THE FIGHTING RACES OF THE ORIENT:

GERMAN ORIENTALISM AND IMPERIAL DISCOURSES

IN POSTWAR MEMORY

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ABSTRACT

The Fighting Races of the Orient:

German Orientalism and Imperial Discourses in Postwar Memory

In this thesis, through the deconstruction of the memoirs of two German military officers who served in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War, I argue that it becomes possible to view these life-narratives in a new light: as post-colonial colonial propaganda, in which cultural and racial hierarchies are deliberately established with an eye towards the discursive construction of the Ottoman Empire as a colonial space and its people as colonial subjects in-waiting. This retroactive 'colonial construction' is unique, in that it attempts to grasp a particular moment of 'coloniality' in German-Ottoman relations which was in many respects a wistful imperial fantasy. The two authors, Liman von Sanders and Gerold von Gleich, construct Ottoman coloniality through extensive reliance on the discursive language of extant European Orientalisms, which equates alterity with inferiority, presupposes the existence of an empirical Oriental mindset with defined characteristics, and readily assumes the audience's familiarity with the tropes of Oriental despotism. Furthermore, Liman and Gerold forgo the idea first propagated by Colmar von der Goltz several decades earlier of the Turks as a "nation in arms" in favor of a conceptualization of the Turks as merely the most military of the peoples of the Ottoman Empire, thereby utilizing the theory of "martial races." This study therefore inserts itself into a historical debate which predominantly interprets the worldview (*Weltanschauung*) of German officers of the First World War as a derivative of earlier German military missions to the Ottoman Empire.

ÖZET

Doğunun dövüş ırkları:

Savaş sonrası hafızada Alman Oryantalizmi ve emperyal söylemler

Bu çalışma, Birinci Dünya Savaşı sırasında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda görev yapan iki Alman subayının anılarının yapıbozumuna yöneliktir. Bu yaşam anlatılarını, sömürge sonrası kültürel ve ırksal hiyerarşileri kasıtlı olarak kuran ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun bir sömürge alanı ve Osmanlı halkının ise beklemede bir sömürge tebaası olarak söylemsel inşasını içeren sömürge propagandası şeklinde görmenin mümkün olduğunu savunmaktadır. Bu geçmişe dönük "sömürge inşası" benzersizdir, çünkü Alman-Osmanlı ilişkilerinde birçok açıdan özlem dolu bir emperyal fantezi olan belirli bir "sömürgelik" anını kavramaya çalışır. Her iki yazar, Liman von Sanders ve Gerold von Gleich, Osmanlı'nın sömürgeliğini, büyük ölçüde başkalık ile aşağılığı eşit tutan mevcut Avrupa Oryantalizmlerinin söylemsel diline dayanarak inşa etmekte ve belli özelliklere sahip ampirik bir Doğu zihniyeti öngörürken Doğu despotizmi algılarına aşina bir izleyici kütlesinin varlığını da varsaymaktadır. Ayrıca, Liman ve Gerold, birkaç onyıl önce Colmar von der Goltz tarafından öngörülmüş olan Türklerin bir "millet-i müsellaha" olduğu fikrinden vazgeçip "savaşçı ırklar" teorisini kullanarak, Türkleri yalnızca Osmanlı İmparatorluğu halklarının en askerisi olarak kavramsallaştırmaktadırlar. Çalışma, ağırlıklı olarak, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'ndaki Alman subaylarının dünya görüşünü (Weltanschauung) Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda daha önce bulunmuş Alman askeri misyonlarının bir türevi olarak gören tarihsel tartışma kapsamındadır.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In November 1919 German General Liman von Sanders put the finishing touches on his memoir of his experience in the Ottoman theatre of war. Barely released from British captivity on the island of Malta, he had ample opportunity to reflect on the metanarrative of his work. The very last words of the memoir, which are found in the epilogue, contain precisely the kind of narrative soul-searching to which authors are given when taking a step back to view their work as a continuous and coherent whole: "It seems that thoughts of the tales of *The Thousand and One Nights*, or the *fata morgana* of the Arabian desert dimmed judgement at home."[1] In saying this, Liman evidently hoped to underline one of the most important themes in his narrative: Germany's lackluster and desultory handling of the Ottoman-German military alliance during the First World War. There can be no doubt that therein lies an additional indictment of the authorities in Berlin who had repeatedly overridden Liman's opinions throughout his five-year long tenure as chief of the German military mission in the Ottoman Empire, and as commander of various armies in the field. Put differently, these lines may be read as the culmination of a 400-page attempt to exculpate Liman from the final collapse of the Ottoman Army in 1918.

Writing a year later in his native state of Württemberg, Gerold von Gleich, a former Major general who served as the chief of staff in the Ottoman Sixth Army on the Mesopotamian front, largely concurred with Liman's dour assessment of the German *Orientpolitik* ("Oriental policy"), and applied it to his own unique

[1] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 408.

experience in Persia, where the Germans and their Ottoman allies had been locked in a mutual competition for imperial influence. In rendering his final judgement on the superfluity of the German imperial entanglement with Persia, Gerold wrote, "A well-intentioned neutral power is always better than a weak, reluctant ally."[2] Like Liman, Gerold blamed the authorities in Berlin and Constantinople for their failure to comprehend the salient facts on the ground in the Orient.

Indeed, one of the more conspicuous of the many threads which run throughout these remarkable ego-documents is the uniform and often extensive criticism of German officials, both at home and abroad, who made political and military decisions based on, in their estimation, wholly incorrect presumptions about their ostensible Ottoman and Persian allies. Drawing upon a cultural register of the Orient with which most Germans were undoubtedly familiar, most prominently the collection of medieval Arabic folk tales known as *The One Thousand and One Nights* and the extremely popular novels by Karl May, Liman and Gerold are quick to trace a likely source of their compatriots' fanciful notions regarding the Orient.

However, Liman's and Gerold's characterizations of the Ottoman Empire and its neighbors were no less skewed by the kinds of generalizations favored by European colonial and quasi-colonial interlopers. Quick to resort to essentializations of the Ottomans in terms which were heavily utilized by European colonialists in reference to many other peoples across the globe, Liman's and Gerold's accounts of the war years place German efforts and verve upon a pedestal, far above that of that of their erstwhile comrades-in-arms. Although they acknowledge that there exist exceptions to these near-caricatures, it is difficult to imagine that their intended

[2] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 179.

audience would have seen their observations as entirely innocent in meaning and import. At the same time, paradoxically, they characterize certain strata of Ottoman society in a completely different manner, which on the surface appears entirely laudable and gracious, but which in actuality is another well-known form of colonial classification.

In this thesis, it is my intention to tease out the various topoi which comprise the aforementioned 'idiosyncrasies' of the Orient, and through them gain an understanding of how Liman and Gerold viewed and contemplated the people of the Ottoman Empire. I aim to do so by a close reading against the grain of Liman von Sanders' memoir *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, written in 1920, and Gerold von Gleich's memoir *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, which was written in 1921. Looking at the language and imagery Liman and Gerold utilize to convey the hebetude, Otherness, cunning, and martial prowess of the Turks and other Ottoman peoples, as well as the Persians, and how the depictions differ or exhibit consistencies, it becomes possible to view these life-narratives on the Great War in the Middle East in a new light: as post-colonial propaganda, in which cultural and racial hierarchies are deliberately established with an eye towards the construction of the Ottoman Empire as a colonial space and its people as colonial subjects in-waiting. This retroactive and remembered colonial construction is unique, in that it attempts to grasp a particular moment of coloniality in German-Ottoman relations which was in many respects a wistful imperial fantasy, a self-serving fiction that was endangered and then finally dispelled through the contradictory and inconsistent policies promulgated by officials in the multifarious centers of military and political power in Germany.

In what follows, I intend to analyze the historical coloniality of the two memoirs through the predominant tropes which they use to make sense of the Orient.

Drawing on the Saidian understanding of Orientalism as a theoretical and ontological framework intricately connected with imperial praxis and the nodes of imperial power, the first chapter will examine how Liman's and Gerold's narrative construction of the Oriental conformed closely to extant discourses pertaining to the inferiority of colonial peoples. While the various manifestations of inferiority were considerable, the salient point was that their very inferiority invited, even necessitated imperial intervention. The second chapter is closely related to the first, and interrogates the German perceptions of Ottoman statecraft as the quintessential embodiment of Oriental despotism, the victims of which were ultimately the non-Turkish peoples of the Ottoman Empire. The topoi of Islam and nationalism are also discussed, and the tensions of Liman's and Gerold's treatment of these two forms of identity in relation to the broader framework of Orientalist discourse are examined. The narrative of the manifestly unjust Ottoman state acts as a call to action to the audience, to import the rule of law to the downtrodden peoples of the Orient. Finally, the third chapter will deconstruct Liman's and Gerold's attempts to cast the Ottoman Army as a colonial army, in which the German element was ultimately the supreme architect of Ottoman military success and the catalyst for the surmounting of nearly a century of supposed military decline. A crucial component of this chapter is the argument that in classifying certain races of the Orient as military or non-military in disposition, Liman and Gerold were directly borrowing from the British imperial discourse of martial races. This argument is subtly different in comparison to the previous two, which posit a call to action contained in the discourse of Oriental inferiority and despotism, in that a position of power, specifically the power to produce knowledge and essentially decide which race is martial and which is not, is presupposed. The presupposition of European discursive domination through

knowledge production in turn presents the very simulacrum of tangible colonial dominion. An effort will be made to situate martial race theory in the broader framework of Orientalist discourse; to this date the former has never been linked to the latter.

The remainder of this introduction will be devoted to unpacking some of the theoretical assumptions that are expressed in the above paragraphs. In the first section, the historical background of the German entanglement with the Orient in military, economic, and political terms will be discussed. Special attention will be granted to the unique features of German colonialism and imperialism in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The circumstances surrounding the dispatching of Liman and Gerold will also be addressed in the same section. In the second section, a brief overview of the relevant literature will be provided. The various lacunae in the scholarship will be addressed, and the potential of this study to contribute and insert itself into the ongoing conversation will be outlined. The third section will address the questions of methodology. Special attention will be paid to the specifically German components of, entanglements with, and exclusion from Orientalist discourses, as well as the theoretical underpinnings of martial race doctrine in both the British and the German imperial contexts. In addition, the methodological considerations of memoir analysis, which is of critical importance to the overall study, will be examined. In addition, the factors which separate Liman's and Gerold's accounts of the strange and exotic places in which they found themselves from those of other imperial agents or travel-writers will be elucidated. Finally, the salient aspects of the lives and works of Liman and Gerold will be addressed. After providing a brief biography of both, the discussion will shift to

examine the predominant themes in each, through explicit scrutiny as well as a reading between the lines to tease out the invisible text.

1.1 Nomenclature

Here I utilize the names 'Liman' and 'Gerold' for the sake of brevity, as opposed to Liman von Sanders and Gerold von Gleich. This is consistent with German nomenclature concerning noble suffixes, provided that the name before the noble title is the last name of the person in question. Hence, Otto Viktor Karl Liman (von Sanders) and Franz Maria Gerold (von Gleich), but not, for example, Erich Georg Sebastian Anton von Falkenhayn, who remains as Erich von Falkenhayn.

Second, as was common in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, 'Turkey' was a widely-used term which designated and roughly coincided with the Ottoman Empire in its entirety, and the term 'Turks' could, but sometimes did not, extend to include all the diverse peoples of the empire.[3] While modern scholarship is predictably more accurate in the deliberate employment of one term over another,

[3] In this regard, there is little difference between the German-language milieu of the long nineteenth century and that of other European contexts. For example, in a speech delivered in the House of Lords on July 29, 1889 by the Earl of Carnarvon (I believe him to be Henry Howard Molyneux Herbert, the 4th Earl of Carnarvon) regarding the subject of the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria, he says "A telegram warned the Turkish Government, and the Turkish Government suppressed the circulation of the Times in Turkey. My Lords, these are acts by which the Turkish Government take away from their friends all hope of improvement in Turkey." See Earl of Carnarvon, (*House of Lords*, July 29, 1889), https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/lords/1889/jul/29/turkey-bulgaria#column_1541. The archives of the British parliamentary speeches and debates are rife with references to the "Turkish government," the "Turkish Empire," "Turkey," and the "Turks." Yet, the English, like the Germans, viewed the formulation of "Turkish" or "Turk" as roughly interchangeable with that of "Ottoman." Hence, Sir Robert Peel, the well-known Conservative politician, asked Lord Palmerston his appraisal of the Great Powers "maintaining the integrity as well as the independence of the Ottoman empire." See Sir Robert Peel, (*House of Commons*, February 21, 1840), https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1840/feb/21/affairs-of-turkey. Even more confusingly, in his impassioned and lofty speech on the Eastern Question, delivered on May 29, 1863, in the House of Commons, Mr. Austen Henry Layard spoke of Belgrade Fortress as a monument to the "ancient glories and victories of the Ottoman race." See Mr. Layard, (*House of Commons*, May 29, 1863), https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1863/may/29/papers-moved-for.

Liman and Gerold are unsurprisingly imprecise in explaining his usage of these terms.

This presents a unique challenge to the contemporary author, who must try and decipher Liman's and Gerold's original meaning, and if all else fails make an educated estimate. It does not help that Liman uses the term 'Ottoman' only a handful of times in the memoir, which is typically rendered as 'Osman' or 'Osmanic' in the English translation. Gerold uses it even less. There are some helpful cues, however. Liman and Gerold do not usually categorize the Greeks, Arabs, or Armenians as falling under the rubric of 'Turk.' To the extent that they mention them, this is also true of the Kurds, the Druze and the Jews. Other ethnic groups, such as Albanians and Circassians, are rather less fortunate; from Liman's and Gerold's perspective they may as well be 'Turks.' Furthermore, it would seem that potentially any subject-race could be considered a 'Turk,' particularly if they were connected with the political or military apparatus of the Ottoman state.

Nevertheless, at times Liman in particular usefully specifies 'Anatolian' when discussing the Turks; when this occurs, we can be reasonably confident that the 'Turks' referred to roughly approximate the modern nationalist conception of a 'Turk.' In addition, the meaning and potential scope of what could constitute a 'Turk' had altered appreciably between the beginning of the nineteenth century and the context in which Liman wrote his memoir. During that considerable interval, the Ottoman Empire had lost its European and African possessions, and had consequently gained several generations of Muslim refugees who potentially could have been raised in an Ottoman Turkish or Turkish-speaking milieu.[4]

[4] Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914*, 60-77.

In part, it may be said that Liman and Gerold ascribed a 'Turkish' character to the Ottoman state because, by and large, it was in their view a state 'of the Turks, by the Turks, and for the Turks.' However, even more importantly, by the time Liman had been dispatched to the Ottoman Empire, there was already a burgeoning proto-Turkish nationalism in existence.[5] Ostensibly inchoate, it was nevertheless both recognizable and intelligible to foreign observers such as Liman. Indeed, the murmurs of a Turkish nationalist consciousness, which was perhaps most firmly entrenched in the Ottoman military officer corps, did not escape Liman's or Gerold's notice. As will be shown, a key component of Liman's and Gerold's sense of identification with the Turkish volk was precisely their apprehension that a people, who effectively constituted an Oriental mirror of the Germans, were groping towards self-realization.[6] This fact, combined with Liman's deliberate usage of the descriptor 'Anatolian' in specifying what he meant by 'Turk,' leads me to believe that the term 'Turk' is perhaps more carefully utilized in *Five Years in Turkey* than it historically had been. To that end, in this and the following chapters pertaining to the exploration of the themes in Liman's and Gerold's memoir, I will adopt their terminology of 'Turk' when I believe the subject of the discussion at hand to be a 'Turk' by Republican standards; Liman's corporeal situation in Anatolia must make this

[5] Eric Hobsbawm's discussion of ethnolinguistic nationalism is particularly useful here. See Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*; Üngör, "Turkey for the Turks: Demographic Engineering in Eastern Anatolia, 1914-1945," 287-305; Zürcher, "Renewal and Silence: Postwar Unionist and Kemalist Rhetoric on the Armenian Genocide," 306-316; Suny, *The Revenge of the Past*, 1-19; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide*, 57-68; Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, 402-410.

[6] On the complex history of the term "volk" see Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology.*

probable. Furthermore, I may employ the term 'Ottoman' when referring to the polity, the state, its various organs, or to the various peoples as whole.[7]

1.2 The historical background

An exhaustive account of the genesis of the German imagination about the Orient and its more material entanglements in that region is beyond the scope of this study. It is only possible to briefly sketch the historical aspects of German imperialism and colonialism which have the most bearing on the subject under consideration here. Suffice it to say, the Orient had been an object of intellectual fixation for the German-speaking world since the twelfth century, when the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa met his end leading an army of crusaders in Asia Minor.[8] Many, though not all, of the extant discourses were little more than extrapolations of contemporary anti-Muslim rhetoric, and participation in these discourses helped affirm German belonging in a "collective Christian European community."[9]

The form and meaning of the discourses surrounding the Orient would undergo subtle shifts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, during which the Ottoman expansion into Europe and in particular the two sieges of Vienna in 1529 by Sultan Süleyman I and in 1683 by Grand Vizier Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha

[7] Although I wholeheartedly agree that it is important to recognize the people of the late Ottoman Empire, whether Turkish, Armenian, Arab, Greek, or otherwise as 'Ottoman' insofar as they remained various peoples who lived in the domain of the multi-ethnic polity ruled by the Ottoman dynasty, and am of the opinion that it is of utmost importance to problematize if not subvert nationalist narratives of exclusivity, betrayal, and tyranny, I will eschew such a schema, on the grounds that Liman did not recognize such nuances, as did many of his contemporaries; in the hopes of teasing out how and why Liman thought and wrote the way he did, I must regrettably demur from adopting a narrative different from his own.

[8] Wilson, "Enlightenment Encounters the Islamic and Arabic Worlds: The German 'Missing Link' in Said's Orientalist Narrative (Meiners and Herder)," 75; On the significance of Frederick Barbarossa to late-nineteenth century German "invented tradition," see Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe 1870-1914," 275.

[9] Kontje, *German Orientalisms*, 32.

engendered bitter hatred and fear of 'the Turk' menace.[10] As opposed to maintaining the German-speaking people's belonging in the broader socio-religious collective of Christendom, this later manifestation of 'German orientalism' served as an articulation of early modern German nationalism, an intellectual exercise in self-definition in opposition to the 'Other;' in comparison with other European nations, the Germans did not initially partake in the geographic interest surrounding the New World, and remained fixated on the Muslim East. As more travel accounts of the Near East were published, an "Orientalizing cultural wave" (*orientalisierende Kulturwelle*) informed many aspects of German, and indeed European, culture; this was merely an early manifestation of the 'alla Turca' cultural movement of the eighteenth century.[11] At the same time, however, the closer contact with the Middle East challenged the simplistic perception of the Orient as a place of quintessential unreality and unknowability, and "the imaginary construct [was] confronted with the empirical reality;" the latter was increasingly, but never fully, able to supplant the former.[12]

Germany's initial entanglement with the Orient was characterized by uncertainty and schizophrenically simultaneous attraction and repulsion, emulation and anxiety. In the transition from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the end of the eighteenth century, two very important developments would have an appreciable impact on the future tenor of both German Orientalist and colonialist

[10] Ihrig, *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination*, 2; Suzanne Marchand writes that "the relationship of the Germans to the 'East' was not that of cross-oceanic commerce and colonization, but of powerful nations on one's own unstable borders." See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 28.

[11] In the words of Marchand, "'the terrible Turk' had given way to the ineffectual, corrupt, and oversexed Ottomans of Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio*." See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 14; Kontje, *German Orientalisms*, 33-35.

[12] Prager, *Orienting the Self*, 3.

discourse. First, in the century following the signing of the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, the Ottoman Empire increasingly found itself beset by internal strife and a general decentralization of authority, by the declining ability to raise taxes needed for the maintanance, supply, and payment of the armed forces, and most crucially, by more modern, disciplined, and technologically advanced European armies, particularly those of the Russian Empire.[13] The specter of 'the Turk' which exercised many a mind in the German-speaking world had considerably diminished. Subsequent iterations of multifarious German orientalisms would increasingly assume a position of superiority vis-a-vis the Oriental, who was at worst a barbarian or at best a 'noble savage,' a relic of a less advanced, more innocent age in the history of man; the function of the Orientals and the Orient as a mirror in the construction of the self-image of the German world did not significantly alter in this time period.[14]

Perhaps more significantly, the late eighteenth century also saw the inception of a "'distinct colonial cult' which largely defined German public discourse;" of course, at this historical juncture Germany was little more than an idea, and it had no colonial possessions to speak of.[15] Focusing on the "'latent colonialism'" and "the

[13] I deliberately eschew the term 'decline,' as the 'd-word' has been roundly criticized in the scholarship as a nebulous concept with very little explanatory power; the narrative of Ottoman decline, far from being an innovation of Western scholarship, actually originated in Ottoman court circles. However, late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century German Orientalist scholarship increasingly emphasized the contrast between the ancient wisdom of Oriental civilizations and their degeneration in contemporary times. See for example Lewis, "Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline," 71-87; Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 41-42. For a recent attempt to reconceptualize the 'decline' of the Ottoman Empire in terms of a comprehensive reordering of state-society relations, see Tezcan, "The Second Ottoman Empire: The Transformation of the Ottoman Polity in the Early Modern Era," 556-572.

