman emperors – *nota bene* at a time when the overall proportion of ancient history in Prussian school curricula was significantly reduced. Cf. Erdmann, *Römerzeit* (fn. 102), 80-82, Schneider, “Geschichtsunterricht”, 155.

<sup>104</sup> Friedrich Naumann, “Asia”: *Eine Orientreise über Athen, Konstantinopel, Baalbek, Nazareth, Jerusalem, Kairo, Neapel* [1899], 8th ed., Berlin-Schöneberg: Buchverlag der “Hilfe” 1911, 38 (my translation).

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. 1 (fn. 16), 171; Martin Stather, *Die Kunstpolitik Wilhelms II.*, Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre 1994, 78.

<sup>106</sup> Erdmann, *Römerzeit* (fn. 102), 269; Stather, *Kunstpolitik* (fn. 105), 78-79.

signed by the sculptor Johannes Götz,<sup>107</sup> the statue was placed at the southern gate of the Saalburg in autumn 1900, i.e., roughly about the time the Imperial archaeological expedition under Otto Puchstein started its excavations in Baalbek (see below). The statue's inscription – IMPERATORI ROMANORUM TITO AELIO HADRIANO ANTONINO AUGUSTO PIO GUILIEMUS II IMPERATOR GERMANORUM<sup>108</sup> (“To the Emperor of the Romans, Titus Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius, Wilhelm II, Emperor of the Germans”) – indicated that Wilhelm II considered himself as a counterpart of his Roman colleague across time and space, probably as the emperor of an up-coming German world empire the glory of which was to match the fame of Rome. Celebrating the beginning of restoration works at the Saalburg *principia* on October 11, 1900, the Kaiser declared that Germany's youth might learn in the emerging museum, “what a world empire means”. The Germans, he continued, should become as powerful, united and influential as the Roman world empire had once been – so that in future days the words “I am a German citizen!” (*Ich bin ein deutscher Bürger*) might come up to the ancient “*civis Romanus sum*”.<sup>109</sup>

The excavation-restoration of the Saalburg (to which he remained committed throughout his lifetime<sup>110</sup>) indicated how much the Emperor's interest in archaeology was intertwined with educational aims. The remnants of ancient worlds were excavated in order to reconstruct them *idealiter* as images or *realiter* as haptic “remakes” that could be used for con|38|temporary purposes. In an age of mass education, archaeology (and especially the archaeology of large architectural ensembles) thus helped to capture the public imagination of large national collectives in search of “ideals”, “roots”, and “origins” by discovering, preserving, restoring, and exhibiting visual, monumental proofs of ancient greatness.

Wilhelm II was not the only one to think that way. The rise of archaeology in the Second Empire corresponded to a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction with textualist classical philology.<sup>111</sup> “What has the grammar of Greek particles to do with the meaning of life?” Friedrich Nietzsche had desperately sighed in 1874.<sup>112</sup> A victim of its own successes in past centu-

<sup>107</sup> Stather, *Kunstpolitik*, 80-81.

<sup>108</sup> Erdmann, *Römerzeit* (fn. 102), 272. The author of the inscription was the historian Theodor Mommsen (1817-1903).

<sup>109</sup> Quoted in: Erdmann, *Römerzeit* (fn. 102), 270.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 267-73.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Marchand, *Down from Olympus* (fn. 77), 142-51.

<sup>112</sup> “Was hat die griechische Partikellehre mit dem Sinn des Lebens zu tun?” Friedrich Nietzsche, “Wir Philologen” [1874-75], in: *idem, Werke in drei Bänden*, ed. Karl Schlechta,

ries, classical philology which had been since the Renaissance the main key to higher education and to civilizational identity in Western Europe, was now considered to have become too over-specialized, too dry, too pedantic and boring, and out of touch with reality to provide intellectual and emotional guidance in an age of national mass education.<sup>113</sup> More and more critical voices asked to complement the textual knowledge of antiquity by the persuasive power of visual education, *enseignement par les yeux*, i.e., by images, monuments, works of art, photographs, museums, exhibitions etc.<sup>114</sup> Among the historical disciplines, archaeology was best suited to this task of discovering, restoring, or even recreating persuasive, haptic, seemingly authentic images of the distant past.

