In the fall of 1867, a small photograph inscribed with the words “Guide at Constantinople—Far away Moses” (fig. 1) made its way across the Atlantic in the baggage of Colonel William R. Denny of Winchester, Virginia. Likely the source of inspiration for an illustration Mark Twain later included in his account of his journey with Denny through Europe and the Middle East, it is now filed away in Twain’s archive. However ephemeral, this material exchange across continents provides a unique window into nineteenth-century Americans’ experiences of the “Orient” and the self-exoticizing performances of the Ottomans they met. The man pictured here, known by the name Far Away Moses, was among the most successful guides of the late Ottoman era (see Wayne; Çelik 18; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Destination Culture 103, 105; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “A Place in the World” 71–72; and Nance, Arabian Nights 41–42, 143). Understanding his role in shaping both American perceptions of the East and Ottoman commercial endeavors highlights Ottoman Jews’ participation in the business of orientalism as well as empire.

Far Away Moses’s career was made possible by a changing landscape of travel, tourism, and mass consumption. Once steam and rail travel made global tours increasingly accessible, growing numbers of European and American travelers began to appear in Ottoman lands. In cities across the empire,
people seized the new opportunities this development brought with it (Nance, “A Facilitated Access Model”). Some served as guides and dragomans for the many foreign visitors who sought to tour the Ottoman “East.” Others peddled oriental wares to tourists desirous of items they associated with times and places far removed from their own. By the second half of the nineteenth century, the global market for oriental carpets and other Eastern items was booming, as middle-class individuals across Europe and the United States introduced oriental-style smoking parlors and cozy corners into their domestic interiors (Quataert, *Ottoman Manufacturing* 141–42; Spooner; Hoganson, “Cosmopolitan Domesticity”; Hoganson, *Consumers’ Imperium*). Ottoman vendors responded accordingly, attempting to further cultivate their clients’ tastes for the stuff and styles of their empire. Turkish tobacco, foodstuffs, metal lamps, tables of inlaid wood, swords, Islamic manuscripts, Qur’an stands, carpets, and tapestries lined their shops in Istanbul’s bazaar. Their entrances as well as the merchants within welcomed passersby in an increasingly dizzying array of languages.
Although Armenian, Greek Orthodox, Muslim, Jewish, and other Ottomans all participated in this trade across the empire and beyond, our limited understanding of their commercial, social, and political networks has continued to obscure the lives and careers of these Ottoman traders. Indeed, though both the labor and art histories of the Ottoman carpet, tile, tobacco, and other Islamic art industries are well documented, the merchants who trafficked in these items have attracted scant attention.²

Thanks in part to American travelers such as Mark Twain, it is possible to tell the story of one of the nineteenth century’s best-known marketers of the Orient to the United States and of the company that used his name. Although he left no papers of his own, Far Away Moses—and, later, the company that grew up around him—produced an array of travel writings, photographs, print illustrations, newspaper articles, advertisements, commercial displays, souvenirs, letters, and government and business contracts in English, French, German, Hungarian, Ladino, and Ottoman and modern Turkish. Recovering this archive requires reconstructing not only Far Away Moses’s career but also the process by which different individuals appropriated his persona as icon and trademark, both in the United States and back in the Ottoman Empire. In the Ottoman context, the Jewish and Muslim merchants who established a company bearing his name eventually found that this act of appropriation enabled their firm’s transformation into a global enterprise with ties to the Ottoman state and a broad international clientele. Aided by new technologies, including the steamship, telegraph, and new and ever-cheaper forms of mass media, the members of this company, along with their associates, left an indelible impact on global styles as well as Westerners’ ideas about the Ottoman Empire.

One of the aims of this essay is to suggest that this process was reciprocal—that the various members of the firm not only left an imprint on different global markets but that these markets also left an imprint on them. This approach falls into a rarely trodden territory between fields. While economic histories have illuminated much about merchants’ networks and the cultural practices that sustained their bonds of trust, the ways that practices of self-fashioning have intersected with the politics of the marketplace seldom figure in such studies.³ Although an extensive literature details the transformative effect of consumption on the modern consumer, meanwhile, far less attention has been paid to how both the experience and the demands of the marketplace might be transformative for the seller.⁴ Finally, though the growing number of studies on Jewish economic niches have exposed the extent to which the trade in particular products—rags, liquor, ostrich feathers, Hollywood films,
modernist art—became associated with Jews, we know little about cases in which Jewish traders’ public personas were so thoroughly associated with their product. Yet, this article argues, the success of Ottoman Jewish oriental-goods merchants hinged equally on the alliances they forged and the expertise they accrued, on the one hand, and their ability to sell both themselves and their wares as “authentically” Eastern, Ottoman, and Jewish, on the other. This process not only shaped the way these individuals marketed their merchandise, it also had repercussions in realms both personal and political.

THE MAKING OF FAR AWAY MOSES
Around the year 1860, a self-styled “oriental” Jew who went by the name Far Away Moses began to earn the attention of foreign audiences as he offered tours of Ottoman Istanbul to American and European travelers. Far Away Moses was catapulted from obscurity into the international arena by a series of serendipitous encounters and by his skill in selling himself as he presented and sold the Orient to inquisitive tourists. He quickly became a celebrity on both sides of the Atlantic, inspiring myriad illustrations and colorful travel writings, in addition to a company that would soon bear his name. For all that was subsequently written about his life and work, however, many of the most basic details remain a mystery. The playful moniker he used with his clients enveloped his public persona so completely that it is difficult to find mention of any other name for the man. He appears to us simply as Far Away Moses, Ottoman Jewish dragoman, guide, and “dealer in rugs, embroidery, and all kinds of Oriental goods” (Stoddard 280).

Far Away Moses began his career as a dragoman, or translator, and local guide for Western tourists to the Ottoman capital. He was said to have known many languages but apparently knew English particularly well (Stoddard 280; “Far-Away-Moses: Jew”; “The Troubles of ‘Far-Away Moses’”; Willard 194; Thacher; “Finishing the Fair”). In 1863, a British doctor who traveled to the empire described Far Away Moses as a well-known part of the Istanbul landscape and the best dragoman the “City of the Sultan” had to offer (Radcliffe 721). Just five years later, an American chronicler claimed that “[n]ext to the Sultan, and possibly his grand vizier, the most noted person in the capital of the Mohammedan world is Far-away Moses.” Thus it was that this man, “by profession a dragoman, by residence a Byzantine, by race and religion a Jew,” gained
a reputation so extensive throughout the Levant that it was as notable, “though in a different channel,” as that of the Ottoman military general Omar Pasha or the Algerian war hero ‘Abd al-Qadir, the same author claimed (Swift 424). The comparison was not an obvious one, since by all accounts Far Away Moses was neither a political figure nor a communal leader.

Yet his fame continued to grow. Londoner John Murray’s handbook for travelers to the Ottoman capital recommended Far Away Moses as “an intelligent and honest dragoman” who could “be heard of at the Liverpool Steam-packet Office” in the Perşembe Bazaar of the Galata district of Istanbul—a rare compliment from a guidebook culture that often denigrated dragomans as either untrustworthy or unnecessary for those tourists looking to strike out on their own (Murray, *Handbook* 1871, 18). British and American travel writers soon began to mention their encounters with the man and to praise his honesty, reliability, and intelligence, no doubt in large part because they had learned of his various good attributes from Murray’s guidebook. To many, hiring Far Away Moses as a guide became a requisite part of the tour of the city, no less important an experience than visiting the Hagia Sophia or the Topkapi Palace of Old Istanbul.