[14] Wilson, "Enlightenment Encounters," 276; Susanne Zantop argues that "the 'other' is not just out there, but forms an integral part of the self and its self-perception. The dialectics of self and other are external as well as internal; they affect the collectivity as well as the individual." See Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 5, 14.

[15] Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 1.

development of a 'colonialist subjectivity'" in domestic German discourse during the 'precolonial period,' Susanne Zantop argues that "the colonial urfantasy of the encounter between European and 'native' [was] recast to meet particular ideological needs... all of them build on one another, creating a network of implicit references, which reinforce their message and anchor it in the minds of their readers... [creating] a colonialist imagination and mentality that beg to translate thought into action."[16] Although this was true to some extent of all colonialist imaginaries, the historical experience of the Germans as latecomers in the scramble for empire imbued German colonial fantasies with distinct characteristics in comparison with other Europeans. "'Untainted' by praxis," German colonial fantasies functioned as a quintessential "*Handlungsersatz*," an "imaginary testing ground for colonial action" and intellectual landscape in which the German colonizer could belong.[17] Moreover, this German colonizer, having studied and learned from the mistakes and excesses of other European imperial powers, would prove himself to be a "better" colonizer; when the colonial reality of Imperial Germany's historical experience failed to vindicate this abstract notion of the superior German colonialism, the *Koloniallegende* ("colonial myth") proved to be the more durable. Disappointing reality was subsumed under hopeful and vainglorious fantasy.[18] Zantop's decision to focus on German discourse surrounding the continent of South America, which had known Spanish and Portuguese colonization since the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1493, is not without significance: for the German psyche, the continent served as "a missed opportunity, as the recollection of colonial failure, as a lost object to be regained

[16] Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 2-3.

[17] Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 6-7.

[18] Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 7-9; Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 41.

through renewed efforts."[19] As Malte Fuhrmann puts it, "Impotence led to fantasies of omnipotence."[20] Finally, Susanne Zantop suggests that the German experience of defeat and national humiliation at the hands of the French during the Napoleonic Wars "promoted a sense of identification with the colonized underdog."[21]

One of the earliest German colonialist discourses demonstrated properties unique among those of other Europeans. In the first instance, the Germans had established a colonialist imaginary which had no basis in reality; until the advent of formal German colonialism in the 1880s, it was nothing more than an exercise in national, collective wish-fulfillment. What is more, the specific case of South America demonstrates that retroactivity in German colonial discourse has a tangible, historical precedence. This is important precisely because these two aspects of early German colonialist discourse would prove immensely durable; indeed, it is of fundamental importance to the argument under consideration here. Liman and Gerold constructed a retroactive vision of German colonialism in the Ottoman Empire which was little more than a mirage, a glimpse of "what might have been," were it not for the shortsightedness of German and Ottoman officials as well as the vicissitudes of fate. In this respect, the sheer unalterable historical fact of Germany's complete absence from the first wave of colonialism and tardiness to the New Imperialism of the nineteenth century meant that the Germans were singularly well-versed in the creation and manipulation of discursive colonialist fantasies, which were often inspired by the lived experiences of other Europeans with tangible colonialist subjectivities; the presence of a tangible imperial reality or unreality did little to alter

[19] Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 12.

[20] Fuhrmann, "Anatolia as a site of German colonial desire and national re-awakenings," 126.

[21] Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 8; Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting*, xviii.

these preexisting or postfactual colonial imaginaries. These are important characteristics of German imperialist discourse and will be reiterated further along.

Other than the retroactivity and longing unique to German colonialist discourse, the most distinctive characteristic was "the extent to which Germans identified with the supposedly subjugated other," and the predisposition to view certain 'natives' "as an atavistic self-image," which often led to the simultaneous empathizing and patronizing of the 'natives.'[22] Like Zantop, Fuhrmann suggests that the German self-image as a nation that had directly experienced colonization by the French engendered a unique response to interactions with semi-colonial peoples, although the skeptic would point out that the peoples ostensibly at the bottom of the hierarchy of civilizations, such as the Herero and Nama, received little empathy from actual German colonizers. Although this tendency is not particularly manifest in either Liman or Gerold, it is nonetheless an integral component of the uniquely German conceptualization of the imperial, Oriental 'other.'

In addition, the early nineteenth century was the site of an intellectual reaction against the 'Western rationalism' of the Enlightenment. Most prominent in Germany, the interconnected phenomena of romanticism and idealism challenged the sterile materialist logic of Enlightenment thinking. This was important because the East was associated with a mystic spirituality which in Europe had been ultimately eradicated by the onslaught of modernity; cultural immersion was taken to be the most effective manner in which to salvage the authentic German soul, which was as late to the advent of modernity as it was to empire.[23] In particular, it was

[22] Fuhrmann refers to this unique tendency as a "Sonderweg" in German colonial history. See Fuhrmann, "Germany's Adventures in the Orient: A History of Ambivalent Semicolonial Entanglements," 126-127, 138.

[23] Prager, *Orienting the Self*, 11.

acknowledged by German commentators like Colmar von der Goltz that the Turks were kindred "spirits" with the Germans, and in the late nineteenth century Thomas Mann wrote that Germany was "'das Land der Mitte;'" contemporary Germans were expected to find "a balance between western rationalism and eastern mysticism."[24] It was not for nothing that Hans Kannengiesser, an officer who served under Liman at Gallipoli in the Fifth Army, wrote that, in the 'Turkish' victory at Gallipoli, the "psychological strength had triumphed over the physical, the spirit over the material."[25] The logic of the East as a spiritual reservoir that could be tapped by the Germans was part and parcel of the broader trend in certain German Orientalisms to identify with the Oriental 'other.' However, it would be admittedly difficult to trace the influence of such thought in the works of Liman and Gerold, which evinced a very different German Orientalism altogether.

The next tangible entanglement of the Germans with the Ottoman Empire would come in the form of the military mission headed by the then-captain Helmuth von Moltke, which was active from 1835-39. It is almost unversally agreed that the presence of Helmuth von Moltke did not appear to have effected a great change in the Ottoman Army, which was soundly beaten by the Egyptian Army commanded by Ibrahim Pasha, and which subsequently went on to directly threaten Istanbul.[26] Rather, Helmuth von Moltke's military mission was important for two reasons: one was the fact that the mission "laid the foundation" for subsequent German military missions. A number of personal recollections and correspondences would constitute

[24] Fuhrmann, "Anatolia as a site of German colonial desire and national re-awakenings," 144; Kontje, *German Orientalisms*, 1; Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, xxvi.

[25] I have translated the phrase as "*der Geist über die Materiel*." Kannengiesser, *Gallipoli*, 229.

[26] Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 149, 205.

"essential" intelligence for future German military reformers;[27] this would particularly be the case after the personage of Helmuth von Moltke became the famous *grosse Schweiger* ("great Taciturn") and military genius who masterminded the Austro-Prussian and Franco-Prussian wars in 1866 and 1870.[28] Suzanne Marchand suggests that Helmuth von Moltke's letters on the Ottoman Empire "reflect the genial temper of an intrugued visitor, not a potential conqueror," and his phrase "other places, other norms" demonstrated a degree of open-mindedness. Nevertheless, he deplored what he viewed as Ottoman corruption and disorganization, although he praised Ottoman tolerance and nurtured a degree of respect for Turkish culture. Most importantly, however, he seemed to subscribe to the notion that the Ottoman Empire was in the midst of an irreversible decline, and the spectacular defeat of the Ottomans at the hands of the Egyptian Army cannot have but contributed to his general impression that such a state of affairs could not long endure.[29] This leads to the second reason why the experience of Helmuth von Moltke was important: he directly suggested that Anatolia might serve as fertile ground for German colonization and settlement in the event of an Ottoman collapse. Although this call to action went largely unheeded in his own lifetime, German interest groups operating in the new imperialist era of the late-nineteenth century would cite the national hero Helmuth von Moltke as a credible authority on the efficacy of German settlement in Asia Minor.[30]

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[27] Helmuth von Moltke, "Briefer über Zustände und Begebenheiten in der Türkei aus den Jahren 1835 bis 1839."

[28] Gruesshaber, *The 'German Spirit' in the Ottoman and Turkish Army, 1908-1938,* 9.

[29] Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 145-146.

[30] Fuhrmann, "Anatolia as a site of German colonial desire and national re-awakenings," 127-128; All-Deutschen Verbande, "Deutschlands Ansprüche an das Türkische Erbe," 4, 7-11.

The next significant stage in German-Ottoman relations did not occur until the 1880s, when, in the aftermath of the Russo-Ottoman war of 1877-78, Sultan Abdülhamid II invited another German military mission to reform the Ottoman Army and thereby resist further incursions from the predatory Russian Empire. Arriving in 1882, the personnel of the military mission would be supplemented in the person of Wilhelm Leopold Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz, who in 1885 would assume the leadership of the military mission until 1895.[31] Colmar was by most accounts a brilliant military theorist, and his presence would influence the Weltanschauung of an entire generation of Ottoman officers.[32] Quite apart from any professional or structural impact, Colmar attracted a dedicated corps of activist-minded officers around his person, many of whom would later play an instrumental role in the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. His treatise on the 'nation in arms' would become standard reading at the Ottoman military academy, and he was one of the first to propose a system of exchange by which select Ottoman officers could receive military training and education in Germany. It would seem that the unexpressed hope that these military exchanges, which included weapons contracts to major German armament firms like Krupp and Mauser, would produce Ottoman officers with a positive view of Germany and the Germans was not without result.

The military mission of Colmar von der Goltz would have a fundamental and transformative impact on the long-term development of the Ottoman military, and, even more so than was the case with the mission of Helmuth von Moltke, would lay

[31] Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 206.

[32] Gruesshaber, *The 'German Spirit' in the Ottoman and Turkish Army, 1908-1938*, 10-11, 33-62; Akmeşe, *The Birth of Modern Turkey*, 19-33; Turfan, *Rise of the Young Turks*, 65-66; Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 206-209; Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*, 69; Fuhrmann, "Anatolia as a site of German colonial desire and national re-awakenings," 139-143; Fuhrmann, "Germany's Adventures in the Orient: A History of Ambivalent Semicolonial Entanglements," 131-132.

the foundations for the last German military mission dispatched to reform the Ottoman Army, the Liman von Sanders military mission of 1913. Such was its influence that historians have found it difficult to avoid subsuming the historical impact of the Liman von Sanders military mission under the broader ramifications generated by the preceding military mission of Colmar von der Goltz.

Colmar von der Goltz's military mission was contemporary with important socio-political developments in the recently-unified Germany, which deepened the German involvement in the Near East. Beginning in the late 1880s, German firms like Siemens and Deutsche Bank began to partake in the development of the Anatolian interior through financial investments, agricultural loans and credit, the construction of railroads such as lines between Izmir and Ankara, and Eskişehir and Konya, and irrigation works in Konya and Adana. Due to its fertility, Anatolia was increasingly viewed in German circles with economic interests as a possible hinterland to Germany, which through integration in the global market could supply the metropole with the cereals and foodstuffs it needed.[33] The nature of this economic penetration could be viewed as Germany's first attempt at a kind of imperial economic integration along the lines of the British imperial model. Indeed, the fact that Germany owned almost twenty percent of the Ottoman debt on the eve of the First World War is proof that powerful economic concerns were involved in concerted development of Anatolia, if not the empire as a whole.

At the same time, in the 1880s and 1890s German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck's studious avoidance of formal colonialism was no longer feasible. Despite official reluctance, influential pressure groups like the *Deutsche Kolonial Verein*

[33] Pamuk, *Uneven Centuries*, 118, 126; Fuhrmann, "Anatolia as a site of German colonial desire and national re-awakenings," 141, 143; Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 285-351; Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, 15, 17-18; Grimmer-Solem, *Learning Empire*, 17, 361-367.

(German Colonial Society) and the *Alldeutscher Verband* (Pan-German League) urged the Reich towards the acqusition of colonies.[34] Conceptualizations of the Germans as a *Volk ohne Raum* ("people without space") and merchant anxieties to capture foreign markets for domestically produced goods pushed the German government towards tentive engagement in empire-building. The German public was positively caught in the thrall of "colonial fever" and the aptly named *Torschlusspanik*: the fear that the limited window of opportunity to acquire colonies was rapidly diminishing.[35] Germans concerned by the seeming inactivity of their government were undoubtedly relieved by the ascension of Kaiser Wilhelm II, who quickly proved himself an enthusiastic advocate of empire; indeed, his quest to find "Germany's place in the sun" and geopolitical pivot to *Weltpolitik* ("world politics"), both of which transformed the German Empire into a revisionist power, were important milestones in the inception and development of the ambitious Berlin-Baghdad railway.[36]

All this had direct implications for German relations with the Ottoman Empire, which were largely shaped by the singular "lateness" of German imperialism, a fact which the Germans were painfully aware of. There was a genuine

[34] Isabel Hull refers to this phenomenon by which civilian agitation groups, like the aforementioned as well as the Army and Navy Leagues, adopted chauvinist attitudes that engendered extreme bellicosity and in so doing placed the burden of achieving these objectives, better seen as matters of national prestige, on the German military, as "double militarism." See Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 105-106, 108.

[35] Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 34-36.

[36] On one of his visits to the Ottoman Empire in the 1890s, Kaiser Wilhelm asserted his support for the Christian communities of the Ottoman Empire, visited the tomb of Saladin in Damascus, and proclaimed himself and Germany a friend of the world's 300 million Muslims. The example of his state visit is a strong reminder that, despite cultural ties between the Ottoman Empire and Germany, it would be wrong to imagine that there was a straightforward path towards either Germany's dominion over the Near East, or else towards an alliance with the beleaguered polity. Later on, orientalists like Carl Becker, who believed in the possibility of adapting Islam to modernity, pressed the Kaiser to expand the semi-colonial ties of "friendship" between the German and Ottoman Empires. See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 341-342, 364-365.

"fear of missing out," and German theorists of empire were not blind to the fact that their imperial rivals, the British, French, and even the Russians, had a "head start" in, above all, cultivating relationships with various subject-peoples of the Ottoman Empire.[37] This was significant in two respects. First, there was the widely-held belief that the final collapse of the 'sick man of Europe' was imminent; particularly after the disastrous Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, this belief became even more pronounced, as German diplomatic and military plenipotentiaries rushed to stake a claim on whatever would be left.[38] Second, the Turkish-speaking Muslims of Anatolia, the

[37] Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 336-339, 348-349.

[38] European interventions and innovations in the discursive realm notwithstanding, the Ottoman Empire remained throughout its history almost unique among non-European polities in not passing through the Caudine Forks of formal colonization and subsequent colonial rule; it was "one of the globe's last holdouts." Even the economy of the Ottoman Empire, in spite of the adoption of all the disadvantageous tenets of free trade after the signing of the Treaty of Baltalimanı in 1838 and the establishment of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration in 1881, to say nothing of the predatory capitulations, remained nominally under the control of the Ottoman state. Furthermore, it was not integrated into the global economy to the same extent as its former imperial possession, Egypt. See Pamuk, *Uneven Centuries*, xii, 109, 115, 125. Nevertheless, the power dynamic between the Ottoman state and the other Great Powers of Europe was one decidedly skewed in favor of the latter. Furthermore, after having lost all of its imperial African possessions, as well as most of its European ones in the Tripolitan and Balkan Wars of the early twentieth century, there seemed to be a very clear and unambiguous expectation among both European and Ottoman commentators that, short of a considerable change of luck, the Ottoman Empire would be dismembered sooner or later. In the months leading up to the Ottoman entry in the First World War on the side of the Central Powers, German plenipotentiaries such as German Ambassador Hans von Wangenheim found the need to reconcile the possibility of an alliance with the Ottoman Empire with the conviction that, in the face of an eventual Ottoman collapse, it was in Germany's interest to make inroads in currying favor among other subject-peoples of the Ottoman Empire, and thereby assert "our rights in Asia Minor." See Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 75-76. Mustafa Aksakal might have put it best: "Envisioning outright foreign control in the Near East required no great stretch of the imagination." See Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*, 2. When that 'change of luck' arrived in the form of an alliance with continental Europe's most powerful state, the German Empire, the Ottomans still needed to remain vigilant against potential skullduggery on the part of their allies: Germany might not have feted certain subject-peoples of the Ottoman Empire to the same extent as its British, French, and Russian rivals, and its imperial concerns were, save for the considerable German share in the Ottoman debt, relatively limited in scope. Nevertheless, Germany's unquestionable status as a colonial power was never far from the minds of either the Ottoman statesmen and officers or the would-be 'missionaries' of German military-political might, the diplomatic corps and sundry members of the military mission. To boot, there were not a few voices in the German public sphere which advocated a more energetic German role in the Near East. For the late nineteenth-century colonialist agitation of the Pan-German League, see Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 5. For an overview of German writings between 1914 and 1917, see Krobb, "'*Welch' unbebaumtes Land und riesengrosses Feld:'* Turkey as Colonial Space in German World War I Writings." A much broader conceptualization of German discursive and socio-political entanglements with the Ottoman Empire can be found in Fuhrmann, "Anatolia as a site of German colonial desire and national re-awakenings." See also Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 343. In spite of all these things, the Ottomans cannot be

"Turks," appeared in contemporary understanding to be perhaps the only major 'nation' of the Ottoman Empire without a European patron. France had strong imperial interests in Greater Syria, and after having made treaties with the so-called Trucial States, Britain would likely turn its gaze towards any parcel of land which would further secure its hold on the Iranian oil fields of Abadan; namely, the Ottoman vilayet of Basra, which was close to the Persian Gulf. In other words, this meant that the 'Turks' were particularly viewed by the Germans as a viable "partners" or clients. However, even this conceptualization of the Ottoman Empire proved, at least until the formalization of the German-Ottoman alliance in 1914, to be ambivalent at best in official circles. The lateness of German imperialism also entailed tangible inexperience in all manner of colonial administration and, more importantly, knowledge acquisition and production.[39] In spite of the fact that many German orientalists possessed the "deep culture-historical hermeneutics" thought necessary to effectively colonize other realms, a quality which during the mid-nineteenth century "Second Oriental Renaissance" made them sought after by other European imperial powers, the generalized lack of practical and applicable knowledge on the modern Orient would prove to be a hinderance decades later, when Germany would embark on imperial exploits of their own.[40] The image of a German

considered a proper colonial people, although, as these authors suggest, contemporary imagination made it relatively easy to conceptualize them as such.

[39] According to Erik Grimmer-Solem, Germany's Weltpolitik "was less an intended policy than the end result of an accretion of insights that were later adapted into scholarship and popularized in naval and colonial propaganda by these men." In other words, the observations of the so-called "experts" were fundamental in directing the course of German imperialism. This adds weight to the importance of viewing German semi-colonial encounters with the 'other' as incipient manifestations of 'informal imperialism.' Grimmer-Solem, *Learning* Empire, 19.

[40] Marchand identifies this discrepancy as a consequence stemming from the tension between "relevance" and "profundity;" those interested in the former became colonial hands or administrators, whereas those interested in the latter became orientalists and remained within the confines of the academy. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 143-144, 158, 190, 334.

petty officer handing out questionnaires to local Chinese peasants in the hopes of gaining information on Boxer troop movements and topographical features strikes the reader as rather less professional than that of his British counterpart, who was seldom without accurate maps and detailed knowledge of the environment within which he campaigned as well as the population that inhabited the area.[41] The point is not merely that the German inexperience had logistical ramifications in actual colonial scenarios; it also evinced German 'psychic' or discursive inexperience with the burden of empire. Susanne Zantop's assertion that the colonial reality "caught up" with the "colonial fantasies" notwithstanding, the "ambivalence" of German colonial engagement with the Orient suggests, on the one hand, a disconnect between public and official discourses, and on the other, a continued reliance on "colonial fantasy" as *Handlungsersatz* ("compensation for action"), as a forum for expressing the desire to dominate. This schizoid ambivalence is omnipresent in the memoirs of both Liman and Gerold; it accounts for why they are able to admit colonial failure while laying the blame for this failure at the feet of others, as well as construct a colonial imaginary while acknowledging that Imperial Germany had actually not come close to colonial dominion over the Ottoman Empire and its people.

Finally, certain German civil societies issued direct calls for the settlement of Anatolia by German farmers.[42] After many decades, Helmuth von Moltke's pleas for colonization in Anatolia would be revived by the nationalist and annexationist Pan-German League. Writing in 1896, the Pan-German League emphatically supported the colonization of Anatolia on the basis that Germany's other colonies were unsuited for large-scale German immigration, which was in turn theorized as a

[41] Kuss, *German Colonial Wars and the Context of Military Violence*, 157-164.