For many reasons, archaeological excavations in the Near East enjoyed a special position in the late 19th century:<sup>115</sup> Due to the rise of nationalism in Italy and Greece, it had become increasingly difficult for German museums to acquire new important finds from the primary centers of Greco-Roman culture. In contrast to Greece and Italy, the archaeological discovery of the Ottoman Empire had begun only recently and obstacles to export [39] large parts of the finds were much easier to overcome here than in Europe. Besides, many of the newly excavated sites in the Near East impressed modern observers by a size that favorably appealed to the taste for “monumentality” which accompanied the rise of nationalism in Europe. Above all, due to the revolutionary augmentation of historical knowledge that followed the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs and Mesopotamian cuneiform characters and the discovery of the Indo-German language family, the paradigms of European self-perception were changing.<sup>116</sup> No longer could Europe’s historical “origins” be traced back to Greece, Rome, and ancient Israel alone. More and more, it had become

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vol. 3, München: Hanser 1956, 326.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Marchand, *Down from Olympus* (fn. 77), 37, 124-33, 135, 142-51, 222.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. Marchand, *Down from Olympus* (fn. 77), 142-51; Erdmann, *Römerzeit* (fn. 102), 253-76. – In one of the best sold German books of the 1890s, *Rembrandt als Erzieher. Von einem Deutschen* [1890], 42nd [!] ed., Leipzig: Hirschfeld 1893, the nationalist writer Julius Langbehn (1851-1907), invoking the “struggle between image and letter” (p. 8), demanded “deliverance from the paper age” (p. 3) and pleaded for a national turn from “science” to “the arts” (pp. 2, 8), praising architecture as the pivot of the visual arts, comparable to the role of philosophy in scientific thought (p. 1).

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Marchand, *Down from Olympus* (fn. 77), 188-227.

<sup>116</sup> Cf. Thomas Scheffler, “Exotismus und Orientalismus”, in: *kultuRRevolution*, no. 32/33 (1995), 105-11. See also Hans G. Kippenberg, *Die Entdeckung der Religionsgeschichte: Religionswissenschaft und Moderne*, München: Beck 1997, 45-51.

fashionable to think of Asia as the “Cradle of Civilization”. “Au siècle de Louis XIV on était helléniste, maintenant on est orientaliste”, Victor Hugo had already written in 1829.<sup>117</sup>

#### 4.4. Phoenician roots of Baalbek?

Like many of his contemporaries, Wilhelm II, too, was fascinated by the idea to discover ancient links between “Oriental” and “Western” civilizations.<sup>118</sup> Already in his youth, he had admired Heinrich Schliemann<sup>119</sup> (1822-90), the famous German amateur archaeologist whose excavations in Troy had reinvigorated not only the remembrance of Greece’s heroic, pre-democratic past but had also focused public attention on the importance of Asia for Greek civilization.

Baalbek-Heliopolis seemed to be a particularly rewarding case. The name of the city seemed to indicate Phoenician or even pre-Phoenician origins.<sup>120</sup> The Imperial travelogue assumed that Baalbek had been the site of an ancient sanctuary of the sun god Baal and that the local cult of the [40] sun far preceded the later Roman temple structures.<sup>121</sup> The first local guide book, Michel Aloufs *Histoire de Baalbek*, counted the city among the oldest in the world.<sup>122</sup>

Robert Koldewey who directed in 1898/99 the first German archaeological survey in Baalbek assumed that the Kaiser’s decision to excavate the ruins had been influenced by the German Orientalist Professor Bernhard Moritz<sup>123</sup> (1859-1939), since 1896 director of the Khedival library in Cairo, who had shown the Kaiser around in Baalbek<sup>124</sup>. According to Koldewey,

<sup>117</sup> Victor Hugo, [preface to] *Les Orientales* [1829], ed. Elisabeth Barineau, Paris: Didier 1952, 11.

<sup>118</sup> Kaiser Wilhelm II, *Ereignisse und Gestalten* (fn. 43), 168; idem, *Erinnerungen an Korfu*, Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter 1924, 143-44.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. Christian Simon, “Kaiser Wilhelm II. und die deutsche Wissenschaft”, in: Röhl, ed., *Der Ort Kaiser Wilhelms II.* (fn. 45), 97-98.

<sup>120</sup> Cf., e.g., Michel M. Alouf, *Histoire de Baalbek par un de ses habitants* [1890], 3rd ed., Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique 1910, 28-42; [Georg] Beer, art. “Heliopolis”, in: *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, vol. 15 (8/2), Stuttgart: Druckenmüller 1912, 47-49.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar* (fn. 3), 372-73.

