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CHAPTER 2

**Edward Joris: Caught between continents and ideologies?**

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This chapter describes the ‘world according to Edward Joris’, a Flemish anarchist with modest roots and low self-esteem, who migrated to the Ottoman capital in search of work and adventure, got engaged in the Armenian question and eventually in a terrorist complot, resulting in a death sentence and two years of imprisonment. This *petite biographie*addresses two central contradictions of Joris’s character: How does a flamingant socialist turn terrorist? And how does an internationalist deal with nationalism? The role and importance of transcultural personal encounters and experiences, as well as individual character traits, come to the fore in this chapter.

The *nationalist pacifist anarchist internationalist reformist terrorist* Edward Joris seemed to suffer from a peculiar affliction of mutually neutralizing -isms. Joris, whose claim to fame was his complicity in the failed assassination attempt on the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid II in 1905, combined ostensibly incompatible traits, which still present historians with a puzzle. How could a supporter of the sedately petty-bourgeois Flemish movement turn terrorist? How did he reconcile his pacifism with supporting pro-Armenian violence? What kind of anarchist would remain active in the solidly social-democratic *Belgian Workers’ Party*? How could an internationalist support both Flemish and Armenian nationalism? How did someone who frequented so-called *anarchistes de salon* in Antwerp become a man of violent action in Istanbul?

This chapter will look into these contradictions and offer some background on Joris’s motivations. It presents a reading of the assassination attempt mainly from Joris’s perspective and from Belgian documents. As such it may complement Armenian and Ottoman sources.[[1]](#footnote-1) After a summary of Joris’s life up to his release from prison in 1907, I will address two central contradictions in his character, namely his move from Flemish-mindedsocialism to terrorism and from an internationalist stance to nationalism. Finally, I will try to shed some light on the process of radicalization he underwent.

In short, my main objective is to address the ideological contradictions of a man transposed from Antwerp to Istanbul or, as it were, caught between continents and ideologies.

# Joris and the bomb

Edward Joris (1876-1957) had modest roots in Antwerp. An only child, his father died when he was four. He could only attend school through age 13, after which he worked as a junior clerk in a succession of shipping companies. At age 19 he became the party secretary of the Borgerhout section of the social-democratic *Belgian Workers’ Party* (Belgische Werkliedenpartij / Parti ouvrier belge). He was also secretary of the socialist union *Cercle des employés de commerce ‘l’Unitas’*.[[2]](#footnote-2) In the same period he became acquainted with the Antwerp anarchist milieu.

Joris left for Istanbul in the summer of 1901 in search of work and adventure. He found employment at Agelasto, Sfezzo & Cie, a subsidiary agent of the shipping company *Deutsche Levante-Linie*, as a correspondent (for business conducted in French and English).[[3]](#footnote-3) His fiancée Anna Nellens, who was a seamstress, came over in May 1902 and they got married - somewhat reluctantly on Joris’s part as is evident from his private letters - on 26 July 1902. Barely a month later, on August 14, Joris was fired because he was not up to his task according to his employer: ‘He was slow-witted and he could barely write a line without forgetting some words.’[[4]](#footnote-4) On 2 December 1902 he started working at the local branch of the Singer sewing machine company.

Joris and his wife became implicated in what would become known as the Yıldız bombing, an Armenian assassination attempt on Abdülhamid II on 21 July 1905, which left 26 people dead and 58 wounded.[[5]](#footnote-5) Joris had been introduced to an Armenian terrorist cell by Vramchabou ‘Vram’ Kindirian, a colleague of his at Singer who was a member of the *Dashnaktzutiun*, the *Armenian Revolutionary² Federation* (ARF). At its third congress held in Sofia in 1904, the ARF had decided to eliminate the Sultan.[[6]](#footnote-6) Christaphor Mikaelian, one of the founders of the ARF, was entrusted with this mission. Kindirian introduced Joris to Mikaelian. Both Kindirian and Mikaelian died in March 1905 when experimenting near Sofia with an explosive device. The conspiracy could have ended there because Joris’s passport was found on Kindirian’s body[[7]](#footnote-7), but the authorities did not follow through on this lead. Joris was deeply upset by Vram’s death, which may have played an important part in his becoming more radicalized. Vram had become Joris’s best friend. In his interrogation on 3 August 1905 by the Ottoman police Joris called his relationship with Vram ‘very intimate’.[[8]](#footnote-8)

All in all some 39 people were to some extent involved in the attempt. At least that was the number of defendants in the trial (some were tried *in absentia* like Joris’s wife). Besides Kindirian and Mikaelian, the core of the group consisted of 11 more people according to Joris. The assault itself was carried out by two persons: Konstantin Nemradji Kabulian (known to Joris as Sapho or Lipa Rips) who had taken over as leader of the group after Mikaelian’s death, and a 32 year old Armenian woman who went by the names Rubina Faïn, Nadedja Datalian or Rebecca and who claimed to be Mikaelian’s daughter.[[9]](#footnote-9) These two drove the carriage loaded with explosives near the Sultan’s usual Friday route to the Yıldız Mosque and detonated the explosives. Most conspirators managed to flee, including the actual bombers and Joris’s wife who stayed in Switzerland until Joris’s release. Only Joris – of his own accord – and some minor accomplices did not leave Istanbul.[[10]](#footnote-10)

For a week after his arrest on 28 July, Joris denied every involvement. Belgian diplomatic representatives initially thought that he was innocent, and that he merely had the misfortune to having mixed with the wrong people.[[11]](#footnote-11) According to his 1952 reminiscences, however, Joris had been deeply involved in the preparations of the assault. By his own account, he had cleared the explosives and the bomb carriage through customs by signing off with his actual name on the forms. He had declared the 100 kilograms of Melinite (an explosive made of picric acid) as ‘white soft household soap’.[[12]](#footnote-12) But the role Joris accorded himself in his reminiscences was an exaggeration. The report of the special investigative commission by the Ottoman authorities made no mention of him clearing the carriage or the explosives through customs. Joris had been tracked down by the police because of his relationship with Kabulian, who had the carriage specifically made in Vienna and then shipped to Istanbul. The vehicle had been easy to trace because it had rubber tyres, which at the time were still a rarity in Istanbul.[[13]](#footnote-13) Joris’s actual involvement in the operation had been limited to translating a telegram and a letter into German.[[14]](#footnote-14) As to the explosives, in reality a total of 140 kilos of melinite had been smuggled in small packages into Istanbul by Bulgarian sailors.[[15]](#footnote-15)

In any case, the Ottoman police quickly found evidence of Joris’s facilitating role in the conspiracy. His home had served as a daily meeting venue, two of the conspirators had lived there and the explosives had also been stored at his place.[[16]](#footnote-16) Joris had not been completely aware of all the details of the conspiracy as he did not know Russian, the language he claimed the conspirators used to conduct their meetings at his place.[[17]](#footnote-17) Already on 10 August 1905 he expressed unease with his co-conspirators. To his interrogators he called them “people preoccupied with their own fate and their own life”.[[18]](#footnote-18) As he spent time in jail his dissatisfaction only exacerbated. In a long letter from his Istanbul prison to his wife in 1907, he complained about ‘people without character like most Armenian Sunday revolutionaries indeed are’.[[19]](#footnote-19) Just before fleeing, his co-conspirators had left their weapon stock at his house. This irritated Joris:

What could I do with those giant pistols? Hide them, easier said than done. But where? Some reflection should have made them see that I could not find a hiding place for those toys that night or the day after. As they had fled and were out of danger, those things could have better been hidden in their house. [...] And, almost as if they had wanted to betray me by deliberate sloppiness, they had put this huge package in plain sight on my writing table. [...] [T]hey could just as easily have hidden it in my bed under the cover or in the cupboard. [...] It is abundantly clear that I no longer counted and that my person did not warrant any concern of them for a single moment, which, from a selfish point of view, was perhaps practical but in no way comradely.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Perhaps we should take Joris’s account with a grain of salt. In actuality the ‘giant’ package consisted of three revolvers and 240 cartridges that could be fitted into a single drawer.[[21]](#footnote-21) More spectacular than the guns left at Joris’s house was the discovery by the police of several dozens of explosive devices all across Istanbul. Only part of the smuggled melinite had been set aside for the attempt on the Sultan. The rest of the explosives had been meant to cause havoc in the aftermath of the Sultan’s death, but had never been used.[[22]](#footnote-22)

On 25 November 1905 Joris’s trial started and on 18 December he and his wife were sentenced to death. Because of international pressure and protests from the Belgian government, Joris was not immediately put to death, but merely incarcerated. Initially he had feared torture and maltreatment,[[23]](#footnote-23) but being a foreign subject, he was treated well during interrogations and in prison. This contradicts the contemporary image of the infernal Ottoman prisons[[24]](#footnote-24), which was vividly and mendaciously painted in The New York Times’s report on Joris’s release in January 1908. The title and bottom-line of the article left nothing to the imagination: ‘Tortured two years in a Turkish cage. Belgian falsely convicted of attempt to kill the Sultan, at last set free. [...] Plan to bury him alive just averted by action of his government. Fed on bread and water.’[[25]](#footnote-25) None of this was true. The reports of the Belgian minister in Istanbul to Joris’s mother assured her time and again that her son was well treated, relatively well fed and in fairly good health (at times suffering from arthritis).[[26]](#footnote-26) The minister even quoted Joris as having said that he was being treated ‘as a prince’, adding: ‘If I had been in Belgium, I would be in shackles’.[[27]](#footnote-27) Joris confirmed his being treated fairly to his mother.[[28]](#footnote-28) In 1907 he started complaining because he was kept in solitary confinement.[[29]](#footnote-29) He was bored and lonely. But even in this situation he was not mistreated. He even wrote to his friend Victor Resseler: ‘I have disobeyed on some occasions and have been insubordinate here! The [prison] governor is afraid of me and does not dare say anything, but he has instructed his guards to resolve matters peacefully.’[[30]](#footnote-30) He seems not to have been worse off than in a Belgian prison, but the Belgian legation in Istanbul was well aware of the fact that he was treated far better than Ottoman prisoners.[[31]](#footnote-31)

Before his very sudden release, Joris was planning to escape, an intention he had shared with the Belgian vice-consul and with numerous of his correspondents who passed this information on to third parties.[[32]](#footnote-32) The whole endeavour took a somewhat comical turn, however, when Joris asked Resseler for a narcotic (apparently to sedate his guards) and inquired how long a person could go without air in a five-meter long tunnel.[[33]](#footnote-33)

In the end Joris was unexpectedly released on 22 December 1907 and he was back in Antwerp a few days later. On 11 November 1907 he had consented to the express and written condition that once free, he would never again undertake any action against the Sultan.[[34]](#footnote-34) He urged his friend Victor Resseler to be discrete about this: ‘Don’t accuse me of weakness, I will tell you later why I did it. I had to. Don’t tell anyone for the moment.’[[35]](#footnote-35) Already on the day of his release, however, he had confided to the Belgian legation in Istanbul that he had no intention whatsoever to honour his part of the deal.[[36]](#footnote-36) Indeed, in a self-apologetic piece in *Ontwaking* in 1908 he called the Sultan ‘a criminal with a crown’ and he predicted that Abdülhamid ‘would come to ruin’.[[37]](#footnote-37)

# How does a *flamingant* socialist turn terrorist?

Joris is mainly remembered today as a supporter of the Flemish movement, a so-called *flamingant*, because of his Flemish nationalist collaboration with Germany during the First World War.[[38]](#footnote-38) It is tempting from a modern point of view to regard his involvement with the Armenian cause as a direct reflection of his indignation over discrimination against the Flemish in Belgium. However, neither his letters nor his publications at the time allow for such a far-reaching conclusion. There is only circumstantial evidence that he was indeed interested in the Flemish movement before 1908, the most important of which was his frequenting the flamingant anarchist circles of Antwerp.[[39]](#footnote-39)

While his anarchist credentials are clearly testified by his own writings, there is little to no Flemish militancy to be found in his letters and articles prior to and during his ‘Ottoman period’. One of his long prison letters to his wife was even in French[[40]](#footnote-40) - although this would not disqualify him as a flamingant. Indeed, pre-war flamingants favoured the protection of the Flemish language and culture while still using French and accepting Belgium as their nation-state.

 The history of the Flemish movement in the nineteenth century shows that to someone like Joris, there was no readily available mental link between the fate of Flemings in Belgium and that of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire – despite the present-day Flemish nationalist rhetoric about an ‘oppressed, colonized Flanders’ in the nineteenth century.

When Belgium became an independent state in 1830, French – the standard language in Wallonia and among the elites across the country – was introduced as the sole language of state. At the time more than half of the Belgian population spoke a Flemish dialect of Dutch. Against this background the Flemish movement arose. From 1835 onwards societies were founded in all major towns in Flanders with the aim of cultivating the Flemish vernacular, literature, customs and history. The supporters of the Flemish movement hailed from the socially ambitious, but not yet franchised urban (lower) middle classes (teachers, petty civil servants and the like). They channelled their dissatisfaction with their lack of social power and prestige in their campaign for the recognition of Flemish culture and language.

Before the First World War the Flemish movement was, strictly speaking, not nationalist. It did not pursue congruence between nation and state (as posited by Ernest Gellner’s classic definition of nationalism)[[41]](#footnote-41). Anti-Belgian, separatist Flemish nationalism only arose after the Great War. However, taking a more flexible approach in line with Michael Billig’s,[[42]](#footnote-42) we might say that Flemish nationalism did exist prior to 1914 as a self-evident discourse stating the existence of a Flemish people with its own culture and ethnicity. Yet, it is important to stress that in its origin the Flemish movement was Belgian nationalist, intent on strengthening the Belgian fatherland. Flamingants believed that the country needed a healthy Flemish population to protect it from French annexation.[[43]](#footnote-43)

As in many other Western-European countries, the state initially welcomed the activity of what the Czech historian Miroslav Hroch has called ‘small national movements’[[44]](#footnote-44), as a way of anchoring its nation-building agenda at the local and regional levels. However, the state’s benevolent stand started weakening as the Flemish movement politicized in the 1870s and 1880s and began actively to seek legal intervention to protect the vernacular. This threatened one of the corner stones of the young Belgian state, namely the exclusive use of French as language of state.