[42] Fuhrmann, "Anatolia as a site of German colonial desire and national re-awakenings," 130-131.

necessity on the basis of palpable demographic increases and subsequent Malthusian pressures felt in the homeland.[43] Directly citing Helmuth von Moltke and Friedrich List, the anonymous authors write that "it goes without saying that war would not be the means to obtaining Kleinasien or that Germany should wish for the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire."[44] Nevertheless, the writers considered the collapse of the Ottoman Empire a distinct possibility, even a likelihood, and framed the pamphlet as an attempt to inform the public of the possibility of territorial acquisition in the Near East; one can sense the phrase "before it is too late" in the offing. Unsurprisingly, the authors couched the benefits of German colonialism in effusively optimistic language. The inhabitants of Anatolia, Arabia, and Syria were not calculated to cause problems for their German masters; in fact, it was even supposed that they would be grateful for the imperial intervention. Combining European imperialist discourse of the docile native with the uniquely German self-conception as the 'more compassionate' colonist, even as *Kulturtraeger* ("bringers of culture"), the authors of the pamphlet emphasized that "German work" would make the formerly-flourishing land something akin to what India was for the British.[45] Lebensraum, then, was construed as an essential component of German growth and the continuing quest for *Weltmacht* ("world power"). Moreover, in the event that the Ottoman Empire should avoid collapse longer than expected, the authors anticipated that there would be an 'intermediate stage,' akin to that which preceded British rule over Egypt; this would be the historical moment in which Germany would step in.[46] In short, the German

[43] All-Deutschen Verbande, "Deutschlands Ansprüche an das Türkische Erbe," 1.

[44] All-Deutschen Verbande, "Deutschlands Ansprüche," 4.

[45] All-Deutschen Verbande, "Deutschlands Ansprüche," 4-5.

[46] All-Deutschen Verbande, "Deutschlands Ansprüche," 6-7.

Empire had an "inheritance" in the Middle East, and the Torschlusspanik which drove German anxieties about missing out on the last scramble for colonies is patently manifest throughout the Pan-German League's calls to assert national rights to this inheritance.[47] It is also important to note that, as the pamphlet aptly demonstrates with references to India and Egypt, Britain loomed large in the German imperial imaginary; it was the axiomatic imperial power, and many Germans, civilian and military, assiduously applied themselves to the task of 'learning empire,' with Great Britain as the role model.[48] This point will be raised again later.

Although these calls were not heeded by German officialdom, it would be a great error to assume that this was the work of fringe, "armchair" colonialists urged onward by delusions of imperial grandeur. Of all the civilian advocacy groups in Wilhelmine Germany, the Pan-German League was one of the most important and influential, and although the views they expressed on issues of racial purity, German exceptionalism, and internal as well as external colonization did not reflect the attitudes of German society in its entirety, the organization was nonetheless widely percieved as a respectable middle-class entity which championed the political

[47] The swan song of calls for annexation came in the early years of the war. In the words of Florian Krobb, the Ottoman entry into the war on the side of Germany opened "the floodgates of [colonial] desire." Wartime accounts written by German eyewitnesses in the Orient extolled the advances the Ottomans had made under German tutelage, and "constructed Turkey as a colonial space… and displayed colonialist attitudes towards it by treating it as a vast semiblank canvas for influence, intervention, and exploitation of natural resources- including a population allegedly waiting to be guided in the right direction." Although this historical moment seemingly provided "an opportunity to turn fantasies into realities," the rather disappointing absence of real German influence in the Orient generated considerable tension with the German self-image as mentor and harbinger of a superior civilization. In particular, writers of the time period conceptualized the Ottoman Empire as a veritable, untapped repository of natural resources, which could provide raw materials to the German metropole in exchange for finished goods. One such writer was one of the editors of the German-language Istanbul-based newspaper *Osmanischer Lloyd*, Max Übelhör, who counted among his readership none other than Liman. See Krobb, "'*Welch' unbebaumtes Land und riesengrosses Feld:'* Turkey as Colonial Space in German World War I Writings," 2, 4-9; Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 153.

[48] Here I am borrowing the phrase "learning empire" from the title of Erik Grimmer-Solem's book on the connections between the German universities and the high politics of empire. Grimmer-Solem posits an "empire of learning," which "became entangled with the task of learning about the world and devising an imperial strategy." Grimmer-Solem, *Learning Empire*, 7.

worldview of a significant albeit minor segment of German society. The viewpoints expressed in the Pan-German League's pamphlet share some similarities with the narrative constructions of the Ottoman Empire, its people, and the German role in the memoirs of Liman and Gerold. Although there were no transparent calls for colonization in either memoir, the underlying assumptions of the mutual, though not equal, benefits of German imperialism are present in both. As will be shown, in both memoirs the extent to which the Ottoman Empire experienced "German work" was largely the extent to which it knew infrastructural development and industry, to say nothing of civilization and greater humanity. Furthermore, in both memoirs, the presence of the German was very much constructed as heralding the presence of a strict yet fair schoolmaster, who would 'instruct' the natives in the subtleties of progress.[49] Of course, this picture does not account for the considerable 'recalcitrance' of the pupils in question, the uniquely 'military' outlook of both authors, as well as the inherent dangers of *Verkafferung* ("kaffirization").[50] Finally, the Pan-German League pamphlet evinces a deliberate vagueness and long-term vision of German influence in the Orient, which was shared by both Liman and Gerold in their reconstruction of German-Ottoman relations during the Great War.

It was not merely a similarity of outlooks and themes which linked the memoirs of Liman and Gerold to German imperialist publications of the fin de siecle. Both memoirs were published in 1920 and 1921 respectively through the August Scherl Verlag in Berlin. In 1916, the August Scherl media group, which included

[49] "Progress" was part and parcel of a worldview centered around the concept of "Western civilization," the "geographical range" of which "was potentially worldwide;" which is to say, that non-Western civilizations could also experience 'progress' through the adoption of western technologies and culture. See Doering-Manteuffel, "Perceptions of the West in Twentieth-Century Germany," 84.

[50] Kuss, *German Colonial Wars and the Context of Military Violence*, 86.

both the publishing house as well as the local newspaper, the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, was purchased with the explicit aim of promoting a decidedly nationalist agenda. The purchaser in question was Alfred Hugenberg, and in 1891 he had co-founded the Pan-German League. It is worth noting that in the 1920s August Scherl Verlag g.m.b.h. became a mouthpiece for the *Deutschenationale Volkspartei*, the far-right monarchist party which fielded former general and national hero Paul von Hindenburg as its candidate for the elections for president of the Reich, and which after 1929 formed a coalition with the Nazi Party.[51]

[51] See https://www.hausderpressefreiheit.de/Home/Geschichte-im-Spiegel-der-Presse/Verlagsverzeichnis/August-Scherl-Verlag.html. The then-owner of August Scherl Press was a man by the name of Alfred Hugenberg. A passionate advocate of Social Darwinism and German nationalism, in 1891 Hugenberg founded the Pan-German League, an organization which constituted one of the loudest voices in extolling the virtues of colonialism. The very same year, Hugenberg earned his Ph.D; the dissertation he wrote called for "state assistance to farmers" through expanding the borders of the Reich. In 1909 he became a chairman of arms manufacturer Krupp. During the war, he joined with then-chairman of the Pan-German League and friend Heinrich Class in calling for the annexation of territories in the east for agricultural production by German settlers. Class, by way of reminder, is the same man who wrote the incendiary annexationist pamphlet "If I Were the Kaiser." In 1916 Hugenberg purchased Scherl press as an additional media arm through which to champion his annexationist views, and in 1917 he founded the radical-nationalist Deutsche Vaterlandspartei along with Wolfgang Kapp, who was to lead the Kapp Putsch in 1920, and Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz, the famous advocate of the German Navy as an indispensable tool in Germany's bid for world power. Another member of the Fatherland Party was Anton Drexler, who after the war founded the German Workers Party, which is widely regarded as the antecedent to the NSDAP. The Fatherland Party called for the establishment of Germany as an imperial power "up to the Gates of India." In the postwar era, through his purchase of the film studio UFA Hugenberg became "by far the most important media entrepreneur in Germany." His status as a völkisch media baron assisted him in his capacity as party leader of the Deutschenationale Volkspartei, mentioned above. Ultimately, he brought his considerable influence to bear on the appointment of Hitler as chancellor. Although the Nazi leadership granted Hugenberg a token post as a minister in the government, Hugenberg nevertheless found himself increasingly sidelined. On June 14, 1933, at the Economic Commission of the World Economic Conference in London, Hugenberg issued a memorandum calling for a German economic renewal through the restoration of its colonial empire in Africa, as well as through opening "up to the… *Volk ohne Raum*… areas in which it could provide space for the settlement of its vigorous race;" he mentioned "Russia and large parts of the east" as likely sites of German colonization. Some weeks later, the German ambassador to Italy met with the Turkish foreign minister, Tevfik Rüştü Aras, who denounced the Hugenberg Memorandum, as the pronouncement came to be known, and informed the German ambassador that the memorandum had given impetus to a multilateral non-aggression pact between the Soviet Union and several other states, one of which was Turkey. I suspect it was largely due to the timing and less due to any real objection with the content of his memorandum that Hugenberg's views were disavowed by the German government. After the war, Hugenberg was deemed a "fellow-traveler" of the Nazi regime. See Craig, *Germany*, 360, 508; Hett, *The Death of Democracy*, 20, 58-59, 61; Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, 46, 67-68; Kershaw, *Hitler*, 248, 310. For an excerpt of Heinrich Class' pamphlet see http://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=776. For the Hugenberg Memorandum and an inkling of the resulting fallout, see Sweet et al. *Documents on German Foreign Policy*, 562-567.

This constitutes the historical background to the arrival of the Liman von Sanders military mission in 1913. Although the principal raison d'etre of the military mission was the reorganization of the Ottoman Army in the aftermath of the Balkan Wars, the mission also functioned as an instrument of German imperial aspirations. As conceived by the then-German Ambassador Hans von Wangenheim, the mission was meant to increase German influence in the Ottoman Empire vis-à-vis its European imperial rivals, and otherwise "bewitch the Young Turks [so] that they could see nothing in the political horizon but the vast technical might of the German army."[52] Although this was premised upon the eventual collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the strategic calculus would change with the German-Ottoman alliance, when collapse became a possibility to be avoided at all costs; this does not mean that the overarching goal of increasing German influence and prestige in the Near East, which would be facilitated through the military mission itself, ever changed. Both Liman and Gerold were well aware of the unspoken assumptions which defined their positions abroad as emissaries of German civilization's "highest" achievement: the military.

The history of Germany's involvement with the Ottoman Empire can thus be summarized: after the initial fear of the Oriental other during the middle ages and early modern period subsided, Germans increasingly began to adopt pan-European ideological assumptions of cultural superiority in relation to that which they had previously regarded as an existential threat. Unlike other European 'nations,' however, the Germans demonstrated a unique propensity for empathizing with the colonial native, as well as indulging in complex, colonial discursive fantasies. In

[52] Moorehead, *Gallipoli*, 21; Kerner, "The Mission of Liman von Sanders. I. Its Origin.," 16; Trumpener, "Germany and the End of the Ottoman Empire," 122.

spite of a prominent German military officer's calls for direct colonization in the Ottoman Empire, which were taken up with renewed energy in the 1890s, visions of German settlements in the Orient gradually subsided into a longer-term vision of the Ottoman Empire as a client-state, with substantial military, political, economic, and cultural penetration.[53] The chronology of this shift in imperial priorities, which would ostensibly culminate in a mutual German-Turkish project of national rejuvenation and reawakening, constitutes the main thesis which Malte Fuhrmann advances in his article on German colonial aspirations in Anatolia.[54] İn the same time period, military missions did much to deepen the ties between the two states. To summarize, Germany's involvement in the Near East evinced characteristics unique in the history of other imperial powers. It is in this context that the memoirs of Liman and Gerold should be examined.

1.3 Literature review

In the immediate aftermath of the final defeat in 1918, German officers began penning and publishing memoirs of their experiences during the war. It would seem that there is a direct correlation between the early appearance of a memoir and the degree to which it constitutes a literary attempt at exculpating its author for the disappointing result of the war, typically through liberal usage of accusations and trading of blame. It was only in the late 1920s that official German military histories

[53] Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 268.

[54] Fuhrmann, "Anatolia as a site of German colonial desire and national re-awakenings," 117, 131; Erik Grimmer-Solem suggests that the decline in enthusiasm for settler colonialism was a consequence of the less-than-impressive "record of Germany's African colonies as settler destinations." Similar to Malte Fuhrmann, he suggests that the hope of acquiring more suitable colonies for settlement never fully disappeared. Settler colonialism continued to be viewed as the ultimate test of "self-reliance;" clearly, "frontier masculinities" were operative in this conception of colonialism. Grimmer-Solem, *Learning Empire*, 10.

of the Great War began to be written. The first works dealing with the broad subject of "Germans in the Ottoman Empire" would be written by Carl Mühlmann, one of the three adjutants who accompanied Liman to Gallipoli in March 1915; at least some of these works were commissioned by the Reichsarchiv as official histories.[55] Each of the works of Mühlmann treat with different aspects of the German-Ottoman alliance, such as the origins of the Liman von Sanders military mission, the Gallipoli Campaign, and a broad overview of the alliance from a "standpoint of strategic and operational history."[56] In writing these official histories, Mühlmann hoped to "regain the interpretive authority over wartime events" which Germany had lost to the victorious allies.[57] He made extensive use of available Prussian archival material, 98 percent of which was later regrettably destroyed during an Allied bombing of Berlin in 1945.[58] Included among the documents lost was the personal correspondence of Liman von Sanders.

As a result, the first comprehensive work done on the Germans in the Ottoman Empire, which was written by a man directly involved in some of the events, has an inescapably military bearing and direction. These would remain one of the only histories on the German wartime involvement in the Near East until the publication of Ulrich Trumpener's magisterial work *Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 1914-1918*, published in 1968.

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[55] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 77.

[56] See Mühlmann, *Der Kampf um die Dardanellen*; Mühlmann, *Das deutsch- türkische Waffenbündnis im Weltkrieg*.

[57] Gruesshaber, *The 'German Spirit' in the Ottoman and Turkish Army*, 15-16; Travers, "The Ottoman Crisis of May 1915 at Gallipoli," 72.

[58] Zürcher, "The Ottoman Soldier in World War I," 169.

Trumpener's *Germany and the Ottoman Empire* was the first major work in any language which attempted a comprehensive analysis of the primarily diplomatic considerations, idiosyncrasies, and machinations which governed the particular historical course of the German-Ottoman alliance; for perhaps the first time, the military events of the war in the Ottoman theater were almost completely omitted. Trumpener's main object was to interrogate the hitherto-predominant assumption in the extant Western literature that the Ottoman Empire was little more than a puppet-state controlled by the German Reich, its every action dictated from Berlin.[59] His findings were unambiguous: "the Ottoman armed forces remained exclusively an instrument of Turkish policy. Neither the members of Liman's mission nor any other German officers ever controlled the Ottoman army as a whole."[60] Furthermore, Trumpener devotes three chapters, almost a third of the text, to examining the various economic aspects of the German entanglement in the Near East; this too, was a novelty in the field, although largely in keeping with the academic fashion of the time, which emphasized the social and economic.[61] *Germany and the Ottoman Empire* remains the classic work on the subject of "Germans in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War," and is an absolutely indispensable starting-point for any further elaboration on the subject.[62]

[59] Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, viii.

[60] Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 105.

[61] Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 271-351.

[62] The work of Jehuda Wallach, which takes a broader view of the German-Ottoman alliance, beginning with the mission of Helmuth von Moltke in 1835 and ending with the peace of Versailles in 1919, follows a very similar intellectual tack, although with a greater reliance on personal narratives. See Wallach, *Anatomie einer Militärhilfe*; Gruesshaber, *The 'German Spirit' in the Ottoman and Turkish Army, 1908-1938*, 16.

However, as the more modern reader can immediately detect, Trumpener's approach has its limitations. Quite apart from the lack of a discernible theoretical framework, Trumpener's reliance on the archival material generated by diplomatic exchanges of elite political and military figures in Germany and the Ottoman Empire resulted in a veritable top-down approach to the history of the alliance. Though it would be remiss to accuse Trumpener of adherence to the widely-reviled "Great-Man" conception of history, with the 'ascendancy' of social history it was becoming increasingly evident that the lived experiences of ordinary people merited greater academic scrutiny; in the case of a history of war or wartime, this entailed delving into the lives of the common soldiery as well as the civilians on the home-front. Such a "history from below" in the context of the First World War was first attempted by Erik Zürcher, whose essays on the Ottoman labor battalions and the material realities of life as a soldier in the Ottoman Army, published during the 1990s, were later re-written as the chapter "The Ottoman Soldier in World War I" in his edited volume of essays, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey*.[63] Although not strictly concerned with the German-Ottoman alliance, Zürcher makes novel and liberal use of the memoirs of German officers in writing a social history of the Ottoman army; these memoirs were previously utilized primarily if not almost exclusively for their insights into the military and diplomatic aspects of the war.

There is also a coterie of historians of the German-Ottoman alliance who have traced Ottoman and Turkish appropriation of the "German Spirit" (*Deutscher Geist*/*Alman Ruhu*) and the transfer of knowledge and culture that existed between

[63] Zürcher, "The Ottoman Soldier in World War I," 167-187.

the German military missions and its Ottoman/Turkish "apprentices." Perhaps the earliest to treat the topic was İlber Ortaylı, whose work largely deals with the German influence during the Hamidian period in the nineteenth century.[64] It was Mustafa Gencer who introduced the term "German Spirit" in his monograph on *Young Turk Modernism and the 'German Spirit*.'[65] This term was later adopted by Gerhard Gruesshaber, who although he claims his object is the study of military knowledge transfer in the period beyond the fall of the Ottoman Empire, only dedicates the latter half of his study to the matter; the rest covers a great deal of the Young Turk-era that is the focus of Gencer's study, although it is admittedly more focused on military affairs than education.[66]

Although these three works, particularly the first two, made extensive use of Ottoman Turkish archival material, which had been long-neglected in the broader literature on the subject, the chief significance of all three studies is their emphasis on the fact that the importation and internalization of the "German Spirit" was not an outright imposition by a foreign entity. Restoring historical agency to the Ottomans themselves, all three studies demonstrate that many important Ottoman officials and officers were convinced that the rejuvenation of the empire if not its fate depended on the modernization of its military and society through an alliance with a Great Power.[67] Moreover, both Ortaylı and Gencer devote some attention to the coloniality

[64] Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Imparatorluğunda Alman Nufüzu*.

[65] Gencer, *Jöntürk Modernizmi ve 'Alman Ruhu*.

[66] Gruesshaber, *'The German Spirit' in the Ottoman and Turkish Army, 1908-1938*, 2-3.

[67] Beginning in the 1880s and continuing into the time of the First World War, some German orientalists reveled in what they viewed as the "collapse of Eurocentric stereotypes" and the conceptualization of the Orient as a slumbering giant, which when roused would become an economic and cultural force to be reckoned with. As we shall see, Colmar von der Goltz would have heartily agreed with the assessment of one scholar that "'not only will the Occident act on the Orient, but the

of the largely (although not exclusively) one-sided cultural knowledge-transfers which occurred between the Germans and the Ottomans; in particular, Gencer's conceptualization of the German aim as "making Turkey Germany's Egypt," apart from stressing the perennial German preoccupation on the model of empire that was Britain, emphasizes the mental geography which guided the thinking of German reformers in the Ottoman Empire, and underlines that their mental geography was in a significant capacity shaped by ideas of empire.[68] In this regard, Gruesshaber's work is quite noticeably lacking.

Taking some cues from the methodology of Erik Zürcher, German historian Oliver Stein uses a large number of memoirs, letters, and diaries of predominantly lower-ranking German officers and soldiers to argue that, in contrast with the Mehmetçik caught between "death and desertion," war for these German soldiers was primarily a "travel experience" (*Reiseerlebnis*), an opportunity to experience the war as a "journey," or else engage in battlefield tourism.[69] He offers the reader a composite and primarily positive picture of soldiers-turned-tourists. This is decidedly different from the detailed analysis I offer of two memoirs written and published several years before the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923. As will be discussed in the methodology section, the use of memoirs published at greater remove from the events which they purport to describe is inherently problematic. Nevertheless, Stein's focus on the memoirs of much lower-ranking German officers

Orient will also act on the Occident.'" See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 214-215, 375-377, 427-431.

[68] The original phrase is "*Türkiye'yi Alman Mısır'ı yapmak*." Keleş, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı öncesi ve sonrasında Almanlarda Türk Imgesi," 118.

[69] Stein, "Orientfahrten: Deutsche Soldaten im Osmanischen Reich und der Krieg als Reiseerlebnis 1914 bis 1918," 327-358.

and soldiers also makes the attempt to draw attention to the 'wandering soldier' of the Asia Corps and constitutes a unique bottom-up approach to the historiography of the Germans in the Ottoman Empire.