<sup>122</sup> Alouf, *Histoire de Baalbek* (fn. 120), 29.

<sup>123</sup> On Bernhard Moritz see Johann Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig: Harrassowitz 1955, 316.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. Winnefeld, “Einleitung” (fn. 67), 9. See also the contribution of Annegret Nippa in this volume {Annegret Nippa, “Curious self-representations: Baalbek and its visitors”,

Moritz had caught the Emperor's curiosity with unfounded speculations on the enigmatic (perhaps Phoenician?) origins of the sanctuary.<sup>125</sup>

Having explored the site for some days, Koldewey could not find anything enigmatic at all about it: "Ancient – for instance Phoenician – things ... are out of the question. Everything plain Greek-Roman",<sup>126</sup> he wrote to his friend Otto Puchstein in early January 1899. The results of the Puchstein expedition (1900-1905), too, did not yield any evidence of Phoenician origins. Yet, as late as 1925, Theodor Wiegand (1864-1936), while editing the third and last volume of the Baalbek expedition's final report, had to defend his authors against critics who blamed them for not having traced the once expected remnants of pre-Roman Baal veneration. Wiegand succinctly replied that in the great temple, excavations had been undertaken down to the natural rock without, however, producing the expected result.<sup>127</sup>

We may safely doubt whether the Kaiser would have waived the Baalbek excavations had he foreseen their meager results concerning the Phoenician heritage. Even Otto Puchstein, the head of the main excavation [41] campaign, notwithstanding his own results, continued to believe that the history of Baalbek reached back to the Phoenicians.<sup>128</sup> For Wilhelm II who considered himself the *spiritus rector* of the German war fleet, incessantly preached the nexus between *Weltpolitik* and maritime power, and personally used to spend many months on his yacht, the seafaring Phoenicians must have been a fascinating historical subject of lasting interest – as was the cult of the Sun<sup>129</sup> which obviously had been so splendidly celebrated in Baalbek-Heliopolis.

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183-98}.

<sup>125</sup> Robert Koldewey to Otto Puchstein, Baalbek, January 5 or 6, 1899, in: Schuchardt, ed., *Robert Koldewey* (fn. 74), 135.

<sup>126</sup> "Von alten – etwa phönikischen – Sachen ist allerdings nicht im mindesten die Rede. Alles gut römisch-griechisch." (Koldewey to Puchstein, January 5 or 6, 1899 [fn. 125], 136).

<sup>127</sup> Theodor Wiegand, [Preface of June 15, 1925], in: idem, ed., *Baalbek*, vol. 3, Berlin and Leipzig: de Gruyter 1925, [IV]: "... so ist zu erwidern, daß im Inneren des großen Tempels Nachgrabungen bis auf den gewachsenen Felsen angestellt worden sind, daß sie aber das erwartete Ergebnis nicht zeitigten."

<sup>128</sup> Cf. Otto Puchstein, *Führer durch die Ruinen van Ba'albek*, Berlin: Georg Reimer 1905, 3-4. – On the hitherto futile search for a pre-Hellenistic Baalbek see the contribution of Hélène Sader and Margarete van Ess in this volume {Hélène Sader/Margarete van Ess, "Looking for pre-Hellenistic Baalbek", 247-68}.

<sup>129</sup> For the Kaiser's lasting interest in the symbolism of the Sun, see his *Die chinesische Monade* (fn. 49).

The Kaiser's interest in the Phoenicians was even to grow during the later years of his life. In an evaluation of his own amateur excavations in Corfu (1911-14), published in 1924, Wilhelm II discussed at length the influence of the Phoenicians as a cultural "maritime bridge" between Asia and Europe and suggested a *Phoenician* link between ancient South Arabian cults of the Sun and the veneration of deities like Gorgo and Artemis in the Greek islands.<sup>130</sup> The famous snake hair of the Gorgo, he argued, might be traced back to the stylized sunrays ornating the head of an ancient Phoenician-Arabian sun goddess.<sup>131</sup>

### ***5. Rapid decision - difficult implementation***

In 1898, the Kaiser's sudden enthusiasm to excavate Baalbek found Germany's archaeological establishment rather unprepared. No master plan existed, no previous fact-finding-mission had explored the site, no experts had been selected, let alone trained for this task. In contrast to many other archaeological projects at the time, the Baalbek excavations had not been prepared by years of careful lobbying on the part of museums, ministries, and master archaeologists. The leading German archaeologists and their counterparts in the Prussian bureaucracy had |42| rather focused their efforts on promoting large-scale excavations in Mesopotamia.