Because of the (perceived) slow development of linguistic legislation and the (alleged) neglect of Flanders’ social and economic poverty by the government, the Flemish movement’s Belgian nationalist enthusiasm dwindled by the end of the nineteenth century, the period in which Joris came of age. However, the language issue was not yet sufficiently politicized to spawn a separatist form of Flemish nationalism. Home rule, for instance, was a marginal issue and many flamingants still favoured a bilingual Dutch-French Flanders. It was the First World War that created the conditions for the rise of Flemish separatism.

 Given its social background and the benevolent-indifferent attitude of the Belgian state, the pre-war Flemish movement was not really given to violence. So it may come as a complete surprise that a flamingant *–* if Joris was indeed one at that stage in his life *–* was involved in the attempted bombing of Abdülhamid II.

 Joris, however, also belonged to the Belgian labour movement. While flamingants were not violently targeted by the Belgian police forces, the same could not be said of socialists. Belgium harboured a very strong social-democratic movement and a rather marginal anarchist current. The *Belgian Workers’ Party* (BWP) was founded in 1885 as a loose federation of unions, mutual aid societies, cooperatives and political groups without a common ideological base. Their unity was underpinned by a concrete program of reform, which hinged on universal suffrage and consumer cooperatives as the foundation of socialist action. In spite of its sometimes fiercely revolutionary rhetoric, the BWP was a reformist party from the outset. Nevertheless its meetings and manifestations were routinely screened by the police and sometimes violently dispersed. During the general strike of April 1893, which was organized by the BWP to force Parliament to grant universal suffrage, the police and the *garde civique* killed 12 people, 5 of which in Borgerhout, the town near Antwerp where Joris would become secretary of the local BWP branch between 1895 and 1898.[[45]](#footnote-45)

Against this background it comes as no surprise that the most radical, anarchist wing of the Belgian labour movement also used violence. Since 1881, when the International Anarchist Conference in London had officially adopted the doctrine of “propaganda of the deed”(a synonym for terrorism), a wave of anarchist assaults had swept over Europe, including high-profile assassinations of (royal) heads of state.[[46]](#footnote-46) The terrorist surge also hit Belgium with about 100 attempted assaults between 1874 and 1914.[[47]](#footnote-47) In the 1890s and 1900s the Belgian police arrested several anarchists for possession or use of dynamite and for murder attempts on leading figures. In April 1900 the 15-year-old Belgian worker Jean-Baptiste Sipido tried to kill the Prince of Wales at the Brussels North Station and in November 1902 the Italian anarchist Gennaro Rubino unsuccessfully targeted the Belgian king Leopold II.[[48]](#footnote-48) Obviously Joris must have been intimately aware of this anarchist radicalization as he was not only active in the social-democratic BWP, but he was also part of an anarchist circle in Antwerp around his best friend Victor Resseler whom he had met in 1896.[[49]](#footnote-49)

Joris’s dual involvement in an anarchist and reformist organization is not that unusual. There was a porous, though often conflict-ridden, boundary between social-democracy and anarchism in Belgium. Within the BWP, anarchists were tolerated in the more radical youth groups (mainly in the *Socialist Young Guard*, whose major focus was the protest against the military lottery system) and within ‘more adult’ party sections as long as the anarchist competition did not hamper the growth of social-democracy.

Belgian anarchism, which was deeply entrenched in the international anarchist movement[[50]](#footnote-50), consisted of two currents, represented by an intellectual cultural middle class, on the one hand, and an action-driven working class, on the other, whose most radical fringes were not averse to violence. The particular anarchist milieu to which Joris was introduced in Antwerp, was of the former type. It was more interested in literary and cultural debates than in political, let alone violent, action. These Antwerp anarchists were radically freethinking, libertarian (petty) bourgeois, whose cultural and social origins provided a link with the Flemish movement.[[51]](#footnote-51) Their journals *Ontwaking* (Awakening, 1896 / 1901-1909) and *Onze Vlagge* (Our flag, 1897-1899) were for most of their publication history hardly social or political. They were mainly about poetry and literature.

However, 1901 and 1902, when Joris made his debut as a contributorto *Ontwaking* (under the pseudonym Edward Greene), are the only years when the journal dealt with actual social struggle, practical workers’ problems (for instance, paying salaries in pubs and the anti-syndicalism of employers[[52]](#footnote-52)), strikes and direct anarchist action.[[53]](#footnote-53) It is precisely in those years that a number of radical contributions were published that seemed to condone the use of violence by anarchists. The occasion was the murder in September 1901 of the American president William MacKinley by the anarchist Leon Czolgosz. Joris’s best friend Resseler wrote under the pseudonym of Segher Rabauw: ‘I do not like useless violence and am of the opinion that acts like that do not serve a purpose’. But given the social injustice, the bourgeoisie should not be surprised that such violence occurred: ‘blood begets blood, violence begets violence [...] and the assaults are the answer from below to the call for violence from above…’[[54]](#footnote-54)

Did this reflect Joris’s views on violence? Apparently not. The two articles he published prior to his departure to the Ottoman Empire show him adopting a middle ground between social-democracy and revolutionary anarchism, a position we can qualify as syndicalist anarchism.[[55]](#footnote-55) On the one hand, he encouraged an international syndicalist organization of workers and denounced the political organization of labourers as party politics, using the derogatory terms ‘politicians’ and ‘party men’ to describe social-democrats;[[56]](#footnote-56) on the other, he explicitly rejected revolution and violence. One of the two articles was a critique of a grouplet of revolutionary Antwerp anarchists, whose ideology he described as ‘the gibberish of such an awfully revolutionary little group of delusional, unprincipled adventurers’. In a long paragraph Joris defined what true anarchism was:

Our principles and our aspirations are pure, and we see our cause as noble and pure, something that cannot be reached except through equally pure and honest means of struggle. The well-known dictum followed by some comrades, ‘*the end justifies the means*’, is a false conception based on untenable grounds. ‘*To a noble end, honest means*,’ thus writes Charles Albert somewhere, and that is exactly how it is. When dishonest means are deployed towards a noble cause, this cause will inevitably suffer and carry the stamp of that dishonesty, already before the goal is realized. [...] Let us take heed of these lessons in history, and valiantly defend the virginal purity of our beautiful ideal.[[57]](#footnote-57)

Joris’s ‘restrained’ anarchism is also corroborated by the intelligence provided by the Belgian authorities to the Ottoman special investigative committee. In Antwerp, the report stated, Joris had ‘declared himself opposed to the propaganda of the deed [...] and he was considered incapable of taking part in an anarchist assault’.[[58]](#footnote-58)

Ironically, Joris before leaving to Istanbul had a more moderate view of the workers’ struggle than his bourgeois anarchist friends who pardoned the use of extreme violence. However, the realistic Joris radicalized in Istanbul.