This theoretical approach would be adopted in Joseph Clarke and John Horne's edited volume on "Militarized Cultural Encounters in the Long Nineteenth Century," in which they argue that the accounts of soldiers "reflect something of the travel-writer's experience… offering at least some insight into the men's impressions of the cultures they came into contact with and the spaces they occupied."[70] This kind of "cultural cartography" was supplemented by a "military specificity to what [the soldiers] saw abroad and how they saw it" which, through the "inescapable violence of campaigning," separated their accounts from those of other travel-writers.[71] Although an important extrapolation of Oliver Stein's work, which includes a chapter in the volume itself on the archeological *Denkmalschutzkommando* ("monument-protection unit") led by Theodor Wiegand in Greater Syria during the First World War, some of the conclusions reached by Clarke and Horne are not wholly applicable to Stein's own conclusions in "Orientfahrten." Although memoirs like those of Josef Drexler, who Stein cites on a number of occasions, and the recently-discovered diary of Georg Steinbach, a lowly middle-class private who spent the entirety of his short tenure in the German Army in Istanbul, were written by 'military men,' it would strain credulity to imagine that these narratives bore the imprint of any significant kind of "military specificity."[72] In

[70] Clarke and Horne, "Introduction: Peripheral Visions- Militarized Cultural Encounters in the Long Nineteenth Century," 6.

[71] Clarke and Horne, "Introduction: Peripheral Visions- Militarized Cultural Encounters in the Long Nineteenth Century," 6-8.

[72] Drexler, *Mit Jildirim ins Heilige Land*; Steinbach, *Strolling Through Istanbul in 1918*.

fact, if the reader knew nothing of the context in which these memoirs are written, it would be impossible to discern the fact that there was an ongoing armed conflict at all, let alone a global war, from reading these memoirs. Admittedly, this calls the "military" nature of such memoirs somewhat into question, particularly since, as will be shown, the memoirs of military men like Liman and Gerold were suffused with concerns of military ethnography. Perhaps there are gradations or degrees of "martial character" in memoirs written by soldiers and officers; certainly, those written by the latter seemed more involved with the concerns addressed in this study than the ones written by the former.

A work still more intricately involved with memoir 'analysis' and the broader question of "Germans in the Ottoman Empire" is Jan Christoph Reichmann's unpublished dissertation "'Tapfere Askers' und 'Feige Arabers:' Der osmanische verbündete aus der Sicht deutscher Soldaten im Orient 1914-1918," written in 2009 at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität zu Münster.[73] The work is an exhautive attempt at prosopography, and is a mosaic of German soldier's voices; it is not a close or alternative reading of the primary sources. Indeed, many of the shortcomings of Reichmann's work stem precisely from the sheer, massive scale of the monograph. Precisely because Reichmann is primarily interested in particles of evidence to paint a composite picture, the innate tendency of the dissertation is towards generalization; specificity and to a lesser extent nuance become the sacrificial victims of an overarching narrative. Furthermore, there is a marked tendency to summarize; excerpt after excerpt follow one another, with little analysis or attempt to deconstruct the broader significance or possible implications of what

[73] Reichmann, "'Tapfere Askers' und 'Feige Arabers:' Der osmanische verbündete aus der Sicht deutscher Soldaten im Orient 1914-1918."

the sources are saying, attempting to say, or not saying. For example, Reichmann suggests that "despite individual efforts by German interest groups… the influences of colonialist tendencies on German-Turkish cooperation during the war are difficult to prove."[74] On the contrary, colonialist tendencies were embedded in the very fabric of the German-Ottoman alliance, and particularly in the inception of the last German military mission to the Ottoman Empire. Without acknowledging these colonialist tendencies, it is difficult to discern the significance as to why, to make an example of one of Reichmann's main theses, Turkish soldiers were privileged over non-Turkish soldiers in German collective memory and postwar discourse. To underemphasize the imperial considerations governing the German involvement in the Near East is to ignore one of the fundamental bases of that involvement.

Looming over these shortcomings is his problematic inability to establish or account for the intertextuality of German postwar memoirs. Although he rightly acknowledges the various pitfalls of working with ego-documents, particularly those published many years after the events in question, his observation that the delay in the publishing of memoirs might have been brought on by the reading of "other literature on the subject" does not appear to have extended to the realm of cognizance on the development of collective memory among German *Asienkämpfer* (Asia-fighters), or how that collective memory was influenced by the chronology of memoir publications.[75] As this study will attempt to argue, Liman's text in particular can be considered a foundational text of German postwar memoir literature; yet Reichmann rarely makes use of it. This becomes problematic when he characterizes

[74] Reichmann, "'Tapfere Askers und 'Feige Arabers:' Der osmanische verbündete aus der Sicht deutscher Soldaten im Orient 1914-1918," 16.

[75] Reichmann, "'Tapfere Asker, und 'Feige Arabers:' Der osmanische verbündete aus der Sicht deutscher Soldaten im Orient 1914-1918," 12-13.

the German view of the Turkish soldiers as rather negative; but then, considering the fact that he does not use Liman, whose views of the Turkish soldiers were rather different, it is hardly surprising.

Finally, the works of Malte Fuhrmann and Florian Krobb both rely heavily on theoretical conceptions of Orientalism and colonialism in deconstructing German aims and entanglements in the Near East. In particular, Fuhrmann's work is conceptually sophisticated. It has already been shown that in his article on "Anatolia as a site of German Colonial Desire" that the role of Anatolia in the nineteenth and twentieth century German imperial and pre-imperial imaginary evinced considerable fluidity: it evolved from a conceptual object of eventual settlement akin to the American frontier, to a staging point for German philhellenic fantasies of following in the footsteps of Alexander the Great, to a project of national rejuvenation with the intent of remaking the Asia Minor if not the Ottoman Empire as a whole in the image of Germany.[76] The latter role of Anatolia in the German imperial imaginary is most pertinent to our discussion here, and is also extrapolated upon in his article on "Germany's Adventures in the Orient." Fuhrmann argues that "colonizing Anatolia had become a binary process… a coincidental appropriation of German imperialism and Turkish nationalism."[77] Through this binary process, the Turks would be continually reminded "of the advantages of German civilization;" "translated into modern terms, [the Germans] envisioned directly installing a postcolonial mentality into a fully sovereign Turkish nation without first installing colonial dependency."[78]

[76] Fuhrmann, "Anatolia as a site of German colonial desire and national re-awakenings," 125.

[77] Fuhrmann, "Anatolia as a site of German colonial desire and national re-awakenings," 143.

[78] Fuhrmann, "Germany's Adventures in the Orient: A History of Ambivalent Semicolonial Entanglements," 133.

However, a delicate balance needed to be struck between the Scylla and Charybdis of provoking the ire of the nascent Turkish nationalists through excessive preaching on the superiority of German civilization, and strengthening the hand of the Turks without any noticeable gain.[79] Fuhrmann is particularly perspicacious in teasing out the various difficulties faced by Germans in their struggle to gain influence in the Ottoman Empire; problems of this nature constitute a major topos in the memoirs of Liman and Gerold. This study takes the work of Fuhrmann as one of its (admittedly many) points of departure.

However, Fuhrmann's works also demonstrate some lacunae, though notably fewer than other historians treating the same subject matter. Crucially, his treatment of the German military involvement in the Ottoman Empire, which was of fundamental, even outsized importance, particularly during the Young Turk-era, in establishing and modifying novel and prior conceptions of the 'Orient' and Germany's task within the region, is largely cursory and anemic. Particularly, Fuhrmann has a tendency to essentialize the worldview of the German officers in the Ottoman Empire as mere outgrowths of Colmar von der Goltz's political philosophy. As will be discussed, Colmar rejected the notion that Europe was the "pinnacle of civilization," and moreover rejected Germany's place in Europe. In his view, modernity, which wreaked a pernicious influence in the German Empire and undermined traditional social values and hierarchies, threatened the Ottoman Empire, and it was Germany's task to assist the Ottoman Empire in avoiding the same fate

[79] Fuhrmann, "Germany's Adventures in the Orient: A History of Ambivalent Semicolonial Entanglements," 134.

through developing the Ottoman military.[80] Both Liman and Gerold believed in and understood the civilizing power of the military; but the similarities ended there.[81] The memoirs of both reflected markedly different underlying assumptions, and indeed can be said to embody a different paradigm than the conceptual framework of Colmar.

Admittedly, the underestimation of the military facet of the German entanglement in the Orient is not a flaw which Florian Krobb's work suffers from. Although unlike Fuhrmann or Gruesshaber, Krobb does not recognize the singular importance of the Ottoman military in the minds of the German reformers as a vehicle for transmission of German 'values,' he is perhaps the only scholar who has realized that the one of the chief distinctive characteristics of postwar German memoirs is their post-coloniality:

> What all of these books have in common, is that they represent a very specific variety of Orientalist discourse; this discourse, in turn, must be considered as a part of Weimar colonialism since all of these publications kept the memory of a specific colonial space alive just after Germany's loss of her overseas possessions and, importantly, also of her capacity for informal imperialism and peaceful penetration.[82]

Moreover, Krobb touches upon the critical fact that many German officers in the Ottoman Empire specifically framed their conceptions of the Middle Eastern theater of the Great War as a colonial front; this is something which the memoirs of both Liman and Gerold evince. However, Krobb seemingly does not follow Fuhrmann's warning "against simply projecting master-servant schemas on to colonizer and

[80] Fuhrmann, "Germany's Adventures in the Orient: A History of Ambivalent Semicolonial Entanglements," 132; Fuhrmann, "Anatolia as a site of German colonial desire and national re-awakenings," 142.

[81] Ihrig, *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination*, 3.

[82] Krobb, "'Doch das orientalische ist es ja eben, was uns interessiert:' Colonial Desires and Ottoman Space: War Memoirs as Post-Colonial Discourse," 169-170, 172.

colonized," which is particularly important for "in-between spaces… of… colonial encounter" as well as "semicolonial spaces."[83] In fact, it is difficult to discern Krobb's stance on the actual coloniality of the German presence in the Ottoman Empire. Critical to this study is the understanding that the "colonial space" which Liman and Gerold imagine to exist in the Orient was largely nonexistent, a fact which both authors were painfully aware of; 'colonial fantasy' as Susanne Zantop understood the concept remained operative throughout. In contrast, because of his uncritical conceptualization of the Ottoman Empire as a 'colonial space,' Krobb's analysis remains rather simplistic and without methodological or theoretical sophistication of the kind found in Fuhrmann's work. His seemingly random usage of memoirs without regard for the historical context in which they were written, a mistake made by Reichmann as well, does not help matters. Finally, although his treatment of Gerold raises a number of valuable points and interesting interpretations, his early dismissal of Liman's memoir suggests a fundamental misunderstanding of the text. Krobb's assertion that "[Liman's] book shows hardly any stereotypical Orientalist traits" is blatantly incorrect, as this study will show.[84] Nevertheless, the significance of the contribution of conceptualizing the post-war German memoirs as post-colonial discourse cannot be denied. It now remains to be discussed the importance of choosing Liman's memoir, and the relation of his memoir to that of Gerold and the broader corpus of post-war German memoirs on the Orient.

[83] Fuhrmann, "Germany's Adventures in the Orient: A History of Ambivalent Semicolonial Entanglements," 139.

[84] Krobb, "'Doch das orientalische ist es ja eben, was uns interessiert:' Colonial Desires and Ottoman Space: War Memoirs as Post-Colonial Discourse," 173.

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 The sources

It may well be asked why the memoir of Liman von Sanders, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, would be selected for a close reading in this study. Liman von Sanders was the most senior, and quite possibly the most prominent, German officer in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. Indeed, as one recent historiographical survey succinctly asserts, "no other German national was better connected with Ottoman statesmen and officers for as long and in as diverse parts of the empire."[85] However, the very prominence of the man and his memoir raises the question as to why the attempt should be made to reevaluate it, particularly since the memoir is well-known in the corpus of self-narrative literature on the Ottoman theater of the Great War. The same question would not be asked of Gerold von Gleich's *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, which has neither received the same degree of scholarly attention nor had the same impact on contemporary postwar German discourses.

First, the choice of both Liman's and Gerold's memoir was made partially on the basis of the very early publication dates. As I have suggested above, there is a marked correlation between the degree of self-justification and finger-pointing and the degree to which the publication was contemporary to the events themselves. While this does raise problems, it also somewhat, though never completely, circumvents the generally accepted view that the greater the temporal remove from the events remembered, the greater the danger that the vagaries and vicissitudes of memory affect the accuracy and fidelity of the narrative. This is closely related to the

[85] Kayalı, "The Ottoman Experience in World War I: Historiographical Problems and Trends," 893.

historical context in which these postwar German memoirs were published, and, for a number of reasons, later years prove to be more problematic, particularly since the authorial decision to compose and publish the memoir at a certain time is often reflected in the content and import of the narrative remembrance; memory is affected by contemporary Zeitgeist.

For our consideration, the years 1923 and 1925 prove particularly problematic. In 1923, the Turkish National Movement, the formerly-defeated remnants of the Ottoman Army, swept aside the remaining enemy forces and established the Turkish Republic. When Liman and Gerold published their memoirs in 1920 and 1921, they did not and cannot have known how the Turkish War of Independence would end. Their own experiences with the Ottoman Army allowed them to make conjectures, but these conjectures are thoroughly tentative and suffused with the self-recognition that predicting the future is a rather dubious enterprise. After 1923, and particularly beginning in 1925, when German veterans started publishing memoirs in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the victory at Gallipoli, there is a noticeable increase in the tendency to treat the Ottoman Empire and its collapse as the last sigh of an antiquated polity, before the oppressed Turks tapped into their own dormant national identity and forcefully stamped their mark upon the parchment of history with the establishment of their own ethno-state.[86] In particular, the tendency to construe the victory at Gallipoli in teleological terms as the prelude to the Turkish national struggle, as well as the tendency to retrospectively see Mustafa Kemal 'Atatürk' in Colonel Mustafa Kemal Bey, became fairly acute. This is not to say that the sentiment behind these conceptualizations was

[86] According to Kenneth Barkin, "The knowledge of how things turned out or what the consequences of certain actions were, will no doubt determine the author's perspective on the past." Barkin, "Autobiography and History," 88. See for example Kannengiesser, *Gallipoli*.

not present in the account of Liman; we speak of Liman here, since he was the commanding officer of the Ottoman Fifth Army at Gallipoli. Liman had the unfortunate proclivity to dismiss the military contributions of other subject-peoples of the Ottoman Empire serving in the Ottoman Army. The resulting picture is very much that of a victory of the Turkish people, or of the Turkish "race." However, the projection of this victory forward in time to the establishment of the Turkish Republic is missing from Liman's memoir. Memoirs published after 1923, by contrast, bear the indelible marks of accommodating the present reality of Turkish national identity and the Turkish Republic into the Ottoman past which was multi-national.

While these considerations do present problems, they are on the whole rather less significant than the uncritical use of memoirs without regard for the intertextuality of German postwar memoir literature. I argue that Liman's memoir *Fünf Jahre Türkei* was an urtext of the German experience in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War, and that it fundamentally shaped subsequent historical debates and memoir compositions in postwar Germany. This is partially due to the preeminence of the man himself and the role he played as head of the German military mission to the Ottoman Empire. Liman was situated in a position of considerable influence, and stood nominally at the head of many German officers who would in time write memoirs of their own. However, this may have been less important than the fact that, simply put, Liman had made many enemies among his compatriots in the Ottoman Empire. In the words of Isabel Hull, "the archives are filled with vociferous official complaints about the (admittedly) misanthropic,

paranoid, and downright peculiar head of the military mission."[87] Just as Liman had scores to settle after the war with the publication of his memoir, his many enemies availed themselves of the opportunity to do the same. As Gerhard Gruesshaber shows in his chapter on postwar debates in German veteran circles, there was a loose division between a pro- and anti-Liman camp, the latter of which was "led" by the former German military attaché to the Ottoman Empire, Otto von Lossow.[88] Otto von Lossow continually questioned the selection of Liman as the head of the military mission, a concern which was echoed by others.[89] Even the accounts of people with whom Liman was on nominally good terms, although they do not question the appropriateness of Liman's appointment, utilize language which suggests a very concerted effort to avoid blatant criticism of the general's character.[90]

The stature and disputed reputation of Liman the "man" was compounded not only by the immutable fact of the early publication but the sheer breadth and scope of his memoir. Liman addresses practically every major development on every major front in the Ottoman Empire, freely dispensing commendations and rather more rarely censure of his compatriots. Other, subsequent memoirs could and did supplement, modify, or challenge Liman's narrative and legacy; they could not avoid weighing in on or otherwise engaging with Liman's text. What is more, some

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[87] Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 270.

[88] Otto von Lossow considered the selection of Liman to be the principal "sin" of the German military authorities in 1913. In his estimation, Liman's imperiousness stemmed from a self-conception as the "Kaiser's 'personal emissary,'" which might explain why Liman vigorously combated every attempt to curtail his rights and authority as head of the military mission. Of course, as Otto von Lossow knew very well, such intransigence was ultimately not conducive to harmonious relations between the Ottomans and the Germans. Gruesshaber, *The 'German Spirit' in the Ottoman and Turkish Army, 1908-1938*, 166-180.

[89] Wolf, *Victory at Gallipoli 1915*, 16.

[90] Hans Kannengiesser writes that the Field Marshal (Liman) was a "lofty, taut military appearance, a self-contained personality, quick to decide, clear when issuing orders, restrained in praise, and sharp in reprimand, and in pursuing a decision once resolved upon." Kannengiesser, *Gallipoli*, 17.

memoirists directly borrowed from *Fünf Jahre Türkei* while composing their own works. Liman's subordinate at Gallipoli, major general Hans Kannengiesser, places *Fünf Jahre Türkei* at the top of his list of "source material" that he consulted; Dr. Werner Steuber, a member of the sanitary corps and expert on tropical medicine, who served under General Erich von Falkenhayn with the Yıldırım Army Group in Greater Syria beginning in 1917, also lists *Fünf Jahre Türkei* in his list of sources.[91] To be certain, authors like Steuber and Kannengiesser may have felt the need to consult Liman's memoir, which included a great number of telegrams quoted verbatim, for clarification on certain details. However, this does not mean that these authors were not influenced by the predominant discourses embedded in the text of *Fünf Jahre Türkei*. Furthermore, precisely due to the remembered nature of military hierarchy, and of Liman's place at the apex of that hierarchy, any other military account of the German experience in the Ottoman Empire would not only show considerable deference for Liman's account, but quite possibly evince the implied necessity to conform to Liman's narrative; in other words, to remember the events as Liman remembered them. This raises the very intriguing question: at what point does a personal memory become the foundation of a collective memory?

As philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs suggests, "a man must often appeal to others' remembrances to evoke his own past. He goes back to reference points determined by society, hence outside himself."[92] Even individual memory, then, has an externality which is culturally as well as historically shaped. Liman's work is not exempt from this fact: according to recent translator's notes on the work *Gallipoli, Der Kampf um den Orient*, written in 1916 by Erich Prigge, who

[91] Kannengiesser, *Gallipoli*, 239; Steuber, *"Jildirim,"* 12.

[92] Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, 51.

was Liman's adjutant, Liman made selective use of the book when he composed his own memoir.[93] To be sure, Prigge's work never achieved the status or recognition that Liman's did, and would not have commanded the same degree of consideration as *Fünf Jahre Türkei*. While the degree to which other German memoirists were constrained by Liman's narrative, as well by their own personal opinions of the cantankerous general, cannot be established in this study, the question remains as to what extent *Fünf Jahre Türkei* can be considered as the base of subsequent postwar German memoir literature. Hopefully, future research will be able to provide a more definitive answer to this question.[94]

My choice of Gerold's memoir is due to its unique position in the intertextual web of Liman's narrative and the broader corpus of postwar German literature. Published a year after Liman's memoir, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad* is in constant dialogue with its predecessor, although it evinces a considerable, though not total, freedom of narrative voice. The subject of the memoir addresses the German imperial entanglement in Persia, an obscure sub-theatre of the Mesopotamian front of the war in the Middle East. In *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, Liman is very explicit in making it understood that the chief source of his information on the events in Persia was Gerold himself.

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[93] Given that Liman authorized the project in the fall of September 1915 to combat Allied propaganda surrounding the Gallipoli campaign, it is not inconceivable that Liman exercised some authority in determining the contents of the book. See Prigge, *The Struggle for the Dardanelles*, 95.

[94] While the highly likely role of Liman's memoir in influencing other German memoirists has been established with some degree of certitude, the question of the treatment of Liman's memoir in the extant literature remains. As shown to be the case with both Fuhrmann and Krobb, Liman's memoir has either been entirely subsumed under the conceptual rubric of Colmar von der Goltz, or otherwise dismissed as somehow atypically removed from the Orientalist discourses that were increasingly attributed to the Germans in the Ottoman Empire. Both understandings are incorrect: the former mistakes one theoretical paradigm as thoroughly hegemonic, when in reality Liman's memoir challenged some of the basic tenets of that paradigm, and the latter is quite clearly based on a facile reading of the memoir itself. Simply put, the reason that the work of Liman seems to have been overlooked in the latest scholarly contributions lent additional weight to the desirability of analyzing Liman in this study.