Yet, as unprepared as they were, they quickly seized the opportunity to enlarge their range of action in the Ottoman Empire and to engage the most high political authority in Germany in a long-term archaeological project.

In the absence of genuine experts for Baalbek as well as of a reliable survey of the costs and tasks of an in-depth exploration of the ruins, the Prussian Ministry of Culture and the General administration of the Royal Prussian Museums approached the architect and archaeologist Robert Koldewey.<sup>132</sup> Koldewey, at the time preparing his departure as head of the German excavation campaign in Babylon, was urged to go to Baalbek first, for an on-site evaluation of the whole project, to be undertaken in cooper-

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<sup>130</sup> Cf. Kaiser Wilhelm II., *Erinnerungen an Korfu* (fn. 118), esp. 109-28. The excavations were assisted by the archaeologist Wilhelm Dörpfeld (1853-1940), Schliemann's former assistant. On the Corfu excavations see also: Wilhelm II., *Ereignisse und Gestalten* (fn. 43), 169-71, and his *Studien zur Gorgo*, Berlin: de Gruyter 1936.

<sup>131</sup> Wilhelm II., *Erinnerungen an Korfu* (fn. 118), 109-11.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. Immediatbericht to Wilhelm II, Berlin, December 3, 1898 (fn. 72), 35-37; Koldewey to Puchstein, December 12, 1898 (fn. 74), 133.

ation with Prof. Bernhard Moritz (Cairo) whom Koldewey was to pick up in Alexandria for that purpose.<sup>133</sup>

This is not to say that the Kaiser's sudden interest in Baalbek put the Babylon project at risk.<sup>134</sup> It did, however, mean that Koldewey and his assistant, Walter Andrae (1875-1956), had to speed up their departure<sup>135</sup> [43] and that their work in Baalbek (from December 27, 1898, to January 16, 1899) had to take place under rather rough and winterly weather conditions ("bei Schnee und Kälte").<sup>136</sup>

As it seems, Koldewey, in the beginning, had even not been overly convinced of the archaeological value of the whole undertaking. He blamed Moritz – whom he did not consider an expert – for having "stirred up the whole Baalbek story".<sup>137</sup> It was only in Baalbek that Koldewey became really interested in the Kaiser's project: "The ruin is interesting, much more as one hitherto should have thought", he wrote to Otto Puchstein in early January, 1899.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>133</sup> Cf. Immediatbericht to Wilhelm II, Berlin, December 3, 1898 (fn. 72), 36-37.

<sup>134</sup> Against: Richter, *Orientreise* (fn. 10), 202. – Since the planned Babylon expedition was supposed to reach Mesopotamia via Trieste–Alexandria–Beirut–Alexandrette–Bagdad, the Ministry of Culture rather considered it a "particularly happy coincidence" (*eine besonders günstige Gelegenheit*) to have such a highly experienced specialist as Koldewey passing through Syria anyhow. Entrusting Koldewey with the pre-exploration of Baalbek meant saving the costs for a special expedition and having to pay only the additional travel costs Beirut–Baalbek–Beirut and a ca. three-weeks stay in Baalbek. Cf. Immediatbericht to Wilhelm II, Berlin, December 3, 1898 (fn. 72), 36-37; Bosse to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 11, 1898 (fn. 73), 44. – According to Koldewey, Moritz left Baalbek already after 8 days (cf. Koldewey to Puchstein, January 5 or 6, 1899, in: Schuchardt, ed., *Robert Koldewey* (fn. 74), 135).

<sup>135</sup> Originally, the Babylon expedition was supposed to set out for Mesopotamia only after the official Ottoman excavation permit had been issued. The Baalbek project changed these plans: Koldewey and Andrae were supposed to leave Germany earlier, without the Babylon firman of the Porte. The rest of the Babylon expedition would follow them as soon as the Ottoman firman was issued and meet them at Beirut or Alexandrette. Cf. Immediatbericht to Wilhelm II, December 3, 1898 (fn. 72), 36-37. – Koldewey's and Andrae's departure from Germany seems to have taken a rather hectic course: On 11 December, it was still not sure whether they would reach the Trieste–Alexandria steamer on 14th or on 21st of December or whether they would have to travel via Neapel. Cf. Bosse to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 11, 1898 (fn. 73), 44.