Tourists did not simply seek Far Away Moses’s services because they found him reliable, however. His image as an Eastern Jew particularly appealed to his largely Protestant Anglophone clientele, many of whom regarded him not merely as an exotic oriental but also as a biblical figure worthy of their admiration. One English author who published a travelogue describing his time in Istanbul in 1877 made the religious dimension to his choice explicit, writing, “If the traveller is wise, he will immediately show a proper respect for his Old Testament by selecting Far Away Moses.”

The Ottoman Jewish tour guide and dragoman played the ancient Hebrew type well. By the 1860s he was no longer a young man. His “flowing beard” was “thickly streaked with gray,” according to an American journalist who added that the Ottoman Jewish cicerone had the “saddest of eyes,” having “often looked upon the weary side of life” (Leech 60). His outfit also struck his foreign clients as appropriately exotic and antiquated. With his turban, baggy pants, waist sash, and short loose vest—a traditional mode of men’s dress that the introduction of the Ottoman uniform of frock coat and fez in 1829 had rendered “unmodern”—Far Away Moses took on the aura of a different era (Quataert, “Clothing Laws”).

The carte de visite, or photographic calling card, he had made by 1867 suggests that Far Away Moses was aware that his success hinged on creating a
memorable image of himself. Doing so involved playing on an evolving stereotype of the Ottoman Jew. An 1863 photograph of a group of Jewish men who posed in the studio of the imperial photographers Abdullah Frères shows them dressed in outfits similar to—though more ragged than—the one Far Away Moses would wear in his carte de visite just a few years later (fig. 2). It was no coincidence that the “Jewish types” depicted in the photograph were portrayed in rags: Jews had a reputation for being among the poorest groups in the Ottoman capital.¹¹ Many European and American travelers would have been familiar with such stereotypes. Some may have even seen this particular photograph, as various English-language guidebooks recommended the Abdullah Frères studio to their readers, suggesting that a photograph produced by the Ottoman studio was “one of the most valuable curiosities” that tourists could take home from Istanbul.¹² Far Away Moses thus embodied and performed for tourists the role of the generic Ottoman Jew whom they had come to expect.¹³ Rendered among the sundry objects that he helped them acquire, he too became a curiosity.

It did not take long for others to begin to propagate their own images of Far Away Moses. When in 1869 the private secretary of a US admiral published
his account of their squadron’s goodwill tour of Europe and the Middle East, he included an illustration of the Ottoman Jewish dragoman made by the well-known American caricaturist Thomas Nast (fig. 3). Nast’s drawing offers a mirror image of the photograph that originally appeared on the Ottoman Jewish guide’s carte de visite, suggesting that the American author who contracted his services was among those who had received a personal copy of Far Away Moses’s photographic calling card. Although he remained faithful to the photograph in his depiction of the Ottoman Jewish guide, Nast took liberties elsewhere, adding to the originally empty background the silhouette of a mosque flanked by two minarets. Standing in the foreground of a scene now set in the “Land of the Sultans,” Far Away Moses became at once more exotic and less (exclusively) Jewish. In Nast’s rendering he was no longer simply a wise old Hebrew but also an Eastern subject from a Muslim country. The
insertion of Islamic architecture added a new dimension of oriental allure

to the relatively unadorned image that Far Away Moses had circulated of
himself.\textsuperscript{16}

More fortuitous still than his portrayal by the famous American cari-
caturist was Far Away Moses’s inclusion in a second book published that
same year.\textsuperscript{17} This was Mark Twain’s \textit{The Innocents Abroad, or the New Pilgrim’s
Progress}, an account of the American author’s travels to Europe and the
Levant in 1867. There, at the start of chapter 35, appeared a description and
engraving of Far Away Moses, who had served as Twain’s guide and translator in Istanbul.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure4.png}
\caption{Far Away Moses as portrayed in Mark Twain, The Innocents Abroad, or the New Pilgrim’s Progress (Hartford, 1869).}
\end{figure}
(381–82) (fig. 4). With 69,500 copies sold in its first year, *Innocents Abroad* was an immediate success (“Europe and the Holy Land”). It did not take Far Away Moses long to realize the opportunities that this development afforded him. Almost immediately after it appeared, he began to take regular trips to the American consulate in Istanbul in order to borrow the book and “read the chapter about himself” to English and American tourists (Twain, Letter to Bliss). He also requested a copy of the chapter (and, later, the book) through the offices of the consul, so as to be able to use it as an advertisement (Letter to Cox). Mark Twain obliged his old guide, as an 1870 note to his publisher makes clear (Letter to Bliss).

Far Away Moses had a habit of adapting his persona to the travel literature that described him. According to an American customer he met during the 1860s, he began to use his famous alias only after a guidebook had given him that title (Leech 61). Now he again fashioned his image accordingly. The “baggy trousers,” “silken jacket,” “voluminous waist-sash,” and “fiery fez” Twain had described became Far Away Moses’s signature style, one from which he would deviate only slightly over the years when posing for photographs (Twain, *Innocents Abroad* 381; “Troubles of ‘Far-Away Moses’” 8; Smith). His outfit—unremarkable from the perspective of mid-nineteenth-century Ottoman dress—now became the costume he wore in order to play himself.

He also appears to have compiled his own personal dossier of the various endorsements he received from satisfied customers over the years. This included not only a copy of chapter 35 of *Innocents Abroad* (or, at times, the entire book) but also a letter of recommendation from an American general whom he had toured around Istanbul in the late 1860s as well as various other testimonials (Swift 431–32; “Far-Away Moses: The Girls Visit an Eastern Bazar”; “Faraway Moses, Mark Twain’s Famous Guide”). By the 1870s, Far Away Moses also updated the inscription on his business card to include the page number (382) on which his image appeared in Twain’s famous travelogue (Morris 649; Audenreid).

The more attention he received, the more mysterious Far Away Moses became. Stories about how he earned his famous nickname began to multiply: certain authors suggested that the British Bradshaw’s travel guides had given him his title (Leech 61). Others ventured that it was an edition of Murray’s handbook that had chosen the name for the Ottoman Jewish dragoman. Still others attributed the name to Mark Twain, writing that the American author had devised the nickname as Far Away Moses toured him around Istanbul in 1867 (Adler, Letter to Sulzberger Adler, 24 Dec. 1890; Bancroft 5.854; Donlon). In one American author’s rendition,
The humorist and the guide strolled along together, the former being so intensely interested in what he saw that he often stood stock still in the road to admire the strange architecture of the houses and shops. But Moses kept plodding away, with the result that when the humorist resumed his tramp the Turk was so far ahead of him that it was with difficulty that he was called back. So often did Twain find himself alone in his tramps through the crooked streets of Constantinople that he facetiously dubbed his guide and chaperone “Far Away.”

There was only one problem with each of these explanations: no one appears to have been reading the literature they cited. Had they done so they might have seen that Bradshaw’s guide was among the rare sources not to call Far Away Moses by his famous sobriquet or that Murray’s guide to Constantinople recommended the Ottoman Jewish dragoman in a matter-of-fact manner, without giving any indication of having invented his nickname (“Guide and Interpreter” 638; Murray, Handbook, 1871, 18). Finally, Twain’s chapter in Innocents Abroad makes quite clear that Far Away Moses already had his name when the two met. “Ignoring the fanciful name he takes such pride in,” Twain wrote, “we called him Ferguson, just as we had done with all other guides,” so as to avoid having to pronounce “their dreadful foreign names” (Innocents Abroad, 381). Although the precise role Far Away Moses played in the proliferation of these various origin stories about his unusual nickname is unclear, he seems to have actively cultivated the sense of mystery that continued to grow up around him.