Having established the reasons for choosing the memoirs of Liman and Gerold as the basis of this study, it is now necessary to say a few words on the medium of the sources, namely, memoirs. As historian Kenneth Barkin writes "it is one of the most cherished axioms of the historical guild that consciously created documents, particularly autobiographies, are inherently suspect and are to be treated with bold skepticism."[95] Indeed, Yuval Noah Harari rightly points out that, "in the delicate dialogue between cultural expectations and lived experiences, memoirs manifest the former more than the latter."[96] However, this is precisely what I intend to tease out in this analysis: the "cultural expectations" which led Liman to deliberately compose the memoirs in the manner in which he did, to remember and record those remembrances with reference to a certain discursive framework. As an individual, Liman had a degree of individual agency in "making sense" of his time in the Orient, of imparting meaning to "German work" in the Ottoman Empire; but he did so using the conceptual and discursive guidelines of his own cultural and historical context.[97]

It may be possible to posit three levels of past-as-memory. First, there is the event itself, which occurred in the past and largely remains in the past. Second is one's recollection of that event. To assume that a memoir would be composed exclusively of the secondary level of past-as-memory is incorrect. In fact, because of the publicity of a memoir, we must theorize an additional, tertiary level: how the author wants his or her readership to view, understand, and consume his or her

[95] Barkin, "Autobiography and History," 83.

[96] Harari, "Military Memoirs: A Historical Overview of the Genre from the Middle Ages to the Late Modern Era," 308; Kenneth Barkin writes that "what one seeks in reading autobiography is not a date, a name, or a place, but a characteristic way of perceiving, of organizing and of understanding, and individual way of feeling and expressing." Barkin, "Autobiography and History," 87.

[97] Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, 76.

remembering. The effect of the prior knowledge in memoir writing that the text will be made public cannot be underestimated. It is to some extent inevitable that, to quote psychologist Jerome Bruner, "our self-making narratives soon come to reflect what we think others expect us to be like."[98] In a sense, the relationship between the three levels of past-as-memory can be summarized thus: what the author saw, what the author remembered seeing, and how the author wants to be remembered by others while remembering. The fact that the author might not be fully conscious of the fact that their remembrances are affected by various, oftentimes considerable external factors only underlines the distinct possibility that an author might unknowingly as well as knowingly reproduce prevailing discourses in the composition of their self-narratives. At the same time, for the reasons mentioned above, Liman's memoir demonstrates characteristics of what Michel Foucault would term an "initiator of discursive practices;" it is a work which is not only "produced," but also "produces…the possibility and the rules of formation for other texts."[99] While there were external factors that shaped the composition of Liman's memoir, *Fünf Jahre Türkei* would cement literary conventions which other, subsequent memoirists would draw from.

Additionally, it must be recognized that grappling with the past involves an inevitable confrontation with the many potentialities which are embedded in that past. Writing a memoir with prior knowledge of the consequences that follow from action or inaction does not obviate the propensity to ask oneself how the present might have been altered, had the chain of cause and effect stemming from an endless quantity of choices which led to the current present been altered. There is nothing

[98] Bruner, "Self-Making Narratives," 211.

[99] Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, 131.

radical in Bruner's assertion that "we are forever balancing what was with what might have been."[100] In the case of Liman and Gerold, both of whom had no small axe to grind in their memoirs, the inclination to reconstruct the potentiality for a rather more encouraging present by placing the blame for the erasure of "what might have been" on others is unmistakable.

This retroactive form of narrative wish-fulfilment takes on a much greater significance in view of the uniqueness of the German historical experience in constructing 'fantasies,' chief among them fantasies about empire. The narratives of Liman and Gerold, through the process of reckoning with the painful present of defeat and national humiliation, and through the consequent search for past alternatives which might have forgone the current present reality, generate meaning through the construction of an ideal past, which never quite existed as constructed by the two military men.[101] Just as was the case with German colonial fantasies about the Americas, as demonstrated convincingly by Susanne Zantop, *Fünf Jahre Türkei* and *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad* are as much dirges for lost imperial opportunity as they are recollections of the past; contained within are the grains of a retrospective call to action.

[100] Bruner, "Self-Making Narratives," 216.

[101] Their reasons for doing so were many, and indeed some might have been the aforementioned importance and influence of societal expectations and the prior knowledge of the publicity of the narrative remembrance. However, it is highly likely that a genuine bereavement for the loss of empire was a strong incentive. Political scientist Tuija Parvikko notes that "By presenting of the past a wanted interpretation, by remembering certain events and dimensions of the past (instead of some others) in a certain way we want to affect and influence the present time and future. In other words, we don't remember for the sake of remembering itself but rather for the sake of the present and future time. See Parvikko, "Memory, History, and the Holocaust: Notes on the Problem of Representation of the Past," 190. In addition, Clarke and Horne write that many if not most soldier's memoirs were self-reflexive; in encountering the 'Other,' the narrative self was invariably confronted with "what it meant to be modern, to be European, to be 'civilized.'" Clarke and Horne, "Introduction: Peripheral Visions-Militarized Cultural Encounters in the Long Nineteenth Century," 5.

1.4.2 Orientalism

In order to understand how Liman and Gerold construct a distinct imperial space in the Ottoman Empire, it is first necessary to examine the 'unwritten assumptions' which inform their narrative constructions.[102] It is very clear that in 'making sense' of their experiences in the Orient, both authors draw from extant Orientalist discourses to describe a quintessentially foreign space as well as the people inhabiting that space. However, the German historical experience with Orientalism is something which has been passed over in the scholarship, to say nothing of the fact that military emissaries of German civilization like Liman and Gerold are all but ignored in scholarly analyses of Germans who contributed to or drew from Orientalist discourses. In his oft-quoted work *Orientalism*, Edward Said advanced two main arguments: first, that "Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident,'" which oftentimes encompassed "a complex array of 'Oriental' ideas (Oriental despotism, Oriental splendor, Oriental cruelty, sensuality," etc.; and second, that "Orientalism [is/was] a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient," one that was ultimately facilitated by European "power," "domination," and "varying degrees of a complex hegemony."[103] The unpacking of these two arguments and their relevance for this study will be addressed momentarily; however, the treatment of the German historical experience in Said's *Orientalism* must constitute the initial subject of examination.

[102] Barkin writes that "the unwritten assumptions of a period do not appear in the documents and have to be unearthed by deduction." Barkin, "Autobiography and History," 93.

[103] Said, *Orientalism*, 2-5.

Not without some justification, Susanne Zantop writes that "when it comes to postcolonial theory, Germany remains a marginal other."[104] Undoubtedly, she had Said in mind, who claimed that "the German Orient was almost exclusively a scholarly, or at least a classical, Orient… What German Oriental scholarship did was to refine and elaborate techniques whose application was to texts, myths, ideas, and languages almost literally gathered from the Orient by imperial Britain and France." In Said's view, "what German Orientalism had in common with Anglo-French… Orientalism was a kind of intellectual authority over the Orient."[105] With perhaps the possible exception of 'Orientalists' in the vein of Bernard Lewis, who took umbrage at the insinuation that their scholarship was an integral part of a discursive system of oppression, Germanists were quick to criticize Said's overemphasis on Britain and France, as well as his almost complete disregard for "counter-discourses."[106] Moreover, Said's characterization of Orientalist discourse is largely ahistorical, totalizing, and homogenous, seemingly unchanged since antiquity; German Orientalism has been the primary victim of this monolithic and one-sided approach.[107] Attempts to amend or modify Said's conception of Orientalism in the interest of accommodating the German historical experience have varied

[104] Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, 6.

[105] Said, *Orientalism*, 19; Wilson, "Enlightenment Encounters," 73-74.

[106] Prager, *Orienting the Self*, 6-7.

[107] As Suzanne Marchand writes, "'Othering'… is neither new nor is it consistent or internally coherent, and did not create a set of immutable and mutually exclusive European and oriental identities." In addition, despite the "obvious linkages between knowledge and power" in the assembling of information on the Orient, the results did not "contribute directly or unproblematically to empire-building." See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 5, 19; Wiedemann, Orientalismus, Version: 2.0., in Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte, 19.05.2021, http://docupedia.de/zg/Wiedemann_orientalismus_v2_de_2021.

considerably in method and intent.[108] As Felix Wiedemann pointed out in 2012, it is essential to "embed representations of the Orient more strongly in their historical and cultural contexts within European societies." This is all the more urgent in view of the fact that Orientalist figures and patterns of argumentation tend to reflect "domestic [*innergesellschaftliche*] debates and identity models rather than pointing intentionally to an extra-European realm."[109]

Increasingly, scholars like those mentioned above have argued for an understanding of uniquely German Orientalism(s) which are distinct to the German-speaking world's historical experience, as well as a recognition of the fact that German Orientalism was not a historically stable discourse, but one which evinced considerable fluidity that was contingent upon the historical context. In this regard, German Orientalism is interesting insofar as it emerged long before Germany had any colonies, thus throwing some doubt on Said's approach. According to Suzanne Marchand, Said engaged "in a deliberate sort of deck-stacking," in which by focusing on British and French literature during the age of empires, he could claim that Orientalist discourses were a product of empire.[110] Nonetheless, it is not far-

[108] One scholar has supplemented Said's sanguine appraisal of German Romantic literary figures Goethe and Schlegel with a "missing link" deeply embedded in the more-typical rationalist Orientalist discourse, Christoph Meiners. Others, like Todd Kontje, have argued for the existence of multiple Orientalisms, a concept which more effectively underlines the heterogeneity and ambivalence of European discursive engagement with the Orient. See Wilson, "Enlightenment Encounters," 78; Prager, *Orienting the Self*, 14.

[109] Wiedemann, Orientalismus, Version: 2.0., in Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte, 19.05.2021, http://docupedia.de/zg/Wiedemann_orientalismus_v2_de_2021.

[110] An essential component of Marchand's argument is that German Orientalist scholarship, particularly from the eighteenth century onwards, was primarily informed and defined by the theoretical contours of Christian source-criticism and biblical exegesis, as well as classical scholarship on Greco-Roman civilization. Even into the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, scholarly studies of the Orient continued to be dictated by considerations of Old Testament analysis and the textual relations of Islamic, Egyptian, or Indian source material to the ancient Greek world, all in the interest of establishing hierarchies of antiquity, and through this, authenticity of culture, religion, and language with respect to the West. Furthermore, it is difficult to understate the impact of missionary reports on German Orientalist scholarship. Even in the nineteenth century, at which point it was recognized that these reports were not "scientific," they continued to constitute one of the primary

fetched to consider certain German 'orientalisms' as an outgrowth of the kind of "colonial fantasies" which Susanne Zantop indicates as a uniquely German manifestation of imperial or precolonial discourse.

While much of the criticism about the short shrift German orientalisms receive in Said's work is undoubtedly justified, there are essential points where Said proves himself to be correct. Precisely as a consequence of the late entrance of Germany into the nineteenth century wave of new imperialism, much of the discourse of German orientalisms was drawn from those of the British and the French. If one makes a meaningful distinction between Orientalist discourse and its corollary of colonialist or imperialist discourses, then it must be acknowledged that German imperialist discourses and theoretical interventions regarding the praxis of empire were, in many cases, derivations of British imperial discourse. Of course, this only held true as long as there was no substantial German political, military, or economic involvement in a given part of the globe inhabited by an "Other" (at which point, the travel-writings, reports, and accounts of Germans would amend or supersede hitherto-borrowed discourses derived from other non-German contexts). Historian and sociologist George Steinmetz refers to the link that Said posits between precolonial discourses and colonial praxis as the "devil's handwriting hypothesis:" although Steinmetz tends toward agreement with the sentiment that "blueprints for colonialism were prepared not so much in Europe's official ministries as in the scholar's study, the traveler's diary, and the playwright's tale of Oceanic shipwreck and African adventure," he cautions the reader of the exceptional heterogeneity of precolonial discourses. This includes extant German Orientalisms, since there could

bases of research on the Orient. Until the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, travel to the Orient by Orientalist scholars remained exceedingly rare. See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, xix, xxiv, xxix, 1-2, 5, 8-9, 13.

be little doubt that nineteenth century and twentieth century German orientalist discourses, like their British counterparts, increasingly envisioned empire as a logical outcome of Oriental difference.[111]

From the above excursus, we can extract two important pieces of information which are directly relevant to the object of our study here. The first is that there existed German Orientalisms quintessentially different from those of the British or French. It has been shown that one unique trait noted in the scholarship is the unusual tendency of the Germans to sympathize with the 'Other,' thereby somewhat undermining the essential distinction between the European 'us' and the Oriental 'them.' In fact, a la Thomas Mann's assertion that Germany was "das Land der Mitte," some German Orientalisms explicitly denied Germany's place in the 'civilizational' construct that was Europe, and subverted the 'traditional' Orientalist binary of "European superiority" and "Oriental inferiority." As suggested earlier, Colmar von der Goltz, inspired by the Meiji Restoration in Japan as well as reports of Chinese cultural progress, fundamentally adhered to such a view; this version of German Orientalism tended towards Asiaphilia. The second important piece of information is that there existed German Orientalisms which were largely similar to those of extant British Orientalist discourses in both form and in intent. While the 'colonial fantasies' described by Zantop were operative in both German Orientalisms, they were much more present in the latter; this was because there was a very clear hierarchy between "European" and "Oriental," and the perceived inferiority of the Oriental in the hierarchy necessitated European domination. This was the form of Orientalism which is largely present in the memoirs of Gerold and

[111] Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting*, 25-27.

Liman; the key features of this Orientalism, which are very much in line with Said's two main arguments regarding what Orientalism is, will now be discussed.

The first component of this version of German Orientalism is its discursive emphasis on establishing hierarchies of oppositions between the Europeans and the Oriental Other. In the words of Steinmetz, "the assumption of the essential difference and incorrigible inferiority of the subject population is structurally inherent" in imperialist and semicolonialist discourses.[112] Said tells us that "this truth about the distinctive differences between races, civilizations, and languages was (or pretended to be) radical and ineradicable."[113] These supposed differences comprised a discursive tapestry of ideological set-pieces, many of which had roots in the anti-Muslim discourses of the medieval and early modern periods. The first set-piece attributed to the Orientals "an excessive cruelty and lust, and an inability to exercise self-control through dispassionate reason," as well as a fanaticism which was (usually) associated with Islam; the second set-piece was that of Oriental despotism, a uniquely "tyrannical and arbitrary" form of rule. Furthermore, German encyclopedias on the peoples of the globe "castigate[d] Arabs and Asians for their indolence…and [their aversion] to progress."[114] Liman and Gerold borrow extensively from all of the above set-pieces in explaining the Orient and its peoples to their audience. Indeed, much of what they write suggests that the basic conceptual categories of German Orientalism which were present in the early nineteenth-century changed but little in the intervening century. However, the description of the Turks or Arabs or Greeks as "lazy" or "venal" was always accompanied by the oft-

[112] Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting*, 36.

[113] Said, *Orientalism*, 233.

[114] Prager, *Orienting the Self*, 12; Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 149-150.

unspoken assumption of European superiority: "backwardness, or racial inferiority, counterposed to the colonizer's modernity, rationality, development, and racial superiority."[115] Certainly, difference itself contained adequate discursive ground from which a European observer would extrapolate inferiority. From this followed the 'natural' corollary that Oriental weakness or difference invited "interest, penetration, insemination- in short, colonization."[116] When the German-speaking world began to supplement the writings and observations of other imperialist powers with that of its own, it was often the case that cultural encounters with the Other confirmed the "preexisting stable of clichés about the East."[117] Here it is quite likely that Liman and Gerold found that what they had thought they had known about the Orient from extant Orientalist discourses was largely accurate; the specter of confirmation bias looms large in both memoirs.

The second component of Liman's and Gerold's version of German Orientalism is the sheer, brute fact of empire, and the subsequent need to rationalize and order knowledge about the Orient. As was the case with nineteenth century European writers, Liman and Gerold were "extraordinarily well aware of the fact of empire."[118] It is not an innocent reference when, for example, Liman compares an Ottoman official's appearance and essence to that of a Chinaman; he is directly drawing from the store of German 'knowledge' about the Middle Kingdom which had been compiled through Germany's colonial entanglements in the Far East. However, it was not enough to merely be aware of what was being said about the

[115] Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting*, 38.

[116] Said, *Orientalism*, 219.

[117] Prager, *Orienting the Self*, 13.

[118] Said, *Orientalism*, 14.

Orient. According to Erik Grimmer-Solem, it is misleading "to treat Imperial Germany purely endogenously and its later imperial gambits as emanating from the metropole outward."[119] In other words, the very fact that Liman and Gerold were in situ in the Orient meant that their reports and narratives contributed to the shaping of German Orientalism and as well as extant imperialist discourses.[120] As emissaries of the 'German way of doing things,' regardless of their raison d'etre in the Orient, Liman and Gerold nonetheless evidently felt the need to engage with hitherto-existing Orientalist discourses in ordering knowledge on the Orient. The attitude of these two men was very much like that of colonial officials, as "men claiming to stand above the fray of politics and offering a privileged, objective voice."[121]

The tool which Liman and Gerold used to order knowledge on the Orient (as well as produce it) was what Steinmetz refers to as "ethnographic discourse."[122] We therefore have two sets of hierarchies: One is the division between the European and the 'Other,' and the other is the various sub-divisions of that 'Other.' Liman and Gerold engaged with Orientalist discourses to largely confirm what was being said

[119] Grimmer-Solem, *Learning Empire*, 8.

[120] As was the case with other colonial officers, the reports of those on-site were ostensibly deemed as the most important. The content of these reports differed considerably from those of "formal" orientalists, who by and large remained uninterested in modern Oriental societies and who were otherwise intellectually bound by philological and religious interpretations of ancient Eastern civilizations. The Austrians, who by necessity had a long historical tradition of diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire, were a notable exception insofar as they encouraged instruction in modern Oriental languages. Although this somewhat changed by the time of the Great War, with a strata of informal orientalists like archeologist-turned-imperial agent Max von Oppenheim constituting a body of German "men on the ground," the field largely continued to be defined by primarily academic considerations, which in turn meant a lack of focus on practical matters, including the Orient's modern military, political, and economic issues. Evidently, Liman and Gerold to a lesser degree can both be situated outside the purview of these professional orientalists. Liman in particular was concerned with purely practical considerations, as befits a senior military officer. See Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting*, 29; Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, xxvi, 25-29, 340-341, 350.

[121] Grimmer-Solem, *Learning Empire*, 20.

[122] Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting*, xiii, 27.

by others (other Germans or other Europeans) about the Orient; indeed, the idea that there existed an immutable "Turkish" or "Oriental essence," which was discernable and knowable, is fundamental to the narrative recollections of both authors. However, Liman and Gerold also drew attention the large variations among the peoples in the Orient: the Turk was different than the Arab, who was different than the Greek, and so on.

It goes without saying that these ethnic distinctions were very much constructions, insofar as nationalisms among the various subject-peoples of the Ottoman Empire were largely inchoate and amorphous. It was the business of Liman and Gerold to supplement what was known about the Orient with their own experiences, with information regarding the salient characteristics of each "nation" of the Ottoman Empire. Again, it is worth emphasizing that this production of knowledge did not take place in a discursive void, amidst archaic texts and exegeses of Islam in the scholar's study. By differentiating between Turks, Arabs, and Greeks, as well as the Persians, Liman and Gerold meant to accomplish two aims, the first of which was to directly influence German imperial policy in the Ottoman Empire. Provided with information generated "on the ground," it was hoped that Berlin would demonstrate a greater amenability to formulate policy and strategy accordingly.[123] In citing his "long years of experience" in his communications with the metropole, Liman is quite clearly drawing the attention of his superiors to his own experience and qualifications, as compared with the German "experts" that were dispatched in

[123] From the litany of complaints of both Liman and Gerold, we know that their views on a variety of issues were dismissed or passed over by their superiors. In particular, Liman's account exemplifies the grievances of a colonial official whose "ethnographic acuity" is not acknowledged. According to Steinmetz, these colonial (or would-be) colonial officials "demanded…recognition of their *ethnographic capital*, of the acuity of their perception and judgement with respect to exotic cultures and indigenous subjectivities." See Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting*, xiv, 48.

the Ottoman Empire and beyond as part of a series of special missions ("*Sondermission*"), which Liman viewed as wielding a degree of influence incommensurate to the value of their ethnographic capital. When it became apparent that the knowledge produced by high-ranking military officers like Liman and Gerold would not form the basis of German imperial policy, these manifestations of imperial ethnography, largely predicated upon various Orientalist discourses, became the foundation of a semicolonial collective memory.[124] In the retrospective imaginary of Liman and Gerold, the Orient and the people within were ordered in the same manner as colonial subjects in the British or German Empires were ordered. In the minds of their audiences, this would serve to reinforce the perception of the quintessential coloniality of the Germans in the Ottoman Empire.