<sup>136</sup> Winnefeld, "Einleitung" (fn. 67), 9.

<sup>137</sup> Koldewey to Puchstein, January 5 or 6, 1899 (fn. 125), 134: "Moritz, der eigentlich die ganze Balbeker Geschichte angestiftet hat".

<sup>138</sup> Koldewey to Puchstein, January 5 or 6, 1899 (fn. 125), 134: "Die Ruine ist interessant, viel mehr als man früher hätte denken sollen."

After Koldewey's departure to Babylon, it still took about one and a half year to set up the final research programme of the main expedition, to arrange a team of qualified experts and to obtain the necessary Ottoman excavation permits<sup>139</sup>. On June 6, 1900, Wilhelm II, in the presence of the Ottoman ambassador, received the General Director of the Royal Museums, Richard Schöne, and the designed members of the Baalbek expedition in Potsdam to discuss the project.<sup>140</sup> On June 20, the German Imperial embassy in Constantinople submitted the official request for an excavation permit in Baalbek to the Porte.<sup>141</sup> On August 8, the members of the expedition arrived in Baalbek.<sup>142</sup>

On September 10, 1900, the main excavations finally started.<sup>143</sup> Funded by Wilhelm II's private disposition fund and directed by [44] Koldewey's friend Otto Puchstein<sup>144</sup> (1856-1911), they lasted until March 1904.<sup>145</sup> In order to gain comparative material from other examples of Syro-Roman architecture in the region, the Baalbek excavations were accompanied by a fact-finding-mission (Summer 1902) to Palmyra, Apamea, Jerash, Amman, Bostra, and the Hauran.<sup>146</sup>

Corresponding to the *excavation-restoration* impetus of Wilhelminian archaeology (see above), the Baalbek excavations were then followed by the construction of a new stairway to the *propylaea*, the ancient entrance hall

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<sup>139</sup> According to the German embassy in Constantinople, the Ottoman ministry of educational affairs had been reluctant to accept the second expedition as a simple continuation of the first and as a personal project of the German Emperor. Cf. Wangenheim to Chancellor Fürst zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, Therapia, July 29, 1900, in: *BAB*, R 09.01, 37696, 59.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Winnefeld, "Einleitung" (fn. 67), 9. See also: Ministry of Cultural Affairs to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UIV 2332, Berlin, December 18, 1900, in: *BAB*, R. 09.01, 37696, 4-5.

<sup>141</sup> Wangenheim to Chancellor Fürst zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, Therapia, July 29, 1900 (fn. 139).

<sup>142</sup> Winnefeld, "Einleitung" (fn. 67), 9.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>144</sup> On Puchstein's biography see A. Jolles, "Otto Puchstein", *Jahresberichte über die Fortschritte der klassischen Altertumswissenschaften* 164 (1913), 192-211.

<sup>145</sup> Winnefeld, "Einleitung" (fn. 67), 12.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. Puchstein's research proposal, "Über die Fortsetzung der archäologischen in Syrien im Sommer 1902 begonnenen Untersuchungen", Freiburg i. Br., January 11, 1903, in: *BAB*, R 09.01, 37702, 65-68; Schöne to Prussian Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Berlin, April 7, 1903, in: *ibid.*, 63-64; Prussian Ministry of Cultural Affairs to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, May 11, 1903, in: *ibid.*, 62; Daniel Krencker and Willy Zschietzmann, *Römische Tempel in Syrien nach Aufnahmen und Untersuchungen der Deutschen Baalbekexpedition 1901-1904*, Berlin: de Gruyter 1938.

of the temple compound. Built under the direction of the German engineer Dr. Gottlieb Schumacher,<sup>147</sup> the new staircase was designed to restore the old central axis of the sanctuary, thus enabling future visitors to enter it the same way as ancient worshippers had done.