Another uncertainty that soon presented itself to travelers was the question of whether they had met the “real” Far Away Moses. So great was the Ottoman Jewish guide’s fame that various individuals across the Ottoman capital reportedly presented themselves to tourists as the man or, when that proved impossible, as his relation. Travelers began to write of spending their days in Istanbul trying to evade “the Moses family,” which increased “by continued accessions” and formed “a sort of procession” that followed them wherever they went (Swift 428). In some cases a group could spend many days in the company of a guide they believed to be Far Away Moses before realizing they had been deceived. One author described his experience, suggesting that about the fourth day he and his travel companions were in Istanbul “the proof came in so strong against” their guide “that he confessed himself not the genuine, but the brother of the original.” As the same author explained, “Far-away-Moses had ceased to be Far-away-Moses” (Swift 431).
Others claimed to see through such schemes from the start. A young woman who went shopping for oriental curiosities in a market in Nice, France, reported an encounter with a man bearing a letter of recommendation from the “American minister at Constantinople” certifying the “remarkable integrity of ‘Far-away Moses’.” “Then you are ‘Far-away Moses’?” she asked him before receiving the cryptic reply, “Yes, and my big brother at Constantinople” (“Far-Away Moses: The Girls Visit an Eastern Bazar” 329). The American journalist and travel writer Thomas W. Knox mocked the claims of various characters to
be Far Away Moses, suggesting that his “seven dozen ‘brothers’ . . . resembled him, each other, and themselves, about as much as a cup of coffee resembles a row of mixed drinks” (178). To illustrate his point, Knox included a caricature of “some of the brothers of Far-Away Moses” in the travelogue he published of his journey east (fig. 5). An American man named Lee Meriwether, who authored a low-budget travel guide of Europe, wrote that by the time he left Istanbul he had met so many claimants to the position of Far Away Moses that he “began to think the woods full of them” (188). “That the guides think the mere name Far-away-Moses a passport to your good graces is a great compliment to Mark Twain,” Meriwether concluded (188–89). The “real” Far Away Moses no doubt agreed. His “mere name” opened many doors for him and—it would seem—for many of his “brothers” as well.

FAR AWAY MOSES & COMPANY
Still others discovered they could use Far Away Moses's name as a trademark. When in 1868 a Jewish merchant named Elia Souhami partnered with the Muslim merchant Sadullah Bey to form a company specializing in oriental items in Istanbul, they drew Far Away Moses into their business, using his fame to build their reputation.23 Thus was Far Away Moses & Company formed.

Soon enough, the famed guide graduated from his first career. Trading places with the tourists he had so often greeted at Istanbul's docks, Far Away Moses embarked for the United States, where he helped establish various branches of the new business he represented (“Troubles of ‘Far-Away Moses’” 8). Among these were a headquarters at New York's Union Square and shops in the Palmer House Building of Chicago, beneath the Grand Union Hotel in Saratoga, and on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia (“Far-Away Moses—He's Back in Turkey”; Memorial of John Eliot Bowen 89; Hutton 101; Putnam; Adler, Letter to Sarah Sulzburger Adler, 26 Dec. 1890). He also displayed the firm's merchandise at different world's fairs during this period, crossing the Atlantic to attend the 1873 International Exhibition in Vienna before traveling stateside again to sell the company's wares at the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia (Knox 178; Putnam; “America's Trade in Oriental Rugs”).

When he finally returned to the Ottoman capital at the close of the decade, the company continued selling its carpets to American clients through auctions and through a Muslim representative named Hasan Bey (“Rugs at
Auction”; “Far Away Moses—Grand Collection”; “Far Away Moses”). In advertisements for one such auction from the late 1880s, an etching of Far Away Moses taken directly from the one featured in Innocents Abroad graces the page, although now with a smoking pipe placed in his hands, presumably to give the image an extra exotic flare (fig. 6). Evidently the former dragoman no longer needed to appear in person to sell his sundry items; instead, the logo of the mysterious and quirky Eastern figure that one of Twain’s illustrators had limned two decades earlier did his work for him. Far Away Moses’s newly gained popularity had rendered him iconic.

Yet Far Away Moses’s iconic status meant that those who sought to malign the Middle Eastern merchants in their midst found in him an easy target. Among the first to make this clear was an American woman who penned an 1879 editorial in the New York Times entitled “The Age of Bric-a-Brac.”
Bemoaning the “Japanese fever” then sweeping the United States as well as the profusion of “cabinet-maker’s rubbish” and “Oriental pots and pans from the bazaars of Faraway Moses and his tribe,” the author not only dismissed all of the “Eastern” merchants who sold items she considered worthless but also suggested that all such merchants were essentially indistinguishable from one another. Writing just a few years later, another American traveler lamented that before going abroad her knowledge of “Turks had previously been limited to the Far-away-Moses sort, who come to America as missionaries to convert us to a correct taste in carpets” (Pitman 190). For this author as well, there was reason not to allow “the Far-away-Moses sort” to serve as the de facto ambassadors of the Orient in the West, nor to dictate so fully Americans’ views of the East. Despite their dismissive tone, both editorials signaled the extent to which Far Away Moses’s name had become synonymous with the trade in “Eastern” goods for American consumers in the late nineteenth century.

Others were vexed by Far Away Moses and his “tribe” because of the direct competition they represented. Among such individuals was the American department-store mogul John Wanamaker. Anxious to undermine his Middle Eastern competitors, Wanamaker launched an advertising campaign during the early 1890s that drew on Far Away Moses’s fame and quoted from Mark Twain’s description of his one-time guide.24 Seeking to discredit the Ottoman carpet and curiosities dealer whose name they used to capture readers’ attention, Wanamaker’s ads suggested that there was no longer any reason to buy oriental objects from orientals since their goods could now be had cheaper, and with greater transparency, at his store (“Wanamaker’s,” Philadelphia Times, 17 Sept. 1891). Dismissing the whole “Far-away-Moses business,” one such ad suggested that the “solemn merchandise and the serious manner” with which they approached their work hardly made the “Turk or Arab a model of honest trading.”25 Another ventured that although the “humbug of Far-away Moses” had often been exposed, “[d]evious and crafty Armenian ways” were taking over the oriental embroidery and rug business in the United States (“Wanamaker’s,” Philadelphia Times, 6 Apr. 1892). Although these ads referred to all sorts of “Easterners”—including Turks, Arabs, and Armenians—as wily and unreliable, Far Away Moses stood in for them all.

Wanamaker may also have had more personal reasons for his campaign against the former Ottoman Jewish dragoman and guide. It was in 1876, during the very period in which Wanamaker opened the first department store in Philadelphia, that Far Away Moses brought his company’s merchandise to the Centennial Exposition in that city and, soon after, helped establish a branch
of the Istanbul-based firm not far from Wanamaker’s new department store. Given their shared involvement with the 1876 exposition and the close proximity of their stores, it is likely that Wanamaker and Far Away Moses knew each other. In the years that followed, the two men and their businesses also competed for customers in advertisements placed side by side in the same newspapers (see, e.g., “No Laggards Here” and “Far Away Moses”). For all his criticism of the “Far Away Moses business,” Wanamaker clearly felt threatened by the Ottoman Jewish man and those he represented—both the partners of his company and, more broadly, the growing numbers of Middle Easterners who had by this time arrived in the United States to sell their oriental wares.

As Far Away Moses’s name and image became commonplace—if contested—among consumers and vendors of oriental goods in the US, back in Istanbul the company that had formed with his name now adopted the less whimsical title Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company, after its two partners. Perhaps Souhami and Sadullah believed that the din of voices that had come to question the reliability of Far Away Moses, his “brothers,” and his wares were drowning out those who spoke and wrote admiringly of him, harming the firm’s business prospects in the process. Perhaps they believed that their company had finally come into its own and no longer needed the gimmick of the quirky Eastern Jewish figure who had once appeared on their ads. Whatever the reasons, the company’s new title had the effect of normalizing the firm and de-exoticizing its image. Rather than building its reputation purely on the fame of the elusive literary figure of Far Away Moses, the company now became a company like so many others, bearing the name of its founders. Its choice to switch from an English-language title to one with names that were more recognizably Ottoman also signaled the firm’s growing interest in appealing to local audiences.