# How does an internationalist deal with nationalism?

Socialism and nationalism have a troubled mutual history. ‘Reds have no fatherland and patriots denounce the supranational nature of class.’ At least, that is a still widely held belief. In the academe too, this ‘incompatibility thesis’ was once popular. Early historians of socialism, for instance, interpreted national identity as a false form of consciousness that obstructed the class awakening of the proletariat. However, historical research has amply proven that there was no such thing as a predestined irreconcilability. Ever since its inception,the labour movement’s ‘emotions oscillated in a multi-layered patchwork between alienation from, critical reception of and commitment to the nation state.’[[59]](#footnote-59)

On the issue of internationalism, Marxists and anarchists initially saw eye to eye. Before 1880 both groups generally shared the same cosmopolitan views, favouring the fusion of all nations into one World Republic.[[60]](#footnote-60) This radical form of internationalism was based on the bourgeois-liberal idea that the spread of capitalism and the extension of global trade would introduce the same behavioural patterns all over the world and would extinguish national differences. During the period of the Second International (1889-1914), most Marxists denounced this as naïve cosmopolitanism and replaced it with an ‘inter-nationalism’ based on the respect for the individuality of separate nations.[[61]](#footnote-61)

Regarding the national question, Marxism has generally held the opposite view of anarchism, although there was no clear and unambiguous theory in either ideology. Marx and Engels paid little systematic attention to the national question – only 2 to 3 % of their extensive oeuvre explicitly dealt with it.[[62]](#footnote-62) Moreover, their views were often contradictory. On the one hand, Marx denounced nationalism as a bourgeois contrivance to divide the workers and to obstruct their class awakening. On the other hand, he distinguished, in Stefan Berger’s words, between ‘a justified nationalism in progressive ‘historical’ nations such as Britain and a counter-revolutionary nationalism in backward nations’.[[63]](#footnote-63) In practice, both Marx and Engels were in thrall to great state nationalism. They believed that only large, homogeneous nation-states had a role to play in (socialist) history and that national or ethnic minorities, the ‘historyless anti-revolutionary’ peoples, were doomed to disappear. As a result, Marxist parties like the *Parti ouvrier français* and the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* actively fought ‘small national movements’.[[64]](#footnote-64)

This however did not mean that these Marxist parties were free of nationalism, as they silently adhered to the identity of the larger nation-state (the state being a tool for them to use). This is an instance of the self-evident appeal of what A.D. Smith has termed ‘dominant ethnicity’ or of what Michael Billig has called ‘banal nationalism’.[[65]](#footnote-65) Social-democrats in countries like Great Britain, France and Germany believed that their country would be the cradle of the future revolution and consequently had to be defended against foreign invasion. In general, the social-democrats of (Western) Europe became increasingly integrated in their respective nations before 1914 (meaning both their integration into the political and socio-economic system and their emotional acceptance of the fatherland). This has been described as the rise of oppositional or radical patriotism, a democratic form of patriotism or nationalism, contrasting with bourgeois chauvinism.[[66]](#footnote-66) Yet, this distinction is merely theoretical as scholars now generally agree that there is no watertight partition between both. It is a functional rather than a fundamental distinction: patriotism is a particular manifestation of nationalism, namely the nationalism of an established nation-state or of a movement that shies away from the negative connotations of the term nationalism.[[67]](#footnote-67) Most explanations of oppositional patriotism refer to the social-democratic obsession with gaining power within the state. Reformism implied parliamentarianism, coalition governments and hence a conciliatory rhetoric in which the nation featured prominently. The development of the welfare state and state-sponsored social initiatives accelerated this evolution.[[68]](#footnote-68)

Unlike Marx and Engels, the godfathers of anarchism – Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865), Mikhail Bakunin (1814-1876) and Pyotr Kropotkin (1842-1921) – wrote rather extensively on the national question. Central to their analysis was the issue of freedom and how patriotism/nationalism interacted with it. Proudhon and Kropotkin were the most sympathetic to the national cause. True to the anarchist, anti-authoritarian motto ‘small is beautiful’, Proudhon rejected large nation-states and preferred decentralized, small polities that respected racial, linguistic and ethnic differences. These would cluster into federations that would eventually coalesce into one World Federation.[[69]](#footnote-69)

Kropotkin had a very objectivist conception of nationality as a mystical unity between people and territory. He believed that a nation should consist of freely federated communes without a central state authority. Any national movement that strived for state power betrayed socialism as the state invariably subordinated the interests of the people to those of the bourgeoisie and disregarded the rights of other nations. In an attempt to reconcile internationalism with nationalism, Kropotkin wrote in 1899: ‘it is very possible that the more internationalist a man becomes, the greater will be his regard for the local individualities which make up the international family, the more he will seek to develop local, individual characteristics.’[[70]](#footnote-70) Kropotkin described himself as ardently patriotic. By doing so, he strayed from mainstream anarchism, which by the 1880s and 1890s had become rather hostile towards nationalism and the concept of nationality, at least in theory.[[71]](#footnote-71)

Bakunin was more in line with this mainstream. Initially, enthusiastic about the 1848 revolutions, he had been optimistic about nationalism. This changed, however, as he witnessed the non-democratic outcome of these revolutions. He realized that national movements had a narrow and even reactionary conception of freedom, limiting it to a small segment of the nation and refusing to spread it to all nations equally.[[72]](#footnote-72) As his anti-statist views crystallized, he regarded the central nationalist tenets of political unity and independence as inherently reactionary, imperialist and militarist.[[73]](#footnote-73) In spite of his theoretical rejection of nationalism, Bakunin could not escape the pull of national prejudice. Just like Kropotkin, he considered Latin nations to be superior to Germanic and Slavic peoples.[[74]](#footnote-74)

Overall, then, we might say that, compared to Marxism, anarchism has been more sympathetic to small national movements, while tending to denounce nation-state nationalism.[[75]](#footnote-75)

In Belgium, the BWP became steadily integrated in the Belgian nation-state before the First World War, constructing a theory of oppositional Belgian patriotism. However, this was not reflected in the development of a unified ethnic Belgian identity within the party ranks. In Brussels and Wallonia a francophone Belgian form of ethnicity held sway, while in Flanders a Flemish (sometimes anti-Belgian) sense of ethnic identity prevailed. BWP sections in Flanders were, however, generally hostile towards the organized Flemish movement because of its strong Catholic, anti-socialist tendencies.[[76]](#footnote-76) Yet at the fringes of the party, where radical social-democracy often frayed into anarchism, there was more openness towards the Flemish movement in line with anarchism’s greater susceptibility towards small national movements. It was from these marginal circles that a collaborationist Flemish nationalist socialism arose during the First World War – in which Joris would become active.[[77]](#footnote-77)