In summer 1905, the activities of the Imperial Baalbek expedition were officially concluded. In a solemn ceremony on June 29, 1905, Dr. Schumacher presented the keys to the site's new main gate and to the museum that had been established inside the temple compound to the *vali* of Damascus, Nazim Pasha. Speeches by the German consul general in Beirut, Dr. Paul Schröder, by the *vali*, two local religious dignitaries (the Mufti and the Melkite bishop), and by a local schoolteacher, afterwards a common walk through the ruins, a visit to the new museum, and finally a dinner in the house of Said Pasha Haidar, head of Baalbek's municipality, concluded the day which had abounded in mutual thanks and good wishes for Emperor Wilhelm II and Sultan Abdülhamid II, their empires and their peoples.<sup>148</sup> On November 3, 1905, 57 crates with architectural samples of the [45] finds left Beirut to be shipped to Hamburg.<sup>149</sup> The bulk of the samples went to the Royal Museums in Berlin, the rest to the University of Freiburg (Puchstein's home university), and to the Technical University of Hannover where Bruno Schulz (1865-1932), technical director of the Baalbek expedition, had been appointed as professor.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Winnefeld, "Einleitung" (fn. 67), 12.

<sup>148</sup> See the report by the German Imperial Consul General in Beirut, Paul Schröder, to Chancellor Fürst von Bülow, Beirut, June 3, 1905, in: *BAB*, R 09.01, 37111, 34-35. – Resuming previous proposals by Puchstein and Schumacher, Schröder proposed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to decorate four locals for their merits for the Baalbek project: the Shiite notable Assad Bey Haidar, the Christian notable Elias Bey Mutran, the dragoman of the Syrian *vilayet* government, Nicola Effendi Adami, and the tenant of the ruins (*Ruinenpächter*) Michel Alouf. Alouf, he argued, "is in a way our confidant [*unser Vertrauensmann*] in Baalbekk [sic]; in a short while, he will be appointed as official of the Turkish Museum Administration with a fixed salary, and in future, it will be his duty to watch over the ruins." Schröder proposed to award Adami, Haidar, and Mutran the Red Eagle Order (*Roter Adler-Orden*), 4th class, and Alouf the Royal Crown Order (*Königlicher Kronen-Orden*), 4th class (*ibid.*, 35, my translation).

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Winnefeld, "Einleitung" (fn. 67), 12; and Schmidt, Prussian Ministry of Culture, to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Berlin, January 10, 1906, *BAB*, R 09.01, 37711, 64.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. Winnefeld, "Einleitung" (fn. 67), 12.

### 6. *The Imperial tablet: the Baalbek ruins as palimpsest*

However, there were not only positive responses to the Emperor's visit to Baalbek and to their long-term consequences for the ruins. In a polemical reevaluation of the Emperor's journey, the French daily *Le Gaulois* accused the Kaiser to revel in Wagnerian romantic historic scenarios, while, at the same time, inconsiderately disfiguring historic monuments – citing as one of the proofs the marble tablet that commemorated his visit to Baalbek:

“[C]’est à Baalbek, que Guillaume II a osé son plus insigne péché d’orgueil. Dans le temple de Jupiter, le mieux conservé de toute l’Héliopolis antique, à la place d’honneur, entre deux pilastres corinthiens d’une beauté somptueuse et grave, l’empereur d’Allemagne a fait sceller sous ses yeux une atroce plaque de marbre pour perpétuer sa visite au sanctuaire du roi des dieux! ... Il a choisi la place, fait défoncer le mur que tant de siècles avaient épargné, cimenter l’inscription lapidaire dont la banalité hurle dans les ruines profanées; mais son monument sacrilège appelle déjà les destructions prochaines. Déjà des touristes exaspérés ont mutilé la plaque à coups de pierre; il a fallu la protéger par un grillage; un amorcellement d’ordures l’assiège. Elle sera réduite en débris avant la muraille millénaire qui l’enchâsse.”<sup>151</sup>

The ostensibly purist impetus of this accusation did, however, ignore that the tablet – a gift of Sultan Abdülhamid II – was part of an ancient tradition, [46] too. Since the days of the Pharaohs, leaving one's mark on other people's monuments, erasing the marks of others, or using their monuments for new purposes has been part of the perennial interplay of generations. In fact, the subsequent superimposition of primary, secondary, tertiary etc. layers of meanings constitutes to a large extent the historicity of monuments. The importance of a monument in and for history is not the least indicated by its evolution into a *palimpsest*, i.e., by its change from a mere remnant of generations past into a site of later memories, contemporary visions, restorations, new functions... In this respect, archaeology, too, may be considered as a palimpsest-generating agency. It is, by its very activity, leaving its traces on the objects of its explorations, “recreating” only selected historic strata of ancient sites while omitting others or even destroying them.<sup>152</sup>

<sup>151</sup> P.-B. Gheusi, “Lohengrin en Palestine”, *Le Gaulois*, July 7, 1899.