Yet, despite the change in name, the company’s approach to advertising changed little. Just as the items Far Away Moses had shipped to America in the 1870s and 1880s had included “antique carpets,” “embroideries, silk draperies, Persian-Moorish lanterns,” and “oriental bric-a-brac,” advertisements for the rebranded Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company published in the French, English, and Ladino presses of the empire touted its extensive selection of oriental antiques, embroideries, platters, carpets “large and small,” and “oriental ornaments and curiosities” from regions as diverse as Central Asia (Dagestan), Persia, and Western Anatolia (Izmir, Kula, and Gördes) (“Grand choix varié de tapis orientaux”; “Large and Choice Selection”; “Sadula i Robert Levi”). The geographical diversity featured in Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company’s advertisements or in Far Away Moses’s all-encompassing—if somewhat perplexing—
“Persian-Moorish lanterns” illustrated the great assortment of goods that the company offered from across the Islamic world.

As it announced its eclectic offerings of antiques, embroideries, and carpets from diverse corners of the Islamic Orient, the firm responded to a Western demand for various oriental items displayed and consumed side by side. Equally telling was its use of expressions like “oriental bric-a-brac” and “oriental ornaments and curiosities,” demonstrating the extent to which the company’s representatives had adopted an outsider’s view of the items they procured and produced. There was a long history to such language, of course. Although elites had been engaged in the collection, display, and sale of natural and manmade “curiosities” in Europe for hundreds of years, by the nineteenth century the process had been democratized, allowing members of the global middle class access to the curious and exotic—or at least to things fashioned in this style (Pomian; Greenblatt; Hooper-Greenhill; Daston and Park; Impey and MacGregor; Mauriès; MacGregor; Bleichmar and Mancall; Davenne; Molineux 90–93).

It was during this period that the market for all that was curious caught on in the Ottoman Empire as well. Commercial directories published in Istanbul throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries listed “Oriental Curiosities” as a regular rubric for advertisers. In this sense, Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company promoted its merchandise using the extant professional vocabularies of the day. Yet as the century came to a close, the firm’s interest in providing Westerners with oriental curiosities as well as the self-exoticizing performances of its most famous representative began to compete with new pressures to present the company as one that promoted the goods—and thus also the economic interests—of the Ottoman state.

THE STUFF OF EMPIRE IN AN AGE OF NATIONS
The final decade of the nineteenth century witnessed a significant shift in Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company’s public profile. The firm grew substantially, adding branches in Paris, London, Cairo, and Izmir, drawing nearly six hundred weavers and embroiderers into its employ and expanding its warehouse in Istanbul to seven large adjacent shops of three stories. Different commentators proposed that this new layout made the store unique and quite possibly the largest in the entire vicinity of Istanbul’s Grand Bazaar (Cook’s Continental
The company’s promotional literature now drew attention to the style of its shop’s interiors for the first time. The firm’s 1892 advertisement in *Cook’s Continental Time Tables and Tourists’ Hand Book* described Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company not only as “the largest House in Turkey in Oriental Articles,” boasting “all sorts of rugs and carpets, silken sashes, dresses and curtains in all hues and colours,” but—crucially—also one whose shop was “decorated and adorned in Turkish style” (*Cook’s Continental Time Tables* 202). The new 1893 edition of Murray’s *Handbook for Travellers in Constantinople* employed similar language. In the guidebook’s “Bazar” section, readers could now find an endorsement suggesting that the best firm “in the Stambul Bazar” was “Sadoullah & Co., ‘Faraway Moses’, whose shop is decorated in Turkish style, and . . . [whose] carpets . . . are made for them in Smyrna and the interior” (156). In a late nineteenth-century photograph that captures a section of this shop’s inner courtyard, one glimpses low tables of inlaid wood, carpets, tapestries, portieres, metal lamps, and other decorative items hanging from walls, spread across the floor, and draped from a passageway leading to a second story. In the company’s own version of a cozy corner, two men smoke a nargileh. The man seated in the right back corner is a now-gray Far Away Moses (fig. 7) (Beaugé et al. 70.). The identification of the store’s style as “Turkish” also reflected a meaningful transformation in the firm’s approach to self-promotion. Whereas in the previous decade the company’s advertisements had highlighted the great variety of oriental objects in its warehouses, references to the diverse origins of its goods increasingly gave way to a new advertising strategy. Wares from Ottoman locales—including Smyrna, in western Anatolia, and the Anatolian “interior”—remained in descriptions of the company’s stock while mention of the Dagestani, Persian, and “Moorish” items it had once advertised fell away.
Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company’s new marketing techniques were the product of the Ottomanization of the firm’s image, which occurred serendipitously during the 1890s. During the preceding decade—since Far Away Moses had left American shores to return to the Ottoman capital—the business had grown primarily by selling its wares to individual European and American tourists in that city and to private buyers in the United States and England, although representatives of the firm also showed up at world’s fairs in London in 1884 and Antwerp in 1885, earning two gold medals, a bronze medal, and an honorable mention for their displays (Exposition universelle d’Anvers 88; Corneli and Mussely 331; Meriwether 189; Carathéodory Effendi). By the late 1880s the friendship that Sadullah Bey, Elia Souhami, and a new junior partner named Robert Levy developed with Oscar Straus, the US envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the Ottoman Empire from 1887 to 1889, helped the firm secure the position of purveyors of oriental rugs to R. H. Macy & Company, which was run by Straus’s brothers Isidor and Nathan (Straus, Letters to Isidor Straus, 21 Mar. 1889; 28 Mar. 1889; 11 Apr. 1889; [?] May 1889; and 28 May 1889). Soon after Straus’s tenure as minister ended, the
young American Jewish scholar Cyrus Adler, then an assistant professor at the Johns Hopkins University, appeared in Istanbul as a special commissioner in charge of arranging various Middle Eastern exhibits for the upcoming Columbian Exposition in Chicago. While in the Ottoman capital, he made the acquaintance of the firm’s members and spent long hours with Robert Levy, whom Straus had personally recommended he meet. In a letter he sent home from Istanbul, Adler remarked that he was impressed by these men and also by their shop in the bazaar, which he described as the “handsomest” he had seen. Noting that he considered Levy “hospitable by nature,” Adler wrote that he also had reason to believe that Levy was interested in working with him in order “to do a big thing at Chicago—get a monopoly for the Constantinople exhibit.” Levy was not disappointed (Adler, Letter to Sarah Sulzberger Adler, 24 Dec. 1890). With Adler’s support, his company won the bid to run the Ottoman exhibit at the upcoming Chicago World’s Fair.

The firm’s partners were now tasked with representing their government on an international stage by creating a space that could be judged to be authentically Ottoman, or “Turkish,” as Americans and Europeans were more inclined to call it (“La Ekspozision de Shikago”; “L’Exposition de Chicago”). The contract, prepared by the Ottoman Ministry of Trade and Public Works, specified that Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company would model the empire’s government building at the fair after the Sultanahmet fountain that stood at the entrance to the Topkapi Palace in the imperial capital. It also sanctioned the construction of a mosque, a bazaar, a theater, and a replica of the Egyptian obelisk at Istanbul’s Sultanahmet Square. Proper Islamic etiquette was to be observed at all times and visitors allowed into the mosque only at the discretion of the directors. The carryings-on in the theater, too, were to be regulated: nothing that would cause harm to the reputation either of Muslim women or of the empire as a whole was to be permitted. Not surprising in this context, the contract made clear that—under Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company’s stewardship—only Ottoman goods were to be sold (Ottoman Ministry of Trade).