From this synopsis it is important to remember that there is no necessary theoretical or practical contradiction between socialism (be it anarchist or reformist), nationalism (be it cultural or political) and internationalism. In general, anarchists were more drawn to anticolonial struggles in the Third World than Marxists. In the words of Benedict Anderson, they “were [...] quicker to capitalize on the vast transoceanic migrations of the era.”[[78]](#footnote-78) In this sense, Joris’s move to the Ottoman Empire and his interest in the Armenian question fit a more general pattern, although the actual role of anarchism in Joris’s Armenian turn remains questionable (see below). We do know from contemporary sources that Joris held radically internationalist, cosmopolitan ideas, in favour of ‘worldly solidarity’ and ‘humanity’.[[79]](#footnote-79) Recounting the court proceedings to his wife in an undated letter from his Istanbul prison, he claimed to have said in court: ‘The whole Universe is my fatherland, the whole of humanity is my family and all those who suffer are my brothers. I do not recognize any borders.’[[80]](#footnote-80) At the same time, however, Joris clearly believed in the existence of separate peoples that had distinct national qualities. His writings on Armenia are a case in point.[[81]](#footnote-81)

# How did Joris radicalize?

Some contemporary press outlets claimed that Joris had travelled to Istanbul as a foreign agent, paid by Russia or Great Britain to destabilize the Ottoman Empire. There is no evidence for this hypothesis. According to the official Ottoman report of the special investigative commission, however, it was highly likely that Joris and his wife had been paid by Armenian revolutionaries while in Istanbul.[[82]](#footnote-82) Even if these payments ever occurred, they do not seem to have given Joris great financial independence: in several of his captivity letters he fretted about money and about his material future[[83]](#footnote-83) – money was of essence in prison because the Ottoman authorities allowed Joris to buy extra food, clothes and coal. He was even so strapped for money that upon his release from prison he tried to capitalize on his reputation by asking 150 Belgian francs for an interview with the *Vlaamsche Gazet* (the Flemish Gazette).[[84]](#footnote-84)

Other contemporary sources maintained that Joris had come to Istanbul because he already was a fervent supporter of the Armenian cause. A report of the first session of the trial that appeared in the *Kölnische Zeitung* and that was translated in *La Belgique judiciaire* quoted Joris as having said: ‘About a year before the attempt I read a manifest in the Parisian paper *Pro Armenia* for the poor Armenians. This made a deep impression on me. It was my duty to make myself available to the Armenian committee. That is how I came to Constantinople.’[[85]](#footnote-85) Leaving aside the fact that Joris had already been in Istanbul far longer than a year prior to the assault, it seems unlikely that he actually said this at his trial. In his own summary of the trial, which he presented to his wife in a prison letter, he claimed the reason to be his ‘desire to travel’ – which he also listed as the main reason in 1952.[[86]](#footnote-86)

Most likely, Joris’s sense of adventure and his desire for material improvement were the main drivers of his move to the Ottoman Empire. As such he seems to have been a fairly average example of a ‘Westerner’ coming to the ‘Orient’, and more specifically of a lower-middle class migrant attracted by rather prosaic financial, professional and social opportunities: a higher salary, better job opportunities and social prestige.[[87]](#footnote-87) For instance, at the *Deutsche Levante-Linie* he earned 250 Belgian francs per month – almost doubling his Antwerp salary. About a quarter of his monthly earnings went to lodgings, but he subletted rooms and his wife took jobs on the side.[[88]](#footnote-88) Even taking into account the higher cost of living in Istanbul, his move was a material promotion.

We have no reason to believe that before setting out to the Ottoman Empire in 1901 Joris was already sympathetic towards Armenia. Up to that year neither *Ontwaking* nor *Onze Vlagge* had paid much attention to what at the time was called the ‘Eastern Question’ and one of its derivatives, the ‘Armenian Question.’ Only in 1901-1902, in its more socially conscious period, *Ontwaking* started to refer to oppressed minorities or peoples like the Algerians and the Finns in Russia.[[89]](#footnote-89) I have found only one explicit reference to Armenia in the journal before Joris started his series of articles on the Ottoman Empire in January 1902. Joris’s best friend Resseler explicitly mentioned Armenia in September 1901 as one example of bourgeois-capitalist violence towards the working class in a longer list: ‘Our whole bourgeois society is based on violence: all governments burn and kill in the Transvaal, in China, in the Congo, on Java, in Cuba and on the Philippines, in *Armenia*’.[[90]](#footnote-90) This was a clear example of the emphatic anarchist interest in anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism.

These cursory references are not enough to presume an interest in Armenia on Joris’s part before his actual move to Istanbul in the summer of 1901. Most likely he began to pay attention to the Armenian cause sometime between the end of 1901 and his meeting Kindirian in December 1902. Joris’s first contribution on the Ottoman Empire was published in the first issue of *Ontwaking* in 1902.[[91]](#footnote-91) His first mention of Armenia was in the second issue of the same month, amidst a whole list of crimes committed by the Sultan and his court.[[92]](#footnote-92) His fourth article from Istanbul, dated 4 October 1902, was the first that focused on Armenia and also the first for which he used the pseudonym Garabed, a typical Armenian name.[[93]](#footnote-93) From this moment on all his remaining contributions would be about the Armenian Question[[94]](#footnote-94), except two on Macedonia.[[95]](#footnote-95) His last article from Istanbul was dated 12 November 1904 and it appeared in the following month. The next text by him that has been preserved is an unpublished article ‘About Armenia’ dated 30 May 1905, justifying the use of violence by the Armenians, who ‘realized how wrong it was to hope for Europe’s intervention [...] and that nothing would be gained peacefully.’[[96]](#footnote-96) The article ended with words that sounded eerily like a prediction:

[...] the unwillingness and criminal indifference of the [European] states has created an unrelenting hatred among this tried people, from the gentle Armenian character a new violent generation has grown [...]. Soon Europe will see that a lamb can become a lion, or even if need be, a tiger! Peoples of the earth, can you hear the bells toll? Kneel. The Vespers[[97]](#footnote-97) will start again.[[98]](#footnote-98)

An important step in Joris’s radicalization must have been his befriending Vramchabou Kindirian, a member of the ARF who belonged to the secret commando appointed to eliminate the Sultan. Joris shared a desk with ‘Vram’ at the Singer Corporation in Istanbul, where he started working on 2 December 1902. The exact timing of Joris’s introduction to the terrorist group is hard to pinpoint in his own writings. The only usable reference is an undated prison letter to his wife, in which he stated that at the time of the bombing he had been hiding ‘illegal publications, suspicious books and all my files on which I had been working [...] for more than two full years’ at his office.[[99]](#footnote-99) If we interpret the ‘illegality’ of the documents as a sign of his membership in the terrorist cell, this would date his enlistment to the spring of 1903. In his testimony to the special investigative commission of the Ottoman authorities Joris, however, claimed to have been introduced to Kabulian, one of the conspiracy’s leaders, only in November 1904 and to have been informed by Kabulian about the existence of the conspiracy after the death of Vram in March 1905.[[100]](#footnote-100)