<sup>152</sup> Archaeologists leaving their own inscriptions on ancient monuments are part of this logic. The Prussian Egyptologist Richard Lepsius (1810-84), e.g., had proudly hoisted the Prussian flag on the Pyramid of Cheops in 1842 and left behind “a commemorative inscription in hieroglyphs carved directly into the Egyptian tomb” (Marchand, *Down from Olympus* [fn. 77], 63).

Even before the arrival of the German archaeological expeditions, the palimpsest-like character of the Baalbek ruins could hardly have got lost on anybody. In fact, it made up much of the “enigma” of the site that had provoked the Kaiser’s curiosity, too. Speculations on Phoenician or pre-Phoenician foundations, inscriptions by several Roman Emperors, remnants of a Byzantine basilica and of an Arab fortress, and numerous graffiti by tourists and locals made it difficult to consider the site as a “pure” Roman creation.

The German archaeological expeditions, too, were aware of the already existing multilayeredness of the site. In fact, it was part of their research program to find out whether the Roman buildings of 2nd century AD had been preceded by older structures and how their transformation in a Byzantine and later on in an Arab fortress had taken place.<sup>153</sup> Puchstein’s team employed among others a specialist – the Orientalist Moritz Sobernheim (1872-1933) – to study the Arab inscriptions in Baalbek.<sup>154</sup>

As it seems, Puchstein and his colleagues did not feel particularly offended by the presence of the Imperial tablet. On the contrary, it was on [47] Puchstein’s instigation that the General Administration of the Royal Museums in 1904 proposed to relocate the tablet to a more central place in order to improve its visibility in the ruins:<sup>155</sup>

After the Kaiser’s departure, the tablet had been fixed inside the smaller temple, between two Corinthian columns at the second level of the intercolumnial decoration of the Northern wall,<sup>156</sup> thus protecting the marble against bad weather from Northern and Western directions. As the temple had been full of rubble then, it had been easy to read the inscription without mounting a ladder. As a result of the excavations, however, the temple’s ground floor had been lowered down to the Roman floor, i.e., ca. 3 meters below the level of 1898, thus making it nearly impossible for new visitors to decipher the inscription with the naked eye. Puchstein added that by shifting the entry of the whole compound “to its old loca-

<sup>153</sup> Cf. the memorandum “Ziel und Umfang des Unternehmens”, Berlin, April 20, 1900, *BAB*, R 09.01,37696, 69.

<sup>154</sup> M. Sobernheim, “Die arabischen Inschriften”, in: Wiegand, ed., *Baalbek*, vol. 3 (fn. 127), 12-40.

<sup>155</sup> Cf. General Administration of the Royal Museums (Richard Schöne) to Prussian Ministry of Culture, Berlin, February 16, 1904, *BAB*, R 09.01, 37705, 87-88.

<sup>156</sup> According to the official travelogue, the Kaiser originally had chosen “the Western wall of the Jupiter’s Temple behind the great, well-preserved row of columns” (*Das deutsche Kaiserpaar* [fn. 3], 375).

tion”, the main axis of the ancient temple district would soon be restored, thus depriving the smaller temple of its former centrality<sup>157</sup>. As in Roman times, future visitors again would enter the compound through the *propylaea* and the two forecourts of the greater temple. Puchstein therefore proposed to remove the Imperial tablet from the smaller temple and to refix it amidst the remnants of the main apse of the Byzantine Basilica which had been built under Emperor Theodosius (379-95 AD), i.e., in the main axis of the *greater* sanctuary. To protect it against bad weather there, a special niche should be constructed. Thus, future visitors would be remembered at a central, yet not too conspicuous location to whom they owed the opportunity to study the ruins and to enjoy their beauty.

The proposal did not mention that the excavations had not only changed the legibility and spatial centrality of the Imperial tablet but also its symbolic framework: At the time of the Kaiser’s visit, the smaller temple had generally been taken for the famous Temple of Jupiter said to have been built by Antoninus Pius.<sup>158</sup> It was only as a result of the German [48] excavations that the smaller temple had been attributed to *Bacchus*, a view (first advanced by Otto Puchstein<sup>159</sup>) that is widely accepted today, though final evidence is lacking. In any case, Puchstein’s reclassement implied that the memory of the German Protestant Emperor was recalled ... not under the auspices of the ancient king of gods but in a former sanctuary of Dionysian orgies and excesses.