In a matter of months, the company became the custodian of Ottoman prestige and products abroad. To be sure, Elia Souhami, Sadullah Bey, and Robert Levy’s enterprise in Chicago remained a private one. Yet once preparations for the exhibit were set into motion, the distinctions between the imperial government’s official and unofficial representatives were often blurred. In preparation for the fair, Robert Levy accompanied the Ottoman commissioner İbrahim Hakki Bey to the imperial Hereke carpet factory in order to select the choicest examples of rugs produced at the government-run factory for
shipment to Chicago (Yıldız Perakende). Ottoman entrepreneurs interested in displaying their merchandise as part of the empire’s exhibit were also instructed to make their arrangements directly with representatives of Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company in Istanbul (“La Ekspozision de Shikago” 2). Later, after they had arrived in Chicago, İbrahim Hakkı Bey charged both Levy and his assistant commissioner to act on his behalf when he was obliged to return to the empire for a time (“Calls from Foreign Representatives”). Whether for this reason or simply as a result of their unfamiliarity with his position as a private contractor for the Ottoman government, local press reporters in Chicago referred to Levy with titles like “Effendi Levy, the Imperial Commissioner to the World’s Fair” (“Never Ending Stream of People”) and “the Sultan’s representative” (“Orient at the Fair”). The author of one such report fashioned Levy into the “Turkish Commissioner to the World’s Fair,” suggesting not only that the carpet merchant of Istanbul was a governmental representative but also that he might be considered Turkish (“Rare Turkish Embroideries”).38

Levy actively cultivated this image of himself. Like Far Away Moses, he donned elaborate “oriental” outfits for cameras and crowds in Chicago and beyond. Yet in other respects he departed from his older colleague in his choice of attire. Unlike Far Away Moses, who was rarely caught in anything other than the robe, waist sash, and turban that had become a hallmark of his style, Levy playfully switched between an array of outfits on a regular basis, dressing variously as an Aegean Zeybek warrior, an Islamic legal scholar, and a modern Ottoman decked in frock coat and fez or a tailored suit with no hat.39 Whereas Far Away Moses had continued to publicly embody one Ottoman type—that of the Ottoman Jew—over many decades, Levy chose instead to appear as various Ottoman types, including those associated with Ottomans of other religions. A photograph from this period of Levy together with four other employees of his firm (including Far Away Moses, who appears to his left) shows him in the embroidered vest, tapered billowing trousers, and curved yatağan sword associated with West Anatolian Zeybek irregulars (fig. 8). The nargilehs, inlaid wood tables, and clothing in the photo were, no doubt, among the items available for sale in Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company’s shops. In such cases, the different personas that Levy and other employees of the company adopted were directly shaped by the products they sold.

Levy’s ambiguous status in Chicago also inspired American entrepreneurs, who used his likeness to advertise their products. His self-exoticizing displays convinced various American observers that he could be considered a captivating oriental, a “true Turk,” and even—it would seem—a Muslim.
An 1893 advertisement for Kirk’s American Family Soap gave this impression when it featured the “Noble Robert Levy” leading members of a local branch of Shriners in prayer as part of the dedication of the Ottoman mosque, which his company had helped build and oversee on Chicago’s Midway Plaisance. By presenting Levy kneeling and with hands upturned in the position of Muslim prayer, with a caption suggesting that the dedication ceremony had united “Christian and Mohammedan” alike, the advertisement left open the question of his religious affiliation, using mystery, and the exotic scene, to sell its soap (fig. 9) (“Kirk’s American Family Soap”).

Meanwhile, the now-aging Far Away Moses, who had also shown up at the Turkish Village in Chicago, similarly confused Americans’ categories. To some he appeared as a clearly Jewish type, whereas others simply identified him as an oriental. Although his self-presentation changed little over the years, different observers projected onto Far Away Moses a variety of identities. At times, he seemed to encapsulate the Orient of *One Thousand and One Nights*, appearing to one American observer to be an “Eastern magician.” At other times he became a “remarkable Israelite,” unmistakable as a “Hebrew,” or even a Shylock (Cox, *The Isles of the Princes* 8; “Far-Away Moses: The Girls Visit
an Eastern Bazar”; Knox 177; Smith). Despite these authors’ reassurances and the clue offered by his unforgettable sobriquet, other observers appear to have taken Far Away Moses for a Muslim. As for his nationality or place of origin, commentators labeled him as Turkish, Egyptian, Persian, Algerian, and Syrian in turn, suggesting that the exchangeability of the various objects he sold under the larger rubric of “oriental” had come to apply to him as well.
However they characterized him, different observers continued to portray Far Away Moses as emblematic. Perhaps not by chance, an illustration printed in a pictorial record of the fair depicted a “Turk in Costume” dressed in a nearly identical fashion to Far Away Moses’s now-famous outfit. Like the older Far Away Moses present at the fair, the illustrated figure sported a white beard, baggy pants, waist sash, and turban (fig. 10) ([Bancroft 5.854.]).

Far Away Moses also appears to have been the model for the “Semite” head that Otis T. Mason, an ethnographer at the National Museum in Washington, DC (today’s Smithsonian), selected as one the keystones of the Library of Congress’s Thomas Jefferson Building, alongside the various other ethnic types that adorn its façade (Wayne 18). Far Away Moses thus came to embody various categories—whether Turkish, oriental, Muslim, Semite, Jew, or some combination thereof.

Figure 10: A Turk in Far Away Moses’s costume, Hubert How Bancroft, The Book of the Fair vol. 5 (Chicago, 1893), p. 854.
Yet the Ottoman Jewish guide-cum-enterprising merchant seems to have been less preoccupied with these numerous rubrics than with preserving the image Mark Twain had bestowed upon him. As one chronicler of the fair put it, he was so “very proud . . . of his distinction” that “if questioned as to his identity,” he would reply: “If you do not believe that I am he, look on page 382 of the book” (Pierce 363). A visitor to his shop similarly mentioned that while her group rested “from the fatigue of looking over the large stock” he had displayed before them, Far Away Moses produced a copy of Mark Twain’s book, where his picture could be found. “This was conspicuously marked,” she explained, and “it was evident that he wished our memory freshened by what the author had said of him” (Barber 127).

Far Away Moses took an active role in refreshing people’s memories of him. He regularly inquired after Mark Twain and asked his American interlocutors to send his personal greetings to the famous author (Wadsworth; Cox, Orient Sunbeams 164). Upon realizing that the young man named Theodore Roosevelt whom he had spirited through the Ottoman capital many decades earlier had now become president of the United States, he quickly penned a letter to the American head of state. The autographed correspondence that he received in response now joined Twain’s book, his letters of endorsement, and various other publications featuring his likeness, all of which Far Away Moses reportedly kept with him in order to display them to his customers (“Faraway Moses, Mark Twain’s Famous Guide”). Some of these items even made their way onto the walls of his store: one American commentator who undertook a trip of “nearly 20,000 miles” across Africa, Asia, and Europe, wrote home to Troy, New York, in 1894 to report that while “in Constantinople one day in the bazaar of ‘Faraway Moses,’” the Ottoman Jewish carpet merchant had “proudly exhibited on the wall a framed copy of the Troy Times,” which had given an account of him and featured his picture (“Personal”). The texts and images that others had produced to describe Far Away Moses to foreign audiences thus became part of his performative repertoire, which he used to promote both his business and himself.