1.4.3 Martial Races

Argumentation to the effect that Liman and Gerold relied on Orientalist discourses, German as well as those more broadly European, to retroactively cast the Ottoman Empire as a colonial space, albeit one which was now (for the time being) beyond the reach of German influence, is interesting and novel in its own right; but it is not the entire picture. Writing on the subject of pre-colonial and colonial India, prominent Chicago historian and anthropologist Bernard Cohn suggests a schema of multiple modalities which allowed the British to acquire knowledge in order to "classify, categorize, and bound the vast social world that was India so that it could

[124] In the words of Clarke and Horne, "collective memory of encounters of abroad [could reach] well beyond the scope of any individual military career." Clarke and Horne, "Introduction: Peripheral Visions- Militarized Cultural Encounters in the Long Nineteenth Century," 9.

be controlled."[125] Among these modalities, soldier memoirs like *Five Years in Turkey* typically most faithfully reproduce the characteristics of the "Observational/Travel Modality" and the "Survey/Enumerative Modalities." Overall, in neither Liman's nor Gerold's memoirs does one see much evidence of the "Observational/Travel modality" that was present in many other memoirs from travelers to the Orient, even those of German soldiers like George Steinbach and Josef Drexler. Instead, there is muted yet undeniable congruence of both memoirs with the "Survey/Enumerative Modalities." Although Cohn separates the two, they seem to manifest as two different aspects of the same intellectual process. Whereas the "Survey Modality" concerned the "systematic and official investigation of the natural and social features" of a territory, which included describing and classifying among other things the "ethnography…history, and sociology" of that territory, the "Enumerative Modality" was more specifically concerned with censuses, and the quest to create social categories "for administrative purposes" and the objectification of "social, cultural, and linguistic differences."[126] In other words, both processes were fundamental to the construction of various identities with a series of distinct, largely immutable characteristics and traits, of which one was military worth.

It is significant that neither Said nor Cohn make allowances for the unique perspectives that military officers provide in the broader project of producing semicolonial knowledge on the Orient. The question remains: what was unique to the

[125] Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 4-7. Superficially, it would appear that the former was much more applicable to Liman and Gerold's memoir than the latter, given that the latter is concerned with a much more formal instrument of imperial power, namely the census. Nevertheless, the "Enumerative Modality" was the instrument through which colonial administrators reified the markers of differentiation between subject-peoples; martial race doctrine would have fallen in-between the two modalities, insofar as it was based, on the one hand, on first-hand observation, and on the other, on the construction of immutable martial prowess of some races and not others.

[126] Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 7-8.

accounts of Liman and Gerold, which did not appear at large in extant Orientalist discourses? What was it about the identity of Liman and Gerold as military officers, as well as the significance of the First World War, which made their conceptualizations of the Orient and the people within unique? The answer lies in a distinct form of what I would refer to as "military ethnography." I argue that, apart from the utilization of Orientalist discourses to retroactively cast the Ottoman Empire as a quasi-colonial space awaiting further German penetration and its 'nations' as awaiting the arrival of the superior culture of the Germans, Liman and Gerold both borrowed extensively from British imperialist discourse, specifically martial race doctrine, to categorize and order the people of the Middle East into a hierarchy on the basis of such criterion as "military worth," "bravery," and "capacity to fight." Here it is important to note that, because of their status as military officers, Liman and Gerold were uniquely suited to evaluate and sort the 'natives' based on martial efficacy; their identities as military men act as a kind of passive ethos in the generating of such intelligence.

Martial race doctrine was meant to accomplish the same ends as Orientalist discourse as described by Said; it is a system of knowledge produced for the purposes of facilitating empire via the meaningful distinction between warlike and unwarlike "races;" such knowledge would be put to use in military recruitment practices, in privileging certain peoples, and in demonizing others.[127] Yet, despite the obvious discursive overlap between the various Orientalisms under consideration here and martial race doctrine, and for reasons not readily understood, there has not been an attempt to integrate martial race doctrine into the broader theoretical

[127] Streets, *Martial Races*, 2-4.

framework of Orientalism, or to examine these primarily militarized encounters through the lens of colonialist ethnography/ knowledge production; nor has there been an attempt to integrate the works of German military officers in the broader academic discourses surrounding German imperialism and Orientalisms; this is quite likely because, according to the prevailing view of Orientalist discourses, the Orient was effeminate and weak, and its inferiority was taken for granted, by both colonialists as well as scholars seeking to deconstruct the attitudes of Europeans towards the Orient; the idea of 'manly races' is not easily reconciled with the depiction of Orientals as weak and ready for subjugation.

An investigation into the precise reasons for this gap in the literature is beyond the scope of this study. Our task now is to briefly review the salient characteristics of martial race doctrine, as well as demonstrate the historical German engagements with the concept. The concept of a martial race is one that must be distinctly understood, and in order to achieve that understanding, two separate yet related assumptions must be interrogated: first, the concept of a 'martial race' must be historically conceptualized and grounded; second, the German understanding of and historical entanglements with the concept must be elucidated, if only briefly. In the memoirs of both Liman and Gerold, discursive hierarchies are established between the Turks, presumed to be the very best soldiers in the Orient, and other Oriental peoples. Quite apart from any sort of praise received for their actions, the military abilities of the Turkish soldiers were rendered in even sharper distinction through contrast with the somewhat lackluster martial qualities of the Arabs and positively dismal capabilities of the Persians.

In the first instance, it should be pointed out that the concept of a martial race gained widespread currency in British imperial discourse after the establishment of

the British Raj in 1858. Of course, as historian Heather Streets suggests, in practically every epoch there have been societies and peoples who have "defined themselves… as 'warlike' or 'peaceful.'[128] Not insignificantly, there can be little doubt that 'the Turks,' however historically broad and amorphous that designation might have been, would have counted themselves among the ranks of the 'warlike' peoples. For the better part of seven centuries the Ottoman Empire had a storied tradition of grand military exploits and triumphs, and it proved to be a perennial source of anxiety for the polities of Christendom, which feared the possibility of a military conquest by 'the Turk.'[129] However, the 'modern' conception of martial race had two distinct markers which differentiated it from the previous forms of notions of "warrior tribes" or "warlike peoples": empire and race.[130] Although these twin

[128] Streets, *Martial Races*, 7.

[129] The extent and implications of the internalization of the Ottoman peoples of this 'warrior ethos,' specifically the Ottoman Muslim peoples who would in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries eventually come to see themselves or be seen by others as 'Turks,' is an important question, albeit one which this study cannot delve into with any great degree of detail. See Kınlı and Kınlı, "Is Every Turk Born a Soldier? A Historical-Processual Analysis," 65-86.

[130] The naked, material reality of European military might which facilitated the foundation and proliferation of empire meant that European powers from the eighteenth-century onward became increasingly secure in their belief in their own martial dominance, and embrace the paradigm of their own martial superiority. Streets, *Martial Races*, 181; As Olusoga and Erichsen put it, "The white races had claimed territory across the globe by right of strength and conquest. They had triumphed everywhere because they were the fittest; their triumphs were the proof of their fitness." Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 73. The above power relations between European and non-European powers, which were imposed more often than not through the use or threat of military force meant that, for perhaps the first time in history, the status as a "warlike people" or "martial race" became a distinction that was conferred upon by an 'Other.' The unmistakable reality of European military ascendancy allowed European nations like the British, and later, the Germans, to impose discursive realities upon the peoples they colonized, and even upon those with whom they engaged on largely unequal terms: it was they who established the criterion by which some peoples, and not others, would be considered "martial races. This is not to deny the agency of colonial or quasi-colonial peoples in internalizing or otherwise repudiating the hegemonic discourses which were imposed upon them through, at its root, the force of European arms. As Streets shows to be the case with Scottish, Sikh, and Gurkha recruits serving in the British Indian Army, colonial or quasi-colonial peoples were not passive recipients of these discourses pertaining to them; rather, due to varying reasons related to personal beliefs and economic push and pull factors, as well as the possibility of partaking in one's own share of considerable prestige, some actors wholeheartedly embraced the necessity of performing the role of an elite soldier belonging to one of the martial races. On the other hand, others "simply did not recognize themselves" in the discourses of martial races, although they may not have rejected the association outright. See Streets, *Martial Races*, 217, Chapter 6 *passim*. The second distinct

pillars of martial race theory, empire and race, became reified in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the origins of the concept of a martial race can be traced to as early as a century prior, beginning with England's unification with Scotland and the impression generated by the Highland regiments during the Jacobite Rising of 1745 and the Seven Years' War, and ending with the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 in Bengal, where the rebellious Bengal Army of the East India Company presidency was eventually crushed with Sikh and Gurkha soldiers recruited from the recently-pacified Punjab.[131]

The considerable variances between the discursive treatment and lived experiences of the 'classic' martial races that were the Highlanders, the Sikhs, and the Gurkhas provide a fruitful field for comparison with the Turks of *Five Years in Turkey* and *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*; such comparisons, although of a necessarily

characteristic of the concept of a "martial race" was race. Although the concept of race existed well before the nineteenth century, theoretical frameworks that were derived from the studies of taxonomy and evolution, which had been advanced by scientists like Jean-Baptiste Lamarck and Charles Darwin, would increasingly arm proponents of the theory of 'race' with pretensions of scientific objectivity. As opposed to what previously constituted the dominant traits of a warlike people, most of which would have been attributed to culture, martial qualities would be increasingly viewed as "inherent" and immutable qualities dependent upon race; peoples who subsequently were not deemed to be martial races simply "did not have 'the right stuff' and no amount of training could change it." Streets, *Martial Races*, 2, 93-94, 179. Europeans who discovered "martial races" often felt an obligation to 'raise up' those martial races and hone their abilities through European drill and discipline. See Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 104.

[131] For an account of the early Highland regiments and British imperial recruiting practices, see Trevor-Roper, "The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland," 15, 25. For a brief account of the importance of the Sikhs to the British Indian Army and their relatively benign treatment after the Anglo-Sikh Wars, see Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 109; Rand, "'Martial Races' and 'Imperial Subjects:' Violence and Governance in Colonial India, 1857-1914," 4. Streets and Cohn also discuss the experiences of the East India Company armies in pacifying the Kingdom of Gorkha in modern-day Nepal. See Streets, *Martial Races*, 175, 76-77; Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 124. Of the continued currency of martial race doctrine in modern British military practices, see https://www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/corps-regiments-and-units/?Query=Gurkha. Finally, in the aftermath of the Sepoy Mutiny, official British military discourse gradually recognized the 'manliness' of the Sikh and Gurkha soldiers, who had loyally fought shoulder-to-shoulder with their British officers and Scottish comrades, in contrast with the 'effeminate' and 'cowardly' Hindu and Muslim soldiers who had mutinied; this had direct implications on British imperial recruiting practices, which targeted the martial communities of the Indian subcontinent. See Streets, *Martial Races*, 8, 26, 95, 214; Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 110, 123.

brief duration, are most instructive in teasing out the considerable flexibility and adaptability of the discourse of martial races.[132] Like the Highlanders of Scotland and

[132] In an effort to avoid confusing the reader, a slight clarification is in order. In the historical background and the literature review, it was shown that certain German orientalisms evinced properties which set them apart from other European orientalisms; these included a unique propensity to empathize with the native "other," a disavowal of Germany's place in Europe or 'the West,' and a tendency to cast the Germans as "better colonizers" than their European counterparts. This leads to the question: to what extent did the memoirs of Liman and Gerold exemplify these tendencies, and were German conceptions of race and the 'other' constructed in similar or different ways as British ones? Regarding the first question, the memoirs of Liman and Gerold exemplified these tendencies to a largely negligible extent. Liman and Gerold were certainly empathetic, but this empathy often adopted the form of paternalistic concerns; paternalism was not at all unique to German orientalisms or colonialist discourses. On the other hand, commentators on the Orient like Colmar von der Goltz and other German orientalists like Ernst Jäckh saw potential in the "rising crescent" of the Ottoman Empire as well as the "Asiatic races" more generally, and believed that the German identity was situated between "Western rationalism and Eastern mysticism," to paraphrase Thomas Mann, if it was not altogether different in substance and form from what was taken to constitute the quintessential aspects of "western" or "European" identity. A recent edited volume has attempted to periodize and historicize the German discursive entanglement with the concept of the 'West.' Conceptually distinct yet interrelated to earlier discursive formulations such as "Europe," the "Occident" and a Christian "Abendland," the idea of "the West" was oftentimes something which was fundamental to the German self-conception, insofar as Germans often felt the need to define themselves in relation to the concept. More than a geographical designation, 'the West' had distinct political connotations, such as "reason, liberty, democracy, constitutional government, the rule of law, the middle class, private property, the individual, and so on." 'The West' was "a relational concept since its inception," and deeply intertwined with notions and hierarchies of civilizational progress, theoretically attainable by non-Western societies. The concept of 'the West' was definitionally opposed to 'the East,' which had its own distinct political connotations, such as "'Eastern barbarism' and 'Oriental despotism' and 'the Asiatic mode of production.'" It should be pointed out here that for Hegel, 'the West' was practically identical to the notion of 'Europe.' The concept of 'the West' was well-established in Germany by the mid-nineteenth century, when the binary opposition of 'West' and 'East,' of 'freedom' and 'despotism' was reaffirmed by the Crimean War against Tsarist Russia; a "'Romano-Germanic West'" was the civilizational bulwark against a "'Slavic East.'" At the same time other German commentators rejected these binary oppositions in favor of emphasizing the historical vitality of "Christian Europe." With the German unification in 1871, the Russian Empire became the most prominent discursive manifestation of the 'Other,' the bastion of an inferior "'Slavic East.'" However, the concept of 'the West' increasingly fell out of favor during the Wilhelmine period, particularly because it became a key tenet of other European powers' justifications for colonialism during the era of New Imperialism then promptly neglected until the outbreak of the First World War. Germans eager to differentiate themselves from their imperial rivals could hardly afford to plagiarize the "ideological underpinnings" of their imperial projects, and the notion of a "German civilizing mission" was rarely utilized in the German colonies. Instead, 'the nation' and the specific traits or values embodied by the 'national character' constituted the hegemonic forms of articulating identity in Wilhelmine Germany; of course, much like the opposition between West and East, the 'German national character' was supposed to be distinctive from other national characters. However, despite national differences, Germany was widely believed to be part of a broader 'European' socio-cultural entity, which had certain shared historical experiences including a Greco-Roman classical intellectual and philosophical tradition, a Christian identity, the Enlightenment, "capitalism, industrialization, and imperialism." In other words, Germany was just one of several *Kulturländer* ("cultural lands"). On the other hand, national anxiety brought on by the displacement of traditional social relations and hierarchies with industrialization, some Germans began to distinguish *Zivilisation*, or mastery of modern technologies and innovation, from *Kultur*, which in this case referred to "the profound, historical, organic and mysterious sources of creativity and identity." Whereas Britain and France were viewed as supreme harbingers of the former, with all the attendant connotations of materialism, individualism, and mechanical rationalism, the Germans believed that they embodied the latter. In other words, as should be apparent by now,

unlike the Sikhs and Gurkhas, the Turks of the Ottoman Empire were not a colonial people; although, it is true that many foreign observers, including Liman and Gerold, subtly constructed a retroactive vision of the Ottoman Empire and its people that had very strong parallels with or drew heavily from extant Orientalist cum colonialist discourses. Furthermore, like the Sikhs of India, the 'Turks' nurtured a pronounced

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discursive sites of German self-conception in relation to concepts like 'the West' and 'Europe' were extremely inconsistent and if anything evinced a profound lack of consensus about Germany's place in the world. The concept of 'the West,' experienced a resurgence in 1914. In the early stages of the First World War, the "ideas of 1914," promulgated by none other than Thomas Mann, posited a fundamental opposition between 'Western democracy' and the *Volksgemeinschaft* or *Volksstaat*, as well as between 'Western civilization' and 'German culture,' or the 'German idea of freedom' more generally. 'The West' came to stand for everything "'un-German,'" and provided a necessary ideological opposite to the flourishing notions of German exceptionalism, which was further embedded in such concepts as "*Abendland*," "*Mitteleuropa*," or the "*Reich*." Again, the opposition was pronounced, but not total. Hans Delbrück, a well-known military historian, expressed "his belief in the common heritage of European cultures," with particular emphasis on those of Germanic origin, namely German and British culture. See Bavaj and Steber, "Germany and 'the West:' The Vagaries of a Modern Relationship," 1-37; Hewitson, "The Kaiserreich and the Kulturländer: Conceptions of the West in Wilhelmine Germany, 1890-1914," 55-68; Llanque, "The First World War and the Invention of 'Western Democracy,'" 69-80. The viewpoint of Delbrück would find marked echoes in the writings of both Liman and Gerold, who demonstrate an uncritical assumption of commonality between the Germans and other European nations, particularly the British. Neither author uses 'the West' as a conceptual label, and both often rely on phrases such as 'the European conception' when underlining the difference between conditions in the Ottoman Empire and Europe. This is not to suggest that the Ottomans, particularly the Ottoman Turks, did not constitute an "atavistic self-image" for the Germans in the Ottoman Empire, or for Liman and Gerold; they did, but that atavistic self-image existed in tandem with explicit and implicit assumptions of essential difference between Europeans and Orientals, and the typical superiority of the former. Gerold, who was rather more introspective, somewhat complicates this picture, as he was admittedly hesitant to employ the simplistic binary of "European superiority" and "oriental inferiority." Furthermore, neither Gerold nor Liman evince an uncomplicated belief in the trope of Germans as the "better colonizers;" at the very least, such a belief was not articulated in such blunt and crude terms. Gerold's discussions on German ambitions in the Near East were more concrete than those of Liman; but to both authors, one European imperialism was much like another. Part and parcel of this were the examples of the British Empire and the nature of "British work" in Egypt and India, which loomed large in the German colonial imaginary and in the works of Liman and Gerold. In addition, it does not seem likely that Liman thought of the Germans as contributing something unique to the development of the Ottoman Empire, aside from superior knowledge of military matters. Even when Liman suggests that the presence of the Germans helped to restrain the impulses of the Ottomans in engaging in acts of fanatical jihad against Christians, it was the Christian identity of Germany, and not its' "German-ness," which was allegedly the key factor in restraining the Ottomans; again, Christianity was hardly the exclusive property of the Germans. Indeed, the most "German" aspect of the two memoirs is, as was the case with Susanne Zantop, the construction of a colonial fantasy. In summary, it is my considered opinion that there simply does not seem to have been anything uniquely "German" about Liman's and Gerold's constructions of the 'other' or their understandings of 'race.' If anything, their understandings of the two were in large part derivatives of extant British imperial discourses. Other German imperial discourses and Orientalisms evinced the unique tendencies listed above, but Liman's and Gerold's treatment of the Ottomans are of a largely different genus.

conception of self which historically emphasized the martial qualities of the Muslims of the Ottoman Empire.[133]

Perhaps most importantly, both the 'Turks' of Liman's and Gerold's memoirs and the Scottish Highlanders and Gurkhas of British imperial discourse were largely constructed identities. The Turks of Liman's memoir were little more a cohesive people than the Gurkhas of British India. In point of fact, the Anatolian peasant who constituted the very "pearl" of the Ottoman Army would likely have been very surprised to learn that he was, in fact, a Turk.[134] The relative diffusiveness of Turkish national identity even in the supposed heartland of the Turks, Anatolia, did not deter either foreign observers or Ottoman proto-nationalists from insisting that the Turkish-speaking Muslims of Anatolia constituted the very foundation of the self-evident, nay, primordial, nation of the "Turks;" the concurrence of the Turks themselves on this point, much like the case of the Sikhs and the Gurkhas, apparently counted for very little.[135] To these "Turks who do not know it" must also be added certain members of the Ottoman military-political establishment, who were often of diverse ethnic and national extraction, and yet who, by virtue of their close

[133] For the Sikh concept of individual and communal honor, see Streets, *Martial Races*, 64. By contrast, it appears that the Gurkhas alone disavowed the theory of martial races when applied to themselves. Violence and military exploits were not celebrated in the cultures of the Gurkha tribes, and the contemporary nickname for these Gurkha soldiers, *lahures* (men who exchange labor outside their communities for wages), suggests that, discourses about them aside, these men primarily sought employment in the British Indian Army in order to obtain higher wages, which they could then remit to their home villages; to this day, this is the chief incentive to prospective recruits for the British Army. See Streets, *Martial Races*, 215-216. In addition, Gurkha recruits in the British Indian Army were expected to learn Nepali and practice Hinduism, when many of them had no familiarity with either; their British officers constructed an essentialized identity, which the village recruits then had to conform to, as if it were their very own. See Streets, *Martial Races*, 175, 202. For the similarly constructed nature of Highland identity in the Highland regiments, see Streets, *Martial Races*, 177.

[134] Kannengiesser wrote in his memoir that, among the Muslims of the Ottoman Empire, there were differences between the European (Thracian) and the Asian (Anatolian) Turks, the latter of which was "the pearl of the whole" (*der Perle des Ganzen*). Kannengiesser, *Gallipoli*, 34.