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<sup>157</sup> Before the end of the German excavations, visitors had to enter the temple area through a vaulted subterranean passage beneath the southern wall of the Arab fortifications and emerged into the ruins near the smaller temple (cf. *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar* [fn. 3], 371).

<sup>158</sup> The 1880 *Baedeker* traveler’s hand-book for Syria and Palestine, e.g., assumes that the larger temple had been devoted to all deities of Heliopolis, while the smaller one had been the sanctuary of Ba’al or Jupiter respectively. Cf. [Albert Socin], *Palästina und Syrien: Handbuch für Reisende*, ed. by K. Baedeker, Leipzig: Karl Baedeker 1880, 395. — Friedrich Lübkers *Reallexikon des klassischen Altertums für Gymnasien*, 7th ed. Leipzig: Teubner 1891, 514 (art. “Heliopolis”) mentions “the great temple of the Sun and the smaller Temple of Jupiter”. — Max Freiherr von Oppenheim (1860-1946) who passed through Baalbek in 1893 presented the smaller temple as the Temple of Jupiter. Cf. his *Vom Mittelmeer zum Persischen Golf. Durch den Ḥaurān, die syrische Wüste und Mesopotamien*, vol. 1, Berlin: Dietrich Reimer 1899, 44-46, and plate after p. 46. As late as 1906, the British traveler and writer A. C[unnick] Inchbold, too, depicted the smaller temple as the Temple of Jupiter (Inchbold, *Under the Syrian Sun*, vol. 1 [fn. 63], 145, 174-79, and plates facing pp. 144 and 178).

<sup>159</sup> O. Puchstein, *Führer durch die Ruinen von Ba’albek*, Berlin: Georg Reimer 1905, 29-30. See also Daniel Krencker, “Bemerkungen zur Benennung des Tempels, zur allgemeinen Lage, zu den baulichen Schicksalen und zur Ausgrabung”, in: Th. Wiegand, ed., *Baalbek*, vol. 2, Berlin and Leipzig: de Gruyter 1923, 86-89 (p. 86); Friedrich Ragette, *Baalbek*, London: Chatto & Windus 1980, 43.

Moving the tablet to the main apse of the Byzantine basilica, as Puchstein had proposed, would have changed the symbolic framework of the tablet again: The apse lies on the former stairway to the larger temple<sup>160</sup> which Puchstein himself now classed as the real Temple of Jupiter. The *genius loci* of the proposed memorial niche, thus, would have combined the dignity of Jupiter and the aura of the first Christian Emperors of the Roman Empire.

Though Puchstein's proposal was supported by the General Administration of the Royal Museums and by the Prussian Ministry of Culture,<sup>161</sup> nothing came out of these plans, nor did Puchstein succeed with his proposal to dedicate a second inscription (on the backside of the memorial niche) to the work of the German archaeological mission in Baalbek<sup>162</sup>. The Imperial tablet remained in the "Temple of Bacchus" till the end of [49] World War I when it was pulled off by the victors and the names of the Kaiser and his wife were erased.<sup>163</sup>

It was not before the mid-1970s, at the instigation of the late Hans Christian Lankes, then German ambassador to Lebanon, that the names of the Kaiser and his wife were reingraved and the tablet put up again in the Bacchus temple (this time, however, without the richly decorated marble arch that had framed it in 1898)<sup>164</sup> – thus continuing and enriching its proper evolution as a small palimpsest which is nothing but part of a much larger one.

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<sup>160</sup> The remains of the Basilica were removed during the French excavations in the inter-war period (communication Margarete van Ess).

<sup>161</sup> General Administration of the Royal Museums to Prussian Ministry of Culture, Berlin, February 16, 1904, *BAB*, R 09.01, 37705, 87-88; Prussian Ministry of Culture to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Berlin, April 16, 1904, *BAB*, R 09.01, 37705, 117-18.

<sup>162</sup> Cf. General Administration of the Royal Museums (Richard Schöne) to Prussian Ministry of Culture, Berlin, February 16, 1904, *BAB*, R 09.01, 37705, 88.

<sup>163</sup> See the contribution by Hans Christian Lankes in this volume {Hans Christian Lankes, "The tablets of Baalbek", 235-44}.

<sup>164</sup> Cf. *ibid.*