In the hands of the firm’s new partner Levy, however, the self-exoticizing self-promotion of the company’s early days came to overlap with a new impulse toward state promotion. In contrast to his older business associate, Levy made clear the links he drew between his engagement with things oriental and his broader allegiance to his empire—a position that coincided with growing pressures to create a unified and loyal Ottoman citizenry back in the empire. It was in this context that—almost immediately after arriving in Chicago—
Levy made a great show of his patriotism to the local press. In an article describing a gathering of fair organizers at the Palmer House Hotel in downtown Chicago—the very same building in which Far Away Moses had established a branch of his business two decades earlier—a journalist for the *Chicago Daily Tribune* introduced Levy as an “enthusiastic Turk” who was “thoroughly patriotic” and who declared that he “would lose his last drop of blood . . . in defense of his country” (“Turkey Holds the Key”). While on the fairgrounds he gave public speeches in Turkish and orchestrated an Ottoman Day celebration replete with Ottoman flags, food, and patriotic speeches (“Faithful Subjects”). He also promised that the stuff of his empire on display there would help promote the Ottomans’ place in the world (“El Sabah”; *Picturesque Chicago* 15).

Levy’s performances of his political attachment to his empire were not the only signs of growing imperial identification among Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company’s representatives. Well after the fair had ended, the company—now renamed Sadullah, Levy, and Madame Souhami following Elia Souhami’s death—continued to announce itself as the Ottoman concessioner of the Chicago exhibition, as it did in an advertisement the company placed in Demetrius Coufopoulos’ *Guide to Constantinople*, published in 1895 in London. Although this advertisement employed the familiar language of the oriental (suggesting that the company was the “only reliable dealer of Oriental goods”), it also boasted the specifically Ottoman focus the company had developed in recent years, touting both the company’s production of “Turkish Carpets and Embroidery” and its collection “of Turkish Antiquities, Carpets, Old Arms, Embroidery, Porcelain, and Silver Ware,” which it claimed was the largest such collection in the world (6). Even after it added “Eastern” wares from non-Ottoman locales (such as Dagestani and Persian carpets) back into its advertised repertoire, the company announced its new identification with the empire in other ways, as in 1895 when it placed an Ottoman flag on its advertisement in an Istanbul businesses directory and on a new version of its business letterhead (fig. 11) (Cervati 1179; for the letterhead, see Receipts from Sadullah, Levy and Vve Souhami).
CONCLUSION

Although the memory of both have been all but erased, Far Away Moses and the company whose name he inspired were wildly successful in their day, capturing the attention of influential American authors, illustrators, entrepreneurs, collectors, and politicians (including Mark Twain, Thomas Nast, John Wanamaker, George Vanderbilt, and Theodore Roosevelt) and working with interests as varied as R. H. Macy & Company, the Smithsonian and Victoria and Albert Museums, and the Ottoman government. Their multistory production site, warehouse, and shop in Istanbul competed in both its stocks and its approach to interior design with many of the large department stores of the day, while the firm’s claim to be the “only reliable dealer” in oriental goods and its adoption of the fixed-price system similarly echoed the language and policies of its contemporary competitors in the retail trade (Coufopoulos 6). Even those who dismissed Far Away Moses and his imitators as swindlers and vendors of inferior goods testified to the extent of his influence. Indeed, by the late nineteenth century his had become a household name associated, across the United States, with oriental carpets and decorative items—to the point that it came to stand in for Middle Easterners of various backgrounds who had come to the country as vendors of Eastern wares.
Dealing in the global oriental-goods trade was in turn transformative for the company’s members: the various markets in which they operated inspired them to continuously reinvent both their products and themselves. Allowing life to imitate art, Far Away Moses regularly made reference to himself as Far Away Moses the literary—and illustrated—figure, both replicating and embellishing a version of himself that others had imagined, carrying around the pages and engravings that described him, and keeping newspaper articles about himself framed on the walls of his shop in Istanbul. Whatever his “real” name may have been, the stage name others had bequeathed to him enveloped his public persona almost completely.49

With time, Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company also altered its image according to the evolving demands of various imperial markets—not just American and European but also Ottoman—changing its name and increasingly emphasizing the Turkishness of the company, its interior design style, and its wares. Meanwhile, Robert Levy’s image as Ottoman patriot coincided with his increasing involvement with Ottoman goods. Although this was apparent by the time he showed up with the official concession to represent his state in Chicago in the early 1890s, it had begun before: as early as 1886, a group of Ottoman merchants who displayed their merchandise at the Ottoman exhibit at the Exposition Universelle in Antwerp wrote their government on Levy’s behalf, suggesting that the state honor him for his activities promoting the business of their empire at the fair (Carathéodory Effendi). Even as the different members of the firm adapted and readapted their personas and marketing strategies, however, their ability to sell both their goods and themselves as “authentic” orientals remained crucial to their success over the course of many decades.

This imperative—to be “oriental” and, later, Ottoman, in order to propel their business—meant that their Jewishness at times went unremarked. Yet, although their American and European interlocutors often treated the Jewish members of the company first and foremost as “orientals,” there is no indication that they ever attempted to hide the fact that they were Jewish. Of course, there were those who identified both Far Away Moses and Robert Levy primarily, or even exclusively, as Easterners or “Turks,” as well as those who mistakenly took them for Muslims or conflated them with Armenians, for that matter; but their misidentification by others need not be read as straightforward acts of intentional passing. Back home in their own communities, and among fellow Ottomans, their Jewishness would have been an uncontested fact of life. It was thus inscrutable only to outsiders, and even then only partially.
In this context the firm’s members did not need to hide or even down-play their Jewishness in order to develop their oriental and Ottoman personas. Even as they sought to present themselves and their wares as genuinely “Eastern,” the company’s Jewish members actively cultivated both their Jewish ties and personas. There was good reason for this. Although their Jewishness gave pause to certain observers, it often proved an asset. Far Away Moses appealed to Anglo-American audiences in large part because they perceived him as an enigmatic and quirky biblical type. The “East” he represented was at once (or, sometimes, in turns) Jewish and Islamic. Elia Souhami and Robert Levy not only befriended but also found willing business partners and customers in their American coreligionists Cyrus Adler and Oscar Straus, both of whom they hosted in their homes, synagogues, and Jewish communal balls. It was Levy’s connections with Straus that allowed his company to become the purveyor of Turkish carpets to R. H. Macy & Company; his acquaintance with Adler—made on Straus’s recommendation—helped secure his firm the concession to represent the Ottoman Empire at the Chicago World’s Fair. It is thus that, in an ironic twist of history, the company’s American and Jewish ties helped it become more “Eastern” and more Ottoman.

Just as selling oriental items had once fostered the oriental persona of Far Away Moses—who became an oriental who sold “orientals” (a contemporary term for oriental carpets), a curiosity who sold curiosities, and a man many considered as ornamental as the items he helped his customers acquire—the experience of favoring Ottoman goods allowed mercantile and state-building projects to overlap, turning the likes of Robert Levy, and all members of Elia Sadullah Souhami & Company for that matter, into Ottomans. They became, in a sense, what they sold.

But that is not all. The material exchanges that engendered this process shaped not only the public and political personas of different members of the firm but also spheres more intimate. The oriental goods in which they traded figured among their most prized possessions, which they displayed in their own homes and passed down to members of their families over many generations (Rosenspitz 613–14; Adler, Letter to Sarah Sulzberger Adler, 26 Dec. 1890; Bishop, 23 Feb. 2013, 5 June 2014, and 24 Oct. 2014; Valensi, 25 Feb. 2013, and 20 Mar. 2014). Contacts with the individuals who helped them launch their careers also appear to have had a meaningful impact on their personal lives. Far Away Moses reportedly named his son Marco in honor of Mark Twain, whom he claimed as a friend as well as a patron (“Faraway Moses, Mark Twain’s Famous Guide”). Robert Levy followed suit by naming his son
Oscar Straus Levy, after Oscar Straus, the American envoy to the Ottoman Empire with whom he sustained a friendship over many decades (Adler, *I Have Considered the Days* 89; “Se. Izidor Straus” 3). This last relationship engendered new material exchanges in turn. Among the cherished items Robert Levy boasted in his home were the cup and saucer his son Oscar Straus Levy had received from his namesake. Nearly half a century after William R. Denny transported *Far Away Moses*’s photographic calling card on a ship across the Atlantic, these items had made the reverse journey, leaving a tangible trace of the personal connections forged in the midst of business transactions. Robert Levy, who had dedicated his life to selling carpets, objets d’art, and souvenirs to tourists, now had a souvenir of his own.
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1. For the image in his travelogue, see Twain, The Innocents Abroad 382.