[135] Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914*, 25-41.

association with the "Turkish" political order, would be seen by others as "Turks." Hence, for example, the reader will be hard-pressed to find instances of Albanian Ottomans in Liman's and Gerold's memoir: they are merely "Turks" by another name.[136] Furthermore, when Liman and Gerold attribute indolence, cunning, reticence, despotic impulses, and militarily courageousness to the Turks, it was because they were Turks, not because they were Muslims or Ottomans; the impulse to see the various ethnicities of the Ottoman Empire as burgeoning "nations," regardless of the inchoate nature of that nationalism, is pronounced in many accounts of the late Ottoman Empire, including those of Gerold and Liman.[137]

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[136] The considerable malleability of Turkish national identity was recognized by the founders of the Turkish Republic, who diligently set about "marking Turks." Here I am paraphrasing the words of Italian statesman Massimo d'Azeglio, who said "We have made Italy: now we must make Italians." See Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe 1870-1914," 267.

[137] Kayalı, "The Ottoman Experience in World War I," 885. Scholars have increasingly drawn attention to the contested nature of identities in the late Ottoman Empire, and, through emphasis on the latent Ottomanist and especially Islamist intellectual tendencies in Ottoman society, endeavored to downplay the narrative of "Turkification," which has remained indelibly associated with the rule of the Committee of Union and Progress. One of the most exhaustive monographs on the continued importance of Islam as a source of political cohesiveness in the Late Ottoman Empire, particularly during the Young Turk era, is Hasan Kayalı's *Arabs and Young Turks*; he writes, "A main proposition of this study is that among the chief Muslim groups of the Ottoman Empire political nationalism was not a viable force until the end of World War I. Appeals to religion… prevented nationalism from becoming the primary focus of allegiance for Muslim peoples, and as such actually defused nationalism." Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, 12-13. Also see Kayalı, "The Ottoman Experience in World War I," 886, and Zürcher, "Young Turks, Ottoman Muslims, and Turkish Nationalists: Identity Politics 1908-38," 213-35. At the same time, other scholars have argued for the existence of considerable political, cultural and ideological continuities between the Young Turk-era and the early Turkish Republic; indeed, many of the leaders of the national resistance movement and later the Republican politicians were former Unionist party members. See Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*. While Zürcher strictly examined political continuity, others have sought to analyze ideological continuity between the late Ottoman and early Republican periods. This has included a reexamination of the genesis of Turkish nationalism and proto-nationalisms in the nineteenth century. David Kushner's 1977 study on the subject conclusively pointed to a number of important historical developments: Ottoman intellectuals borrowed conceptualization of the nation from Western and Central Europe, particularly from nationalisms like German and Italian nationalism, which emphasized ethnolinguistic unity across in spite of political disunity, or else nationalisms which cropped up in European multi-ethnic empires; Ottoman intellectuals took note of the Orientalist scholarship produced by scholars with often considerable Turkish sympathies, which began to establish boundaries on the uniqueness of the Turkish people and their rich history; early articulations of Turkish nationalism were profoundly influenced by the work and thought of their fellow Turkic brethren in Central Asia, as well as the Turkic peoples of the Russian Empire who emigrated to the Ottoman Empire; finally, a discourse of Turkish nationalism within the broader intellectual framework of Ottomanism was in place during the Hamidian period, which was well before the late or post-1911 CUP-era dating typically associated with the ascendancy of Turkish nationalist thought. See Kushner, *The Rise of Turkish Nationalism*, 1-

While various peoples have historically nourished great cultural pride in their military achievements or prowess, the relatively 'modern' concept of martial races was largely differentiated from earlier discourses of martial ability by the reality of hegemonic European military might, which had been weaponized in the service of empire, as well as the reification of conceptions of race that posited military ability as one of many inherent, biologically determined characteristics that defined a people. Liman and Gerold believed that the Turks were among those peoples who were militarily-inclined; but what enabled them to assert their authority as producers of an authentic discourse, as practitioners of military ethnography, was not only their sense of corporate identity as military officers. It was their conscious sense of belonging to the "first army in the world," that most military of nations which was the Germans, which imbued them with the discursive authority to impose hierarchies of military worth upon the peoples of the Orient.[138] In addition to the ability to draw

19. Subsequent historians have taken up various points of Kushner's analysis. Masami Arai has explored in further detail the differences between the conceptions of Turkish nationalism between the Russian emigres and the native Ottoman intellectuals; in her words, "There were two aspects in Turkish nationalism: the search for a national Turkish identity which among Ottoman Turks had been lost for a long time; and the construction or reinforcement of a social unity by the awakened Turks." See Arai, *Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era*, 4-5. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu reemphasized the early importance of Turkish nationalism in the Young Turk Weltanschauung, which became increasingly racialist and völkisch, as well as the persistence of Ottomanism as a political ideology in the CUP-era. See Hanioğlu, "Turkism and the Young Turks: 1889-1908," 3-19. Finally, Carter Findley makes an interesting argument for the existence of a dialectical process between two currents, "radical, secularizing current and a more conservative, Islamically motivated current," formed in relation to the "triad" of Turkish nationalism, Islam, and modernity. See Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity*, 18.

[138] The phrase "first army in the world" is used by Gerold to explain why the Greek Crown Prince took such an immediate liking to him. Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 25, 32. For a number of historically determined reasons, the Germans felt themselves to be a uniquely martial people. In constructing themselves as a martial nation, they began by reaching back to hallowed antiquity. For the nineteenth century impact of the works of Tacitus in German intellectual circles, as well as the importance of the early Germanic tribes in German collective memory, particularly the importance of the myth of Arminius (*Hermann*) the Cheruskan in the formation of völkisch ideological currents, see Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology*, 67-70; Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 608; Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions," 275. For the historical conceptualization of the German Reich as the "heir" of the Roman Empire, as well as Christendom's answer to the effeminate and savage hordes of Asia, see Kontje, *German Orientalisms*, 35-37. For competing Ottoman claims as heirs of the Roman Empire after the final conquest of the Byzantines in 1453 by Sultan Mehmed II, see Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire*, 56-57. There seemed to have existed a certain degree of German historical anxiety regarding

the military stature of their opponents. In the early modern period, men like Ulrich von Hutten stressed the military worthiness of the Germanic tribes' enemy, the Roman Empire, in stark contradiction with Alexander the Great's military victories over the aforementioned hordes of Asia. In other words, there is historical thread of continuity in the German tendency to evaluate other peoples on the basis of military worth, leading from the early modern era to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Conflict with and victory over a worthy military opponent entailed greater historic valor than the conquest of an inferior one. Other European peoples were not exempt from German national chauvinism with regard to military prowess. In the Wilhelmine period this attitude extended to the German view of the British, whom they perceived as "a nation of shopkeepers" and "military amateurs and dilettantes;" many Germans also characterized everything civilian, un-military, and un-Prussian as saturated with "British commercialism." See Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 141. This aforementioned dismissive attitude of the Germans towards the British was not mirrored by either Liman or Gerold; both authors were generous, even gracious, in their praise of their adversary. This was quite likely the consequence of concerns to the effect that it would heighten the military glory of both authors if the British appeared to be worthy adversaries. Liman hoped to cast Gallipoli as a modern victory of Arminius against the new Roman Empire, as opposed to Alexander's triumphs over the weak armies of Asia. However, both authors also evinced a strong affinity for the British, as though they felt a kind of European or Western kinship. In any case, historical memory imbued German collective consciousness with a peculiar sense of destiny, which was itself contingent upon German martial ability. The idea of a special, even foreordained role for the Germans in history found a most articulate promulgation in German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's work *The Philosophy of History*. Hegel suggested that the world-historical Spirit (*Geist*), a kind of universally governing principle inextricably linked to the various forms of constitution, conceptions of God, and above all the State, underwent totalizing redefinitions throughout history, only to find genuine self-actualization, nay, even perfection, in the "German World," which epitomized the "end of History," its final aim and ultimate goal: "The East knew and to the present day knows only that *One* is free; the Greek and Roman world, that *some* are free; the German World knows that *All* are free." It is important to note here that Hegel's vision was also a repudiation of the German Romantics who placed the ancient wisdom of the Orientals on a high pedestal, particularly that of the Indian subcontinent. Hegel strove to underline the essential difference between Europe and Asia, with the conceptual categories of 'West' and 'East' corresponding to the two geographic and cultural entities. Of course, the former was construed as superior to the latter. See Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, 121; McGetchin, "'Orient' and 'Occident,' 'East' and 'West' in the discourse of German Orientalists, 1790-1930," 115. The virtues which German soldiers and officers were expected to embody can be seen from Kaiser Wilhelm's infamous "Hun Speech," in which he enjoined the departing German military expedition to China to quell the Boxer Uprising with merciless brutality. See Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 135, 143-144. The modern origins of a 'German' association with martial prowess can be found in the history of the foremost state of the German Empire, namely Prussia. Through the eighteenth-century reforms and military exploits of monarchs like Friedrich Wilhelm I and his son Friedrich II, the reputation of Prussia generated statements like "Prussia was hatched from a cannonball," as well as "Prussia was not a country with an army, but an army with a country." Indeed, the military commanded outsized prestige in the Kingdom of Prussia, even though the general association of the Germans, including the Prussians, with martial pursuits was not uncontested: the relatively weak status of Prussia in comparison with Austria, along with the fact that the Prussian army was not particularly effective against the peasant conscript armies of France, ensured that there could never be a complete ideological association of the Prussians with uniquely military competence. See Blackbourn, *History of Germany 1780-1918*, 17-18; Taylor, *The Course of German History*, 57, and Chapter 5 *passim*. After the wars of unification, German society became militarized "to an extent which would be unimaginable today." The particular reason for this lay in the German state-building project, whereby Prussian historical experience was made to represent all German historical experiences; its military victories became the victories of the German people as a whole. See Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 600, 607-609; Blackbourn, *History of Germany 1780-1918*, 285-286; Hobsbawm, "Mass Producing Traditions: 1870-1914," 274, 277, 279; Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 432.

from a collective memory rich in martial exploits, Liman and Gerold were both socialized in the most uniquely German military institution, the General Staff.[139] Though they may not have been fully aware, Liman and Gerold effectively acted in the capacity of agents of what was quintessentially a colonization of Ottoman military culture, and through it Ottoman society as a whole. It was not only a native institution that they hoped to emulate and foster in a new, foreign setting: it was the mindset that went with it, part and parcel of which were the institutional emphases on honor, professionalism, a strong work ethic, and an often-implicit homosocial masculinity. However, according to the logic of martial race doctrine, only 'races' naturally inclined to martial pursuits could internalize modern, European means of warfare. The fact that German officers like Liman and Gerold believed that the officers of the Ottoman Army could be trained in the duties of staff officers suggests that, in their eyes, paternalist fantasies of raising up the 'Turks' would meet with tangible results. This would be further confirmed by the degree to which officers that Liman and Gerold encountered in the Ottoman Army exhibited the capacity for seizing strategic 'initiative.' The importance of an officer's ability to react in a

[139] For the lack of civilian oversight where the German military was concerned, see Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 93, 103; Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 604, 606; Blackbourn, *History of Germany 1780-1918*, 19. For the official contempt of international law as an impediment to military practice, see Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 129-130, 182-196. For the phenomenon of 'double militarism,' through which civilian groups like the Pan-German League pushed the German military closer to war, see Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 105-108. The General Staff was, at its root, a collective body of military officers whose main business consisted of the excruciatingly meticulous planning of military campaigns, organizing the mobilizations for these campaigns, and the unceasing innovation and application of contemporary military theory and doctrine to the former two activities. In particular, Liman had spent many years on the General Staff before he was dispatched to the Ottoman Empire. Many of the other German officers in the Ottoman Empire, including Gerold, also had General Staff training. See Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 9; Blackbourn, *History of Germany*, 287-288; Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 112-113. It is worth pointing out that Mesut Uyar and Edward Erickson believe that the work of Friedrich Bronsart von Schellendorf, a German officer with General Staff training who was the second highest-ranking officer in the German military mission after Liman (and who became the de facto Chief of the Ottoman General Staff), was particularly valuable in the effort to reorganize and reform the Ottoman army, as well as in the training of Ottoman officers in staff work; if nothing else, this is yet another indication of the immense importance the Germans attributed to the purpose and function of the General Staff as an institution. See Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 238-240.

combat situation and effectively improvise without awaiting instructions from their superiors, was another unique facet of German military training, known as *Auftragstaktik*, or "mission-based tactics."[140]

When Liman and Gerold complain about a lack of initiative, or, conversely, when they praise the initiative of Ottoman officers, it is clear that they are writing from a standpoint in which officers were expected to capitalize on any strategic advantage that might suddenly occur on the battlefield. Indeed, some of the most feted Ottoman officers in these memoirs, such as Mustafa Kemal, are showcased for their ability to press an advantage, even though these offensives would often result in a terrible cost. By contrast, failure to act was taken as further proof that some Ottomans, even officers in the Ottoman army, embodied the very essence of the Oriental indolence and passive resistance that Liman and Gerold so disliked. However, the fact that some Ottoman officers were capable of exhibiting independent initiative suggests that the 'German way of doing things' could be a learned behavior; though it would undoubtedly be even more effective were it internalized by a people already predisposed to military endeavor. Auftragstaktik epitomized the kind of instinct, honed by training, that the Germans felt themselves to possess almost naturally as a consequence of their inherent martial prowess. It seems clear that the Germans felt that the 'Turks' also possessed the kind of natural ability for martial pursuits that would be receptive to the importation of a kind of

[140] Mission-type tactics, at their root, underlined the importance of the individual initiative of the officer, in acting in response to the changing strategic situation on the battlefield without awaiting instructions from senior commanders that would "inevitably arrive too late." With mission-type tactics, officers would receive a directive (to seize a vital bridgehead, for example), and it would then be left to their discretion as to the means that would be employed in accomplishing that end. As Hull puts it, "Basic assumptions are the products of historical experience," and it seems evident that the German military command was increasingly convinced that, in a social-Darwinian world where the dictum of survival of the fittest wholly encompassed all the endeavors of man, every opportunity or tactical advantage should be ruthlessly seized, without the need to wait for further orders." Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 97, 115-116.

military-cultural underscoring of staff-planning and individual initiative, with all the commensurate socio-cultural changes that this entailed.

From the above information, we can hypothesize the existence of German discourses which situated the Germans as a uniquely 'martial race' or warlike people; after all, only a nation whose business is war could create such innovations like the General Staff or Auftragstaktik. This is relevant because it is an unwritten rule of martial race doctrine that only a (European) martial race can designate other races as martial or un-martial; of course, this was a classic example of military ethnography. The Germans borrowed their conceptions of martial race doctrine directly from the British. Indeed, Britain was taken as the axiomatic model, in part due to its vast and varied colonial experience, and in part due to a certain sense of shared kinship between the Germans and the British, since both were ostensibly descended from common Germanic stock.[141]

Knowledge of British colonial administration became more important as it became apparent that a major war between the European powers would likely bring the British and the Germans into armed conflict. Both Liman and Gerold evince considerable familiarity with British colonial imperatives and mindsets. Liman cites a memorandum of Lord Cromer, written some forty years earlier, in 1878, in which

[141] The exchange of knowledge on both military and colonial affairs is well-established. See Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 98-99. Of course, there was also a shared sense of superiority between the Germans and the British as emissaries of European civilization and representatives of the white-race more generally. This would occasionally manifest in the bizarre spectacle of colonial expeditions as a competitive sport: during the Boxer War, the British drew up a league-table in which they ranked the relative discipline, bearing, and martial competency of their allies in their punitive expeditions against the Boxer rebels and other unfortunate Chinese peasants. The Germans were undoubtedly delighted by the fact that they led the rankings, ahead of both the French and the Americans and considerably ahead of the Italians and Russians. See Kuss, *German Colonial Wars and the Context of Military Violence*, 208, 211-212. German colonial administrators and theorists were conscientious students of British imperial practices, and sought to apply their knowledge of other imperial works to their own endeavors. See Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust,* 79, 111, and Kuss, *German Colonial Wars*, 127.

Lord Cromer construed the Suez Canal as the most vital link to the center of the British imperium; its loss was therefore unfathomable, and the failure of practically any military expedition to seize it all-but foreordained.[142] In bringing this to his reader's attention, Liman hopes to make public his early misgivings about the Suez Canal expeditions during the First World War, both of which ultimately failed; his intention is undoubtedly to distance himself from such costly military adventurism. However, in doing so, he betrays an intimate knowledge of British imperial considerations.[143]

For his part, Gerold finds a number of opportunities to compare German and British methods of diplomacy and colonial administration. In one of these narrative asides, he suggested that "abroad the English immediately gave the impression of a closed front," and that "behind them there always stood the 'influence of sea-power.'"[144] Although much of this impression was gathered from trips to southern Europe and north Africa, Gerold's usage of the phrase "influence of sea-power-" which is not translated into German, but rather kept in the original English- suggests that, much like Liman, he was well-acquainted with the strategic imperatives of the British imperium.[145]

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[142] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 38-39.

[143] This seems to have persisted in later life. In his introduction to Hans Kannengiesser's memoir on the Gallipoli Campaign, which was written in Munich, 1927, Liman touts Kannengiesser's memoir as a direct and necessary complement to Winston Churchill's account of the First World War, *The World Crisis 1915*; this would in turn suggest an abiding interest in the geopolitical developments surrounding his "brave enemy." See Kannengiesser, *Gallipoli*, 5.

[144] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 45.

[145] This can only be a reference to American naval officer Alfred Thayer Mahan's famous 1890 work *The Influence of Sea-Power Upon History, 1660-1783*, in which he argues that the basis of British imperial strength was its strong navy. There can be little doubt that Mahan's English contemporaries would have heartily agreed with his views.

Although neither of these two examples are strictly necessary to establish the existence of a veritable system of knowledge transfer between the British and the Germans, it is nonetheless important in demonstrating the more salient point: Liman and Gerold understood many precepts of British imperial and colonial governance and administration because, as German officers, and more particularly as staff officers, they were expected to keep abreast of such developments. Their familiarity with British imperialism was an important prerequisite to their utilization of British colonial systems of knowledge and knowledge production, including the martial race doctrine.

Finally, and most importantly, German military and colonial functionaries directly applied their knowledge of the martial race doctrine to their own colonial experiences in China, German South-West Africa, and German East Africa. As historian Susanne Kuss writes, "military domination of the area required exact knowledge of not only the topography of the colony and the resources available but the habits and fighting practices of the native population."[146] Particular attention was paid by military officers and administrators to the amenability of local populations to the possibility of collaborating with the colonial regime.[147] This trend towards categorization and classification seemed to have been rather more operative in places with great ethnic diversity, such as India, Africa, and the Ottoman Empire; polities with ethnic or 'national' homogeneity, like China, seem to have but rarely been so thoroughly dissected to the same extent as polities where the reverse was the case.[148] It is important to note here that, as the Germans were to find out during the Boxer

[146] Kuss, *German Colonial Wars*, 156.

[147] Kuss, *German Colonial Wars*, 161.

[148] Kuss, *German Colonial Wars*, 101-102.

Rebellion, martial race doctrine was not entirely an ideological construct: A race cannot be said to be "martial" in the absence of some kind of significant military success. Whereas Erich von Falkenhayn, who held a field command in China, and Gerold von Gleich would find their relatively high expectations grievously disappointed, Liman von Sanders would find himself on balance pleased with the performance of his Turkish soldiers. The significance of China was important here, since it was the site of one of the German Empire's earliest military expeditions, and therefore an impromptu test of German competency at military ethnography. To be sure, with most of their early knowledge coming from the British who had been in China for far longer, the Germans could not realistically assess 'Chinese martial ability,' particularly if focused through the lens of German military discipline and drill, without encountering the Chinese on the field of battle, either as enemies or else as allies. In any event, the Germans found the Chinese to be lacking in 'military worth,' a phrase that crops up repeatedly in Gerold's and especially Liman's memoirs; simply put, for all the relative merits that the Chinese exhibited, such as industriousness and frugality, military prowess was not one of them. In other German imperial contexts, the natives would similarly be categorized according to martial prowess, likelihood of colonial collaboration, and military participation in the *Schutztruppe* ("Protection force").[149]

In sum, the Germans were well-aware of the doctrine of martial races which had been developed by the British in India, and they consciously brought such an

[149] In German South-West Africa, the hierarchy of martial ability ran from the Herero, who were "militarily useless," to the Rehebother Baster, who were found to be the "most German" racially and militarily. See Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 129, 152-153, and Kuss, *German Colonial Wars*, 161-163. In German East Africa, the German explorer and later-colonial governor Hermann von Wissmann brought back Sudanese mercenaries, who formed the backbone of the Schutztruppe in the region, followed by Zulus from Mozambique. Only later did the Germans recruit local "Askaris." See Kuss, *German Colonial Wars and the Context of Military Violence*, 103-104.

ideological apparatus to bear in their own colonial contexts. Although the same consideration of loyalty unmistakably loomed large in the German estimation of which race really was martial, to some extent the appraisal did depend upon the comportment and efficacy of the race or nation in question on the battlefield. The establishment of racial hierarchies, constructed as they were on various considerations, and the more general practice of comparison lent greater weight to both the militarily incompetence of an un-martial race and competence of a martial race. What I am suggesting is that the Sikhs and Gurkhas of India were ever so slightly more worthy of being considered martial races when compared with various Muslim troops and high-caste Hindus. By way of analogy: in the estimation of Liman and Gerold, the Turks were the best that the Ottoman Army had to offer; in comparison with them, the Arabs could, under the right circumstances, perform very adequately; and the Persians were in serious danger of not knowing one end of a rifle from the other. In stark contrast to this military fiasco that was the German involvement in Persia in 1916, the Turks acquitted themselves nothing short of admirably. Put simply, the establishment of hierarchies and practice of comparison heightened the merits and demerits of martial and un-martial races, and was an additional yet crucial facet of the complex coloniality of the martial race doctrine, derived as it was originally for the purpose of *divide et impera* ("divide and rule").[150] Liman's and Gerold's impressions were not produced and aired in a vacuum; on the contrary, their perceptions of the characteristics and idiosyncrasies of the people and peoples whom they encountered were often reported back to their superiors. Although it is impossible to establish precisely what these superiors intended to do

[150] Rand, "'Martial Races' and 'Imperial Subjects:' Violence and Governance in Colonial India, 1857-1914," 6.

with such hard-won knowledge, the methods and practices involved nonetheless suggest a semi-formalized process of classification and differentiation which is altogether striking in its similarity to those intellectual processes utilized in more formal colonial contexts, by both the British and the Germans elsewhere. To summarize, Liman and Gerold drew extensively from extant Orientalist and British imperial discourses in order to render their experiences in the Ottoman Empire intelligible to their audience. It now remains to examine the men themselves.