From Joris’s correspondence and his journalism it transpires that his socialist background was central to his interpretation of the Ottoman Empire and the Armenians’ plight. In a letter of 2 October 1902 to Victor Resseler, Joris offered a socialist reading of the Ottoman situation:

I would like to write a study of the Ottoman Proletariat. This is a very strange question. This proletariat in no way resembles what we understand by that term in Europe – The lack of industry and factories gives a completely different view of the issue and in ordinary life, on the streets and in commerce one is not aware of the existence of a Turkish proletariat – Yet, if you visit the poorer quarters you see and feel all too well that there is great misery. [...] It is an ideal system of government (from the bourgeois point of view) and religion and government make a rising impossible, not even the thought of it can live – The people are too stupid too slavish and … perhaps for the best![[101]](#footnote-101)

The perceived absence of a proletariat and a labour movement in the Ottoman Empire may have made Joris see violence as the only realistic option to alter Ottoman society.[[102]](#footnote-102) In his socialist mind-set, change could not come from within (as the driver of change, a proletariat, was lacking), so it had to be introduced from the outside. It was Joris’s explicit hope that the assault and the harsh reaction of the Ottoman government would force the European guarantor nations of the treaty of Berlin (1878), whose article 61 protected the rights of the Armenians, to intervene – a decidedly Machiavellian move that belied the anarchist distrust of the big powers.[[103]](#footnote-103)

In May 1905 Joris explicitly addressed the roots of the Armenian question: ‘The great ailment of the [Ottoman] State has always been pecuniary problems and the first reform that Turkey needs is a reform of the financial system because [it is] there for the greater part [that] the root of all evil lies.’[[104]](#footnote-104) He ultimately blamed the discrimination of the Armenians on the autocratic and fiscal system and on the acute money problems of the government, which were due to the Sultan’s excessive appropriation of taxes. This left too little money for the functioning of the state in the provinces.

It goes without saying that when a civil servant is not paid, he will find other means of living and [...] that such civil servants will easily surrender to arbitrariness and coercion when they get the opportunity and they can do so with impunity. [...] Add to this factor the fanaticism of the Mussulmen, the lack of education and civilisation, and the atrocities in Armenia should not come as a surprise.

Here one can clearly see the image of fanatic uncivilized Muslims. It is tempting to interpret Joris’s involvement in the Armenian cause as an orientalist defence of Christian Armenians against Muslim / ‘Oriental’ Ottomans. The full quote, however, included one more sentence: ‘One should only remember what so-called civilised European soldiers have wreaked on China even without having felt the stinging whip of hunger.’[[105]](#footnote-105)

This attitude can be observed throughout Joris’s writings on the Ottomans: he saw no clear binary opposition between a civilized Europe and an uncivilized East. The so-called civilized Europeans behaved as badly in China without the extenuating circumstance of hunger. Joris’s view of Europe was as negative as his view of the Ottoman Empire.[[106]](#footnote-106) It was not barbarism per se that caused Ottoman cruelty, but the reigning institutions, the property relations and hunger. To Joris the root cause of these evils was not cultural, but material and economic. It seems safe to attribute this interpretation to Joris’s socialist background.

This reading of the Ottoman problem was not strictly anarchist. It can also pass as a social-democratic interpretation. Joris’s anarchism as such seems to have played a rather minor role in his view on the Armenians. To anarchists in the Bakuninian tradition Freedom was the ruling principle. Joris did view the Armenians’ history in terms of freedom. In his manuscript article of May 1905 he repeatedly identified Armenia as ‘a blossoming land inhabited by a tough people who [...] have been fighting to the present for their *freedom* with a tenacity of steel.’[[107]](#footnote-107) Yet, Joris’s description of the Armenians’ love of, and struggle for, freedom does not strike me as unambiguously anarchist. It rather resembles the liberal interpretation of freedom that was dominant in the Belgian public discourse. Nineteenth-century Belgium was imagined as the battlefield of Europe. For centuries, so it was believed, ‘foreigners’ had fought their ‘foreign’ wars in Belgium. The country’s history was conceived as a dramatic succession of peaceful periods during which freedom thrived under just princes and eras of violent conflicts and revolutions during which the Belgians tried to reconquer freedom from their foreign oppressors. This process culminated in the Belgian revolution of 1830 which was both modern – as it was a democratic rising for democratic freedoms – and ancient – as a ‘natural’ revolt of the old Belgians against tyranny.[[108]](#footnote-108) Joris’s reading of the Armenian past seems to have been influenced by this Belgian narrative.

 Anarchism may not have been crucial to Joris’s interpretation of the Armenian Question, but perhaps it was influential in his turn towards violence, given the terrorist strands in contemporary anarchism? Not necessarily. We have already seen that prior to his departure for Istanbul Joris had been a syndicalist anarchist, who explicitly rejected the use of violence and instead advocated the organization of workers in unions. Moreover, at his trial Joris went to great lengths to deny any link between terrorism and anarchism, while taking full responsibility for his own part in the bombing, which suggests that this was no strategy designed to have his sentence reduced. In an undated letter from prison Joris recounted the court proceedings to his wife. During his trial he unambiguously declared himself to be an anarchist. To the judge’s question about the violent and murderous means of anarchism, Joris replied that anarchy does not use murder. Its means were peaceful, namely ‘the suppression of private property and governmental authority which we will replace by a free consent between producers.’ The judge pointed out the contradiction between this statement and the bombing. Surprisingly enough Joris answered: ‘I have already told you that my anarchist principles have nothing to do with the attempt on the Sultan.’[[109]](#footnote-109) Nor did Joris frequent the anarchist networks of Istanbul, outside his Armenian circle.[[110]](#footnote-110)

All in all, Joris seems to have been more inspired by moral indignation, an emotional sense of righteousness and his longing ‘to be someone’ than by strictly ideological, anarchist motives. He was truly outraged by the gruesome atrocities committed against the Armenians that were recounted to him: women and girls raped, young men buried alive, babies cut open, torture, arson, plunder. In 1905 he explicitly identified this carnage as ‘mass murder’, and an intentional ‘extermination plan’ of the Sultan.[[111]](#footnote-111) But I believe that what really pushed him into active participation in terrorism was a peculiar character trait that is clearly attested in his private writings. Because of his limited schooling Joris seems to have suffered from a kind of inferiority complex with regard to his culturally more sophisticated middle class anarchist friends in Antwerp. In a letter to his best friend Resseler on 30 July 1902 – in which he described his wedding – he went on for over a page about his disillusionments:

I wish I had dedicated my life to something else; this office business is too painful, but I can now see that it will never be any different. My intellectual powers do not allow me to attain something really great, although it is not for lack of will or effort. I should have become a manual labourer, then I would have felt above my milieu and I could have accomplished something – now I am nothing, a loser, both at my desk and outside. I would have preferred not to have had eyes, then I would not have wanted to climb the mountains whose tops I can now see and I would not have suffered from the awareness of my own impotence.[[112]](#footnote-112)