2. The story of the participation of Armenians in the oriental carpet trade in the United States is perhaps the best known: see “America’s Trade in Oriental Rugs”; Mirak; and Jenkins-Madina. Although various works record the participation of Ottoman Jews in the global oriental-goods trade, we still know relatively little about such individuals’ lives and business practices. For Ottoman Jews and their descendants in Turkish tobacco and oriental-carpet work in Europe, see Guttstadt 111–12, 118, 123, 127–29. For Ottoman Jews and oriental products in the United States, see Angel 143–44; Papo 21, 29–30, 277; Bali; Ben-Ur 23, 29, 49, 131, 287; and Cohen, Becoming Ottomans 135–37. For the Istanbul Jewish firm that eventually employed Far Away Moses, see Grossman and Ahlborn 44, 52, 128; Bali 61; Cohen, Becoming Ottomans 62–73; and Cohen, “Oriental by Design.”

3. Recent studies on the role that trust played in commercial transactions include Trivellato; and Aslanian.

4. Exceptions include recent works in modern Jewish history such as Stein, Plumes, and Karp, “Blacks, Jews,” which argue that Jews’ involvement in different economic arenas affected people’s perceptions of them as more or less white, respectively. See also Chiswick, and Shandler, for how the experience of the marketplace shapes Jewish practice and piety. For some of the recent work on consumption in modern Jewish history, see Heinze; Joselit; Auslander, “’Jewish Taste?’”; Auslander, “The Boundaries of Jewishness”; and the various essays in Reuveni and Roemer.

5. For a fascinating example of the intersection of persona and product in modern Jewish history, see Shandler. On rags, see, among others, Mendelsohn, and Diner. On alcohol, see M. Davis, and Dynner. On feathers, see Stein, Plumes. Among the many studies, too numerous to recount here, that treat the association of Jews and Hollywood and modernist art, see Gabler, and Bilski. Other recent work detailing Jewish participation in different economic niches includes Lerner, and various essays in Kobrin. For new scholarship on Jews and modern economies more broadly, see Penslar; Godley; Schroeter; Slezkin; Teller; Chiswick, Lecker, and Kahana; Karp, The Politics of Jewish Commerce; Lederhendler; Muller; Reuveni and Wobick-Segev 1–20; Chiswick; Kobrin; and Kobrin and Teller.

6. As of yet, I have been unable to ascertain either his birth or death date. His precise relationship (both commercial and personal) to the other members of the firm he
eventually joined similarly remains uncertain, although most sources indicate that he was an employee rather than a partner.

7. According to different authors, word of the Ottoman Jewish guide spread across the Middle East, from Cairo to Damascus and Beirut to Izmir. Swift 425; Glazebrook 85; Stevens 205.

8. Various travel writers of the period, including Mark Twain, explicitly referenced what guidebooks said about the places they visited. One author playfully made light of this, writing in his preface: “Mistakes of fact, when they occur, are not my own, but must be laid at the door of John Murray, Esq., of London,” Swift 6. For writers who praised Far Away Moses’s trustworthiness and knowledge, see, for example, Montgomery 372; Murray, Handbook, 1871, 18; Leech 61; Swift 425; Buckham 1.381; Stoddard 280; and Jacob 58.

9. A number of the American and British travel writers who described Far Away Moses made explicit their identification as Christians. Some were missionaries. Others visited missionary and Bible societies or portrayed their journeys as pilgrimages to the holy sites of the Holy Land and Near East. See, for example, Montgomery, and Buckham; Noble; and Morris 2.657. For the American and British interest in exploring the lands of the Bible during this period, see J. Davis; Obenzinger; Long; Bar-Yosef; Wharton; and Rogers.

10. Baker 8. Other references to Far Away Moses as a patriarchal figure include “Race Types at the World’s Fair”; Noble 505; and Schaff 303. For Far Away Moses as a “worthy old Hebrew” and “Holy Moses,” see Bell and Montbard 48, and Bates 257, respectively.

11. On the image of Ottoman Jews as beggars, see Cohen, Becoming Ottomans 23–24. For the poverty of Istanbul’s Jews in particular, see Baudin; Cyrus Adler, diary entry 29 Jan. 1891; and Rosenspitz.

12. “Photographs” 118. For other recommendations of the Abdullah Frères studio, see “Pera, or Bey Oghloo” 64; “Shops” 647; “Photographers” 651; “Photographs” 640.

13. Not all observers were equally taken with Far Away Moses and his much-vaunted honesty. For an early skeptical account, see Audenreid 482.

14. Montgomery viii, with the note “‘Far-Away Moses’ (from photograph).” The author also mentioned his encounter with Far Away Moses, “a guide and dragoman known to all modern travellers” (372).

15. For the long and complex European associations of Jews and the “East,” see Kalmar and Penslar, and Brunotte, Ludewig, and Stähler.

16. For the exoticizing effect of using objects as the background of ethnographic representations, see Gaudio.

17. For other sources recommending Far Away Moses’s services during this period, see Radcliffe 721; Swift 424; and Murray, Handbook, 1871, 18.

18. Technically, Cox was not a consul but the “Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Ottoman Empire.” There was, as of yet, no official ambassador stationed in Istanbul.
19. An American commentator, in turn, suggested that Far Away Moses’s attire surpassed the attempts of master authors to depict oriental costume: “Neither Irving nor Booth ever conceived so fine and fitting a costume as this old man wears every day in and out of the bazaar” (Smith).

20. Hyde 377. See also Bell and Montbard 48, which simply suggests that Far Away Moses had been “so named by some facetious American—title duly registered in a guide-book, and accepted by the worthy old Hebrew in a large board over his stall.”

21. A note of the parodical, which infused Innocents Abroad, comes through in Twain’s portrayal here: “Far Away Moses” was clearly an English rather than a foreign name, after all, and one that no American traveler could possibly have had difficulty pronouncing.

22. Another faux Moses is described in Barton 103.

23. In one observer’s words, this allowed Far Away Moses to become “attached, as a sort of advertisement” to the company that bore his name (Adler, I Have Considered the Days 86). For more on Elia Souhami, the firm’s Jewish partner, see Cohen, Becoming Ottomans 62–63; for more on Sadullah Bey, the firm’s Muslim partner, see Wayne 15; “Queer Sign Manuals”; Adler, I Have Considered the Days 139; Maruzat; “Sadullah Talip Bey” 498–99; Bali; and Berry.

24. Notably, neither this nor any of the subsequent ads made explicit Far Away Moses’s Jewishness. Borrowing from Twain’s description, they referred to him only as the American author’s “Turkish guide.”


26. For Wanamaker’s involvement with the Centennial Exposition, see Gibbons 1.153–60.

27. Over a decade later another American department store chain—Chamberlain, Johnson, Dubose, of Atlanta—ran a smear campaign that invoked Far Away Moses’s name to similar ends (“Chamberlain, Johnson, Dubose Co. Furniture”).

28. This interpretation appears to be confirmed by the fact that, by the 1890s, the company made increasingly infrequent use of the name and image of Far Away Moses in their advertisements and commercial listings.

