

Turkish role-models in interwar Germany

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Abstract

In 1933, Adolf Hitler gave an interview to a Turkish newspaper. In it he summarized his admiration of Mustafa Kemal [Ataturk] whom he called his shining star in the darkness of the 1920s. This was reprinted on the frontpage of the *Volkische Beobachter* and it would become the official Third Reich line on Turkey. This might surprise but was grounded in the on-going German fascination with all things Turkish that continued beyond the 'brotherhood in arms' of World War I.

In this lecture, an overview will be given of the imagined role of the New Turkey and Ataturk for interwar Germany. It will sketch how and why 'Turkish lessons' for Germany were advanced and what their impact has been.

Bio

Prof. Dr. Stefan Ihrig is a Professor in the Department of General History at the University of Haifa and the Haifa Center for German and European Studies (HCGES). He is director of the HCGES and co-editor of the *Journal of Holocaust Research*. His last book dealt with the connections between the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust (*Justifying Genocide – Germany and the Armenians from Bismarck to Hitler*, Harvard University Press, 2016). Another book dealt with the role Ataturk and the Turkish nationalists played for Hitler and the Nazis (*Ataturk in the Nazi Imagination*, Harvard University Press, 2014). It has been translated into Turkish (2015, two editions) and Greek (2016). Kurdish (Kurmanji) and Arabic versions are forthcoming.