This went on for two more paragraphs. In a letter from October 1902 he revealed his insecurity about the articles he wrote for *Ontwaking*: ‘Please tell me frankly whether you thought my earlier article in Ontwakingwas worth wasting time on? There was nothing there that has not already been said a hundred times by better writers and that is not known by everyone.’[[113]](#footnote-113) The director at Singer, a German named Rosenstein, concurred with Joris’s own appraisal of his character. Rosenstein’s deposition to the Istanbul police contained this statement: ‘He [= Rosenstein] noticed that Joris had a weak character, very little aptitudes and he did not entrust him with important tasks.’[[114]](#footnote-114)

To my mind, Joris’s ambition to become more than a mere office clerk explains his involvement in the conspiracy and accounts for the fact that he did not flee after the bombing. In a prison letter to his wife he admitted to having stayed behind in Istanbul while all others had fled because he wanted to receive full credit for his role in the assault. This attitude is also evident in his interrogations.[[115]](#footnote-115)

Joris had even harboured a romantic plan to launch an armed Armenian uprising in Istanbul. Kabulian, however, had dampened his revolutionary zeal, saying that he wanted to wait for the new Sultan’s policies and adding that a general uprising had not been prepared.[[116]](#footnote-116) Joris wanted to to show the world that he was a man of action. On 10 August 1905, while being interrogated by the special Ottoman police commission, he explicitly refused to ask to be pardoned by the Sultan: “I am no coward” and he contrasted himself with his Armenian co-conspirators who had fled.[[117]](#footnote-117) Joris seems to have drawn self-esteem from the conspiracy. For instance, he could not part with the incriminating evidence he had stored in his desk cabinet at Singer. In a long letter to his wife on 20 March 1907, he confessed to not having burned his materials:

I couldn’t do it. It cut into my soul so deep to destroy that mountain of night work all at once. [...] This was all my work. It contained the best of my powers [...] I could not destroy what I had accomplished through so much hard work, so much soul-searching [...].[[118]](#footnote-118)

In 1952, when reminiscing in front of the Armenian community of Antwerp, about what had happened half a century earlier, he admitted:

I was full of revolutionary romanticism and thought that for the Armenian people the French 1789 had come and that Europe would intervene. Big disappointment for my young heart that glowed with fighting spirit and that heaved for the glorious liberation of the Armenian people that had been suppressed, tortured and murdered for centuries. Unfortunately no one came, nothing happened and many, many young dreams and images of freedom melted away in empty bottomless NOTHINGNESS.[[119]](#footnote-119)

# Epilogue

After his release from prison and his return to Belgium, Joris earned his living as a bookseller and he became the secretary of the Antwerp affiliate of the *Ligue des droits de l’homme*. He was no longer involved with anarchism, but he stayed on in the periphery of the social-democratic party. During the First World War, he belonged to a small ‘Flemish-minded’, socalled ‘activist’ (meaning collaborationist) fringe in the BWP.[[120]](#footnote-120) He became a member – among other things – of the *Verwaltungsbeirat*, a commission set up by the Germans in September 1918 to serve as a kind of government of Flanders.[[121]](#footnote-121) After the war Joris was tried before the Assize Court of Antwerp.[[122]](#footnote-122) To escape his sentence of five years imprisonment he fled to the Netherlands. In 1929 he was able to return to Belgium as a result of a more general pardon. He became an active contributor to the Socialist Workers’ Radio Broadcasting Service for Flanders and earned his living as self-employed publicity agent.[[123]](#footnote-123) During the Second World War he took on a full-time position as head of publicity of the Antwerp paper ‘De Dag’ [*The Day*]. This was not the official organ of a collaborationist party, but it could only be published with the express consent of the Nazis. After the war Joris was again tried for collaboration, but it is unclear what sentence he received or whether he actually spent time in prison. In any case, in 1946 he was still/again at liberty. Until his death in 1957 he worked as a publicity agent – his life remaining somewhat of a puzzle.[[124]](#footnote-124)

Joris seems to have combined mutually exclusive ideals of pacifism and terrorism, of reformism and anarchism, of nationalism and cosmopolitanism. Digging deeper, one realises that many of these contradictions were mere paradoxes. There was no inherent ideological or theoretical incompatibility between nationalism or the defence of small national movements and socialism. As an anarchist Joris could easily support the Armenian cause and the Flemish movement at the same time, even though we have no clear proof that he supported the latter prior to his return from Istanbul. Similarly, there is in practice no contradiction between radical cosmopolitanism and nationalism. Self-avowed world citizens could harbour national prejudices. It should not surprise us, then, to see that Joris supported the idea of one World Republic without national differences, while nourishing a very objective belief in the existence of age-old separate and distinct nations – the case in point being that of the Armenian people.

As an anarchist Joris remained active in the reformist Belgian Workers’ Party. At the fringes there was some overlap between the two socialist currents. Probably Joris’s particular brand of anarchism, which was based on syndicalist organization and not on revolutionary violence, found a better practical outlet in the well-organized BWP, which also counted unions among its constitutive organizations, than among the bourgeois *anarchistes de salon* of Antwerp.

The real puzzling issue in the Joris case is how a pacifist could have ended up advocating the use of excessive violence. It was most probably not some kind of Flemish militancy that drove Joris towards terrorism; there is simply no evidence for that hypothesis. Neither do I think that it was his anarchist ideas that pushed him in the direction of violence and of the Armenian cause. His anarchism had been of a syndicalist brand in Belgium and he had explicitly rejected violence as an anarchist means. However, his socialist interpretation of the Ottoman situation might have played a facilitating role. The perceived absence of a proletariat and of a labour movement in the Ottoman Empire precluded the possibility of change from within Ottoman society. The only viable option for durable change that Joris could envisage was violence. In his mind, an attempt on the Sultan would cause such a vicious official reaction that the European powers would be forced to intervene on behalf of the Armenians. His moral indignation over the Armenians’ fate coupled with his low self-esteem and his desire to escape his petty self, which are clearly attested in his private writings and in his post-factum exaggerations of his role, might ultimately explain his turn towards terrorism, with the death of his close friend Vramchabou ‘Vram’ Kindirian possibly serving as the trigger. Male friendships played a very important role in the sociability of the Antwerp anarchist circles in which Joris and his confidant Victor Resseler were active. The loss of Vram, Joris’s best friend in Istanbul, must have been very traumatic given the fact that Vram died on a mission experimenting with a bomb while carrying Joris’s passport. This may have facilitated his terrorist turn. In this respect research on present-day radicalization among young Muslim men in the West might illuminate Joris’s case. It seems that ideological and religious motives play a lesser role in radicalization than the psychological make-up and social position of the men involved. Their activism in what they perceive to be a transnational movement that will correct their subordinate position seems to compensate for their low social status and their feelings of personal inadequacy and humiliation.[[125]](#footnote-125)

 Finally, in what sense does the Joris case help rethink European-Ottoman entanglements in the prewar period? As a scholar of nationalism I have found that the detailed study of this particular episode is a useful antidote against anachronistic assumptions about national identity. Joris’s later life as a minor hero of Flemish nationalism sheds a shroud over his Ottoman episode and has been used sometimes as an explanatory framework to make sense of his actions. Studying Joris’s involvement in Istanbul in its own right lifts the shroud. It provides a useful reminder of Rogers Brubaker’s call not to view national identities as the logical outcome of an already existing ethnic identity, nor to conceptualize the ‘nation’ as a real group, but rather “as practical category, institutionalized form, and contingent event”.[[126]](#footnote-126) Looking into the Joris case from the perspective of his Ottoman experiences clearly shows that his later Flemish nationalism is an explanandum, not an explanans.