1.5 Biography of Liman von Sanders and Gerold von Gleich

Otto Viktor Karl Liman was born in Stolp, Pomerania, on February 17, 1855.[151] The "son of a country gentleman" cum merchant who owned a "knightly estate" (*Rittergut*), Liman entered the military after completing gymnasium in Berlin, and held several staff appointments as well as commands in the Hussars and cavalry brigades. Liman's father's grandfather was an assimilated Jew; as Ulrich Trumpener points out, Jewish descent was exceedingly rare among Prussian generals.[152] In 1911 he was appointed as commander of the 22nd Division in Kassel, and two years later he was ennobled by Kaiser Wilhelm II; he chose the title 'von Sanders,' after his first wife, Amelie Lily Karoline Gabriele von Sanders.[153] On that occasion, Liman was offered command of the nascent German military mission in Istanbul. The ostensible purpose of the military mission was to help reform the Ottoman Army after the serious defeats incurred during the Balkan Wars.[154]

[151] See http://webopac.hwwa.de/PresseMappe20E/Digiview_MID.cfm?mid=P011454. To date, there exists no full-length biography of Liman.

[152] Trumpener, "Liman von Sanders and the German-Ottoman Alliance," 179.

[153] See https://www.lagis-hessen.de/pnd/11878000X.

[154] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 9-11.

Scholars have debated the extent of the reforms that Liman was able to effect in his capacity as chief of the military mission before the outbreak of the war. The impact of his leadership during the war itself has similarly been the topic of discussion.[155] Matters were made somewhat more complicated by the fact that some

[155] Ever since A.J.P. Taylor's assertion that the Germans "had a firm grip on the Turkish Army," the historiographical pendulum has swung towards a revisionist view, to the effect that the German influence on the reform of the Ottoman Army, as well as its impact on the direction of the Ottoman military effort during the war, has been largely overstated. This is most convincingly demonstrated in Ulrich Trumpener's classic monograph, which remains the standard work on the subject of the German officers in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. It is fair to say that the balance sheet of Liman's achievements during his time in the Ottoman Empire has come under increasing scrutiny, and has suffered by varying degrees. For example, there now appears to be a loose consensus to the effect that the Ottoman Army had already undergone a significant degree of reorganization prior to the arrival of Liman's military mission. M. Naim Turfan cogently argues that the raison d'etre of the German military mission as conceived by then-Grand Vizier, Mahmud Şevket Pasha, was to establish governmental control over the unruly and politicized officer corps. See Turfan, *Rise of the Young Turks*, 308, 310-313. Also see Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 241. Similarly, Liman's various field commands have also attracted critical attention. In his monograph *Ordered to Die*, which is to date the most comprehensive English-language military history of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War, Edward Erickson challenges the "myth" of Liman's role in preparing for the defense of Gallipoli. While Liman "worked tirelessly to improve the tactical situation" through such measures as expanding fortifications, drilling the men constantly to maintain readiness and improve morale, and bettering hospital arrangements, the overall plan for the disposition of troops on the peninsula corresponded to plans that had been drawn up by the Ottoman General Staff in 1912-1913. Nevertheless, Liman's "almost immediate reaction… in diverting and committing reserve divisions proved decisive," and in the final analysis Erickson credits Liman with having had a "vital role at Gallipoli," but also censures the general for having refused commands on the Eastern front, where his help was badly needed. See Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 81-82, 85, 234. In contrast with Erickson, Mesut Uyar suggests that, far from being an asset to the Ottoman defense at Gallipoli, Liman's poor understanding of the strategic situation on the ground endangered the Ottoman positions to such an extent that the only remaining option for the Ottoman officers under his command was to disobey his orders. See Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 259. Although Klaus Wolf upbraids Liman for running roughshod over the "Turkish way of doing things," he is adamant that Liman's "planning and assertiveness" deserve credit for the final result of the Gallipoli campaign, writing that "All unemotional and unbiased analyses allows for no other conclusion." See Wolf, *Victory at Gallipoli 1915*, 241. It is clear that Erickson and Uyar, to varying degrees, are part of the aforementioned historical revisionist trend which has pushed back against the hitherto existing tenets in Western scholarship which attribute to the Germans a considerable role in directing the Ottoman war effort. One detects hints of Kemalist cum Turkish nationalist historiography in both authors. By contrast, Wolf makes an effort to rehabilitate the Germans who contributed to the Ottoman victory at Gallipoli, thereby repatriating them in the history of a campaign which has traditionally been viewed in the Turkish official historiography as the site of the "birth of the new Turkish nation from the wreck of the Ottoman Empire." See Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 258. It is likely due to the relatively short duration of his tenure as commander, as well as the status of the Gallipoli campaign as a foundational myth for the Turkish republic, that Liman's leadership in Palestine and Greater Syria has not received the kind of commentary seen with regard to his role at Gallipoli. Curiously, here Erickson is the more critical, arguing in some detail that the kind of defensive scheme envisioned by Liman's predecessor Erich von Falkenhayn was more suited to the changing realities of warfare and military strategy during the First World War, which were pioneered in Europe and subsequently brought to bear on the Ottoman forces by their British adversaries. See Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 200. On this point, Uyar largely concurs with Erickson, in that Liman's experiences at Gallipoli did not reflect or take into account the new ways in which war was being

German officers, such as those on the Ottoman general staff, were not subject to the authority of the chief of the military mission. In addition, the German Embassy and various military attaches also established their own political networks within the Ottoman polity. It would be a mistake to imagine that 'the Germans in the Ottoman Empire' were a monolithic entity; rather, it is more appropriate to consider the Germans as constituting distinct factions, which were loosely united by the same military-political objectives.[156]

Nevertheless, when war was declared, and the German and Ottoman politicians sought to conclude a military alliance, the military mission was essentially incorporated into the Ottoman Army, while retaining some minor semblance of its independence. Liman was given command of the First Army in Istanbul.[157] In the spring of 1915, the looming threat of an Entente attempt to force the Dardanelles

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waged, some three years later. Nevertheless, Uyar suggests that Liman "tried his best" in the abysmal conditions under which he labored, conditions which were not helped by Erich von Falkenhayn's costly squandering of available forces and reserves. See Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 270. In evaluating Liman's impact as chief of the military mission and as a commander in the field, I must acknowledge, first and foremost, that Uyar, Erickson, and Wolf are all former military officers, which I am not. Nevertheless, I think it possible to weigh in, even as a non-specialist. Uyar's comments strike me as too critical to be considered an unbiased appraisal of Liman's performance at Gallipoli. It is telling that despite the considerable animosity between Liman and Enver Pasha, the latter nevertheless offered the former command of the Yıldırım Army Group; a mix of desperation and grudging respect for Liman's ability as a field commander likely contributed to this decision. Furthermore, the role of Mustafa Kemal in both campaigns, who receives nearly unqualified adulation from both Erickson and Uyar, may be used as a litmus test in appraising Liman's performance at Gallipoli and in Palestine and Greater Syria. Mustafa Kemal never resigned while under Liman's command at Gallipoli, and served under the German general again in 1918 with equanimity. By contrast, Kemal was provoked to such an extent by Erich von Falkenhayn's imperiousness that he "resigned from his post." See Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 268. Therefore, in the final analysis, it seems to me that Liman may be reasonably credited to some extent with the Ottoman victory at Gallipoli; both Klaus Wolf and Edward Erickson have shown that this can be done without taking away from or otherwise downplaying the considerable achievements of the Ottomans themselves, from officers like Mustafa Kemal and Esat Pasha down to the common soldiery. Regarding Palestine, the general consensus is that Liman could do but little to forestall a defeat against an adversary with overwhelming numerical and material superiority. On this point, Liman himself predictably disagrees.

[156] According to Gottfried Hagen, "German colonialist discourses were far from unified. Instead, they differed from one colony to another, and even within the same administration." Hagen, "German Heralds of Holy War: Orientalists and Applied Oriental Studies," 145.

[157] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 36.

open and potentially attack Istanbul itself spurred the Ottoman military authorities, led by Enver Pasha, to form the Fifth Army. Command was granted to Liman, who, aided by an array of highly competent officers, both German and Ottoman, parried the Allied attack during a grueling ten-month campaign.[158] The resultant victory at Gallipoli has been lionized ever since.

After the Gallipoli campaign, the Fifth Army was involved in some minor skirmishes against the Entente in Asia Minor, but it seems that the majority of the military activity consisted of patrolling the coastline to curtail espionage and prevent Greek brigands and military deserters from terrorizing the local populace.[159] In the meantime, Liman continued to offer counsel to the Ottoman military authorities as well as the German chiefs of staff of the Ottoman Army, much of which was ignored. On February 19, 1918, Enver Pasha offered Liman von Sanders command of Yıldırım Army Group, or Army Group F (*Heeresgruppe F*), on the Palestine front.[160] Liman accepted, and was able to hold back General Allenby's forces until September, when the Ottoman Seventh and Eighth Armies collapsed and withdrew toward Aleppo and Adana. On October 31, after receiving news of the Armistice, Liman returned to Istanbul, and was situated on Büyükada for a month and a half.[161]

In early 1919, on his return to Germany, Liman was brought ashore on Malta, and subsequently detained by the British authorities, on suspicion of his complicity in war crimes against the Greeks and Armenians of the Ottoman Empire, as well as

[158] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 77.

[159] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 189.

[160] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 247-248.

[161] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 398-399.

mistreatment of British prisoners of war.[162] After six months, having been apparently acquitted, he returned home to Germany. He retired from the army that year, and died in Munich on August 22, 1929 at the age of 74.[163]

Much less is known about Franz Maria Gerold von Gleich. He was born in 1869 in Ludwigsburg, in the territory of Württemberg. His father, Alarich von Gleich, was a lieutenant-general in the military. After his education at gymnasium, Gerold joined a cavalry regiment in 1886.[164] In 1900, Gerold began training in the German General Staff. In 1912, he was sent to Greece, where he acted in the capacity as a commander cum military attaché in the Greek Army. He was present for some part of the campaigns in Macedonia and Epirus.[165] When the war began in 1914, Gerold returned to Germany to take command of a cavalry regiment, and in 1915 he was promoted to the rank of colonel. This promotion apparently entailed a post as chief of staff, far away from any front. By the end of 1915, and by his own admission, Gerold had become rather bored with the tedious and bureaucratic nature of his work; he positively jumped at the chance to become the chief of staff of the Ottoman Sixth Army under the command of Colmar von der Goltz.[166]

There is little indication that Gerold belonged to the German military mission proper. Although it is known from Liman's memoir that Gerold provided Liman with reports, in Gerold's own memoir his main point of contact was Erich von Falkenhayn, who was his superior before he was dispatched to the Ottoman Empire.

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[162] Tusan, *Smyrna's Ashes*, 131.

[163] See https://www.lagis-hessen.de/pnd/11878000X.

[164] Gerold considered himself to be an "*alte[r] Kavallerist*." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 90.

[165] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 7.

[166] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 66-67.

After having left in February of 1916 to assume his new post, Gerold did not arrive in Baghdad until the 14th or 15th of April, at which point he found that Field Marshal Colmar von der Goltz was on his deathbed.[167] The Field Marshal died a few days later, and the precise nature of Gerold's position in the Ottoman Sixth Army was thrown into confusion. Gerold initially had fairly good relations with the commander of the Sixth Army Halil Pasha, who in late April presided over the second most significant Ottoman victory during the war, the Siege of Kut, where British forces under Charles Townshend surrendered after months of being encircled near Baghdad. After the victory, Gerold grew increasingly displeased with the decision by Ottoman military headquarters to dispatch part of the Sixth Army into Iran in order to assist 'friendly' Persian forces fighting against the Russians and the British. As time wore on, Gerold tried to convince his superiors in Berlin, particularly Erich von Falkenhayn, that the German involvement in Iran was a futile endeavor. Furthermore, although relations with Halil remained cordial, Gerold's opinion of the Persian allies bordered on vociferous contempt. In the summer of 1916, Gerold was struck by a disease which nearly claimed his life, and he was forced to return to Europe to recuperate.

After his return to Europe, Gerold participated in various battles until the end of the war, including the Battle of the Somme, Arras, Flanders, Cambrai, and the Ludendorff Offensives of 1918. After the war, Gerold retired from the military, and embarked on a surprising vocation as a physicist. By 1923, he had published articles in various journals on the subject, and in 1930 he wrote a work entitled *Einsteins Relitivitätstheorien und physikalische Wirklichkeit*, which apparently was not without

[167] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 95, 99.

impact on the broader debates in the scientific community. In 1938 Gerold died, after a long battle with illness.[168]

1.6 Publication information and Gerold and Liman as author and protagonist

Liman's memoir *Fünf Jahre Türkei* has its inception in Liman's "involuntary stay at Malta," as the general himself puts it.[169] With time to spare, Liman drafted a rudimentary manuscript during his confinement, which was supplemented with further records upon his return to Germany. Having written the foreword in November 1919, it seems likely that the book was published in early 1920. In 1927, an English translation was released by the United States Naval Institute. Gerold's memoir *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, was written in the spring of 1921, and was published through the same publisher, August Scherl Verlag, later that year.[170] To my knowledge it remains untranslated.

With the exception of very few details, much of what was stated above can be gleaned from only the briefest perusal of the memoirs themselves. It is necessary to delve a little deeper to uncover more about Liman von Sanders, Gerold von Gleich, and their memoirs. Although not all of the minutiae of Liman's and Gerold's biographies may seem relevant to the manner of his composition of the memoir, certain trends indicative of a greater influence do manifest throughout. The present section will attempt to draw attention to some of the more salient details of Liman's and Gerold's personalities, which in turn have a bearing on how the memoirs are

[168] http://articles.adsabs.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/nph-iarticle_query?bibcode=1938AN....266...63W&db_key=AST&page_ind=0&data_type=GIF&type=SCREEN_VIEW&classic=YES.

[169] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 5.

[170] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 6.

written. The most important aspects of both authors' personalities are related to the tensions in their identification with both the German Empire and Prussia and their conspicuous preference for monarchical forms of statecraft. Additional facets of Liman's and Gerold's authorial approaches in the memoir include the somewhat ambivalent treatment of the ordinary Ottomans and the memoirs' broad focus on the Ottoman elite, as well as the almost complete lack of a feminine presence in the memoirs themselves. Finally, it will be necessary to consult other sources for a glimpse of Liman as seen by his contemporaries. This will serve as a useful reminder that the literary personas of the authors of ego-documents seldom appear at fault in their own narrative. Because of his short duration in the Ottoman Empire, as well as the sheer controversial nature of Liman, Gerold never received the same amount of scrutiny. The following section will examine the organization of the memoir, and the more predominant themes therein.

While it can only be expected that Liman should refer to himself as a "German general," it is illuminating that, at least twice in the memoir, Liman chooses to write "Prussian general" instead.[171] The usage may very well be deliberate, and the connotations distinct. In Liman's own lifetime, the German Empire came into being, and the appellations "German" and "Prussian" likely did not completely overlap. On the one hand, Liman's *Heimat* ("homeland") of Pomerania was part of the domain of the Kingdom of Prussia. In this sense, Liman probably utilized the designation "Prussian" in the same manner that he uses "Bavarian;" namely, as an indicator of geographic origin. Evidently, local 'nationalities' had not

[171] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 276-277, 305-309.

been completely superseded by the supranational identity of 'German.'[172] On the other hand, as a descriptor, 'Prussian' has a pedigree somewhat different than that of other local Germanic identities. The Kingdom of Prussia was the driving force behind German unification, and Prussian military and political institutions, including the imperial Hohenzollern dynasty, predominated in the Second Reich. If Germany was an empire of Germans, then the Prussians were the first subject-citizens of that empire, and held an especial claim to the military prestige that was part and parcel of Prussia's enduring legacy.[173] On the other hand, Gerold's account hints at the possibility of Prussian identity as something that could be learned, as opposed to a quality that was innate. Indeed, Gerold refers off-handedly to his "Prussian-raised eyes," which suggests that despite his identity as a Swabian, he similarly felt himself to be a member of the same socio-cultural military institution that was the Prussianized German Army as Liman.[174]

This is connected to the following observation: Liman von Sanders was a staunch monarchist.[175] Again, this is hardly surprising, given that the military was a

[172] The question inevitably arises if Liman's political outlook, if it can be said that he had one (since, like many career soldiers, he left politics to other men), was at all influenced by his Jewish background. It is not even clear that he was aware of his Jewish ancestry, and he certainly makes no mention of it. It is not impossible that, like some Germans of Jewish descent, he may have felt the need to rather more forcefully assert his 'German-ness.' It is more likely, however, that Liman simply felt himself to be German through and through, as many Germans of Jewish descent undoubtedly did.

[173] Following unification, the Prussian administrative and political system became "the conservative anchor within the German system," while the Prussian military, now the military of the Reich, "remained a praetorian guard under the personal command of the king," whose "executive organs [were] embedded in the sovereign institutions of the old Prussian state." See Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, Chapter 16.

[174] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 11.

[175] Liman's concern with his own narrative depiction as a 'loyal subject' of the Kaiser, along with his disdain of the apparent overlap between politics and military affairs, which in his eyes was an innovation of the Committee of Union and Progress, begs the question as to how else Liman's views on monarchism might have affected his depiction of the internal conditions of the Ottoman Empire and of the Ottomans themselves. Aside from antipathy to CUP members and favoritism towards those who ostensibly belonged to the 'Old Turks,' it does not appear to have affected his perspective to a significant degree. Without any basis other than supposition, it is not impossible that, within Liman's

hotbed for monarchism. However, it is important precisely because it has bearing on how Liman portrays both himself and others in his memoir. Acutely aware of his place in the imperial hierarchy, as well as the socio-cultural importance of duty from the standpoint of a German military officer, Liman is eager to demonstrate his fealty

worldview, there was an explicit link between the institution of monarchy, manifested in this instance by Kaiser Wilhelm II, and the potentiality of empire. The title "Kaiser," which had been granted before formal colonialism in the German Empire, presupposes the very existence of empire. Of course, this should not obscure the domestic colonialism of the newly-established Second Reich with regard to East Prussia and the Polish question. Indeed, the 'German East' was widely viewed as the "field of a German *mission civilisatrice*," as Alfred Hugenberg's dissertation on the necessity of the 'internal colonization' of Germany clearly epitomizes. See Sdvizkov, "Russian and German Ideas of the West in the Long Nineteenth Century: Entanglements of Spatial Identities," 104. In the time in which Liman was writing his memoir, monarchy remained the most common form of governance; in addition, many of the great powers were acutely aware of the need to acquire new lands and territories to cement national prestige. It is no accident that the political system of monarchism "sat well with imperialism." The personal figure of the monarch functioned as an object of fealty for indigenous rulers, who were nevertheless subject to the "watchful eye" of colonial agents, and was also perceived as "unifying disparate peoples and lands, a personage above internecine political debates, ethnic clashes, and cultural quarrels," a recipient of adulation who upheld the principles of tolerance and diversity. Imperial pageantry affirmed "imperial paramountcy and the personal role of the sovereign." See Aldrich and McCreery, *Crowns and colonies: European monarchies and overseas empire*, 1-26. This was both true and false in the specific instance of Kaiser Wilhelm II. As Matthew Fitzpatrick convincingly demonstrates, in accordance with German legal developments in the aftermath of the German unification, Kaiser Wilhelm II ostensibly wielded supreme power in the governance of colonies; his prerogative in the capacity of emperor was absolute and unquestionable. However, Fitzpatrick also points out that Kaiser Wilhelm II rarely deigned to make use of his supreme power, and often acquiesced to the recommendations of the Reichstag, the Chancellor, the General Staff, and the Colonial Department. When the Herero revolted in German South-West Africa, Kaiser Wilhelm II studiously avoided intervention until his aides begged him