29. On “Oriental Curiosities” as a rubric for advertisers in late Ottoman Istanbul, see, for example, “Curiosités Orientales (Marchands de),” 1880, 436–37; “Curiosités Orientales (March. de),” 1881, 302; “Curiosités Orientales (Marchands de),” 1889–90, 436; “Curiosités Orientales,” 1891, 503. A commercial directory of late Ottoman Izmir and Anatolia also featured antiquities dealers who registered themselves as vendors of “Oriental Curiosities” (Nalpas 72, 146, 270; de Andria 50). Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company (later Sadullah, Levy, and Vve. Souhami & Company; Sadullah, Levy & Company; and—finally—Sadullah, Levy, and Mandil) advertised in each of these commercial directories under the rubric of “Oriental Curiosities”
through the 1920s and in material published abroad. See “Curiosités Orientales,” 1899, 1371; Meyers Reisebücher 267.

30. For the company’s new international branches, see L’Indicateur Ottoman, 1881, 88, and 1885, 345. For reports of Far Away Moses in Cairo during different periods, see E. S. P., “Letter from Egypt”; Bell and Montbard 48; and Stoddard 280. For the company’s nearly six hundred employees, see Lecomte 104. Advertisements the company ran during the 1890s announced a two-story shop made up of seven consecutive rooms, up from the four rooms mentioned in ads from the 1880s. For the shop’s expansion see also Willard 194, and Berry 48, which describes a three-story shop with an enclosed central courtyard by the 1920s.

31. For Jews and department stores in Germany, see Lerner. For department stores in the Middle East, see Stein, Making Jews Modern, especially 175–201, and Kupferschmidt.

32. The same description was later reprinted in the 1907 edition of the handbook.

33. This photograph is misidentified in the book as representing the shop of “Maisons Abdullah et Cie.” That it is actually a picture of the premises of Elia Souhami Sadullah & Company is evidenced by the presence of Far Away Moses and other recognizable employees of the company as well as the faint white writing in the bottom left corner of the photograph, which reads “Maison Sadullah,” an abbreviated name sometimes employed to refer to the firm.

34. For how he came to be appointed in this capacity, see Adler, I Have Considered the Days 72–75.

35. Straus recommended Levy to others as well. In a letter to his brother Isidor, he wrote that Levy had more “snap and sense” than any merchant he knew and suggested that the two meet; Straus, Letter to Isidor Straus, 21 Mar. 1889.

36. The contract was also published in “Malumat-ı Dahiliye-Şikago Sergisi” 3.

37. Robert Levy represented his firm in Chicago, whereas two Ottoman civil officials—İbrahim Hakkı Bey and A. Fahri Bey—were appointed to serve as commissioner and assistant commissioner of the empire at the exposition.

38. This was not the only source to describe Levy as a Turk. See also Bates 257; Chicago Times Portfolio; Potuoğlu-Cook; Cohen, “Oriental by Design”; and Cohen, Becoming Ottomans.

39. Of the dozens of references and images I have found of Far Away Moses, I have found only one mention of his wearing anything else. See ““Far Away’ Moses and His Pets.” For further discussion of the many outfits Robert Levy and others donned at different moments, see my discussion of the phenomenon I’ve labeled “clothes-switching” in Cohen, “Oriental by Design.”

40. In at least one respect the advertisement was accurate: during his stay in Chicago, Robert Levy was inducted into a local Shriner branch. See “Turkish Village Dedicated.”

41. For Far Away Moses as an oriental, see “Dr. Henshall at the World’s Fair.” Knox (177–78), described Far Away Moses as “a dignified oriental with a Jewish cast of
features,” who (despite his apparent Jewish distinctiveness) might easily be replaced by “some English-speaking Turk, Jew, or Christian who affectionately inquires after Mark Twain and hopes he is well and happy.” For Far Away Moses as an Eastern magician, see “Far-Away Moses: The Girls Visit an Eastern Bazar.”

42. Paine 180, told how, upon his travels to Istanbul during the early twentieth century, he and his travel companions had “called at the bazaar of Far-away Moses” only to find that he had died and “gone to that wonderful grand bazaar of delight which the Mohammedan has selected as his heaven.”

43. For references to Far Away Moses as a Turk, see Twain, *Innocents Abroad* 381; “Troubles of Far-Away Moses”; Bates 257; and “Personal”; for Far Away Moses as an Egyptian, see *Chicago Times Portfolio*; for his Persian incarnation, see Wister 352; for a description of Far Away Moses as Algerian, see Buel n.p. Most recently, Nance, *How the Arabian Nights*, cross-referenced Far Away Moses in her index with the entry “Peddlers, Syrian.” A different type of confusion about Far Away Moses’s nationality has resulted from a misreading of the company’s business contract (in Ottoman Turkish); Wayne 16, and, following him, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Place in the World” 72, have suggested that Far Away Moses was the American-born Harry Mandil, who eventually became a partner in the company in the early twentieth century. This assumption is undermined by the great disparity in age between the two men, by a comparison of their photographs, and by the evidence Wayne used to make the link: he understood the word “mösyö” next to Mandil’s name to have meant Moses, an unfortunate misreading of the Turkish word for “monsieur.” On this see also Bali 61–62.

44. The image is nearly identical to another illustration of Far Away Moses published during the exposition in Smith 698. See also the reference to Far Away Moses as “graybeard” at the fair; “Finishing the Fair.”

45. Roosevelt had traveled to the Ottoman capital in 1873 with his family; see Kohn 22.

46. On the concept of the repertoire in performance studies, see Taylor.

47. For attempts to foster imperial identification among Ottomans of all backgrounds, see, for example, Kayali; Rahme; Frierson, “Mirrors Out, Mirrors In”; Frierson, “Gender, Consumption and Patriotism; Blumi; Makdisi; Petrov; Anagnostopoulou and Kappler; Özbek; Campos; Hartmann; Bashkin; Philliou; Levy; Ueno; Cohen, *Becoming Ottomans*; and Kechriotis.

48. For transactions with the Vanderbilts, see Brendel-Pandich and Dodds 306; Berry 73; and Receipts from Sadullah, Levy and Vve Souhami. For those with the Smithsonian and the Victoria and Albert Museum, respectively, see *Report of the U.S. National Museum*, and MA/1/S2606.

49. Rare and contradictory references to Far Away Moses’s other possible names do exist. See Buckham 381, which refers to him as Samuel Moses. A man by that name was registered (although without any indication that he was Far Away Moses) in “Guide and Interpreter” 638. Whether he was the same man listed in *L’Indicateur*
Ottoman, 1880, 169, as “Samuel Mozas” is unclear, as is the possibility that this Mozas was Far Away Moses, since the same page on which Mozas’s name appears includes a separate entry for “Sadoullah Faraway (Moses et Cie)” and lists the two at separate addresses. A later source suggests that Far Away Moses’s last name may have been Guerson, as a Jewish merchant active in Istanbul in the mid-twentieth century and bearing that name claimed to be Far Away Moses’s grandson (though without noting whether the connection was maternal or paternal) (McLemore). Still other contemporaries, who claimed that he had a familial relationship to Robert Levy, introduced the possibility that Far Away Moses’s surname may have been Levy; see Wood 566.

50. For one writer’s skepticism about the company’s Jewishness, see Snider 373.
51. Straus, Letter to his family; Adler, Letter to Sarah Sulzberger Adler, 24 Dec. 1890; Adler, Letter to Sarah Sulzberger Adler, 26 Dec. 1890; Adler, Letter to Sarah Sulzberger Adler, 6 Feb. 1891; Adler, I Have Considered the Days 86. When Oscar Straus’s brother Isidor came to the Ottoman capital a few years later, Robert Levy also toured him around the city; “Se. Izidor Straus.”
52. On the cup and saucer in Levy’s possession, see the diary entry for 6 June 1915. It is likely that Straus chose the gift from the porcelain collections of his family business, L. Straus & Sons, which specialized in glassware, china, and porcelain products—including cups and saucers. On this, see Hower, and Henderson.
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