1. The primary sources on which this contribution is based are:

Joris’s private correspondence from Istanbul, mainly to his best friend Victor Resseler from 16 October 1901 to 25 November 1907 (10 letters and postcards prior to his arrest and 12 long letters smuggled out of prison); the correspondence between the Belgian authorities and Joris’s supporters during his trial and incarceration; a manuscript article by Joris ‘About Armenia’ dated 30 May 1905. All these materials were published in 1997 with an extensive biographical introduction in: W. Resseler and B. Suykerbuyk (1997) *Dynamiet voor de sultan: Carolus Eduard Joris in Konstantinopel* (Antwerp: b+b).

15 articles Joris published in *Ontwaking* between 1901 and 1904

an unpublished talk he held on 16 April 1952 for the Armenian committee of Antwerp about his Istanbul years. This talk is preserved in two slightly differing versions: as the handwritten text he delivered on 16 April 1952 and as a typed version dated 15 May 1952 (Letterenhuis Antwerp, J4483/H).

the archival file on the Joris affair of the Belgian Foreign Ministry (Archief van de Federale Overheidsdienst Buitenlandse Zaken, Brussels, Political files, nr. 4417/12 – further abbreviated as ABZ, PF)

the published official report of the special investigative commission set up by the Ottoman authorities on the 1905 attempt: (1905) *Enquête sur l’attentat commis dans la journée du 21 juillet à l’issue de la cérémonie du Sélamlik: Travaux de la Commission Spéciale, presidé par Nédjib Melhamé* (Istanbul: Loeffler). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Secretary-General of the Belgian Ministry of Justice to the Foreign Minister, Paul de Favereau, 4 September 1905, ABZ, PF 4417/12, vol 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Letterenhuis Antwerp, J4483/H. Typed version of the conference by Edward Joris for the Armenian committee of Antwerp [see above], p. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Letter from Sfezzo to Tonnelier, 22 August 1905, ABZ, PF 4417/12, vol 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. *Enquête sur l'attentat*, p. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. On the ARF see: A. Ter Minassian (1994) ‘The Role of the Armenian Community in the Foundation and Development of the Socialist Movement in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, 1876-1923'’ in M. Tunçay and E. J. Zürcher (eds.) *Socialism and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire 1876-1923* (London: British Academic Press), p. 129. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Report of the interrogation of Joris by the Ottoman authorities in the presence of the second dragoman of the Belgian Legation, Svetozar Margetić, 10 August 1905, ABZ, PF 4417/12, vol 1; *Enquête sur l’attentat*, p. 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Margetić’s report of the interrogation of Joris by the Ottoman authorities on 3 August 1905, ABZ, PF 4417/12, vol 1, Annex 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Margetić’s report of the interrogation of Joris by the Ottoman authorities on 10 August 1905, p. 23, ABZ, PF 4417/12, vol 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid, pp. 4-5, 22-3, 27-30, ABZ, PF 4417/12, vol. 1; Edward Joris to his wife Anna Nellens, 20 March 1907, in Resseler and Suykerbuyk, *Dynamiet*, pp. 125-38. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Gaston Errembault de Dudzeele to Edward’s mother Catherina Joris, 3 August 1905, in Resseler and Suykerbuyk, *Dynamiet*, p. 74. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Letterenhuis Antwerp, J4483/H. Typed version of the 1952 conference by Edward Joris for the Armenian committee of Antwerp, pp. 6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. *Enquête sur l’attentat*, p. 12 ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. *Enquête sur l’attentat*, p. 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. *Enquête sur l’attentat*, p. 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. *Enquête sur l’attentat*, pp. 48-9, 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Dragoman’s report of the interrogation of Joris by the Ottoman authorities on 10 August 1905, ABZ, PF 4417/12, vol 1.1, Annexe 2, p. 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Interrogation of Joris by the Ottoman authorities in the presence of the drogman of the Belgian legation, 10 August 1905, p. 22, ABZ, PF 4417/12, vol 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Joris to his wife Anna Nellens, 20 March 1907, in Resseler and Suykerbuyk, *Dynamiet*, p. 126.

All translations from Dutch or French are the author’s. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Joris to Nellens, 20 March 1907, in Resseler and Suykerbuyk, *Dynamiet*, p. 128. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. *Enquête sur l’attentat*, pp. 40, 55. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. *Enquête sur l’attentat*, pp. 86 ff., 115-16. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Joris to Anna Nellens, 20 March 1907, in Resseler and Suykerbuyk, *Dynamiet*, p. 135. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. See K. F. Schull (2014) *Prisons in the Late Ottoman Empire: Microcosms of Modernity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. *New York Times*, 19 January 1908. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. De Dudzeele to Edward’s mother Catherina Joris, 30 September 1905, in Resseler and Suykerbuyk, *Dynamiet*, p. 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Report by de Dudzeele, 21 August 1905, ABZ, PF 4417/12, vol 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Joris to his mother Catherina Joris, 19 October 1905, in Resseler and Suykerbuyk, *Dynamiet*, p. 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Joris to Jean Grave, July 1907. Resseler and Suykerbuyk *Dynamiet*, p. 148. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Joris to Victor Resseler, 12 July 1907. Resseler and Suykerbuyk *Dynamiet*, p. 149. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Baron Gustave de Hübsch, first dragoman of the Belgian Legation, to de Dudzeele, 28 October 1907, ABZ, PF 4417/12, vol 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Joris to Victor Resseler, 30 July 1907; Joris to Grave, July 1907; Resseler to Georges Lorand, 11 August 1907; Rédaction Droschak to Resseler, 3 October 1907; the Dutch syndicalist Christiaan Cornelissen to Resseler, 19 October 1907, in Resseler and Suykerbuyk, *Dynamiet*, pp. resp. 151, 148, 152, 155, 160-1. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Joris to Resseler, 30 July 1907 and 29 August 1907, in Resseler and Suykerbuyk, *Dynamiet*, pp. 150, 153, respect. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Joris to Resseler, 25 November 1907. Resseler and Suykerbuyk *Dynamiet*, pp. 162-4. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Joris to Resseler, 11 November 1907. Resseler and Suykerbuyk *Dynamiet*, pp. 161-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. De Dudzeele to the Belgian Foreign Minister, Count de Favereau, 23 December 1907, ABZ, PF 4417/12, vol. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Joris, ‘Een woord ter opheldering’, *Ontwaking*,1908, (8); this piece is reproduced in Resseler and Suykerbuyk, *Dynamiet*, pp. 169-72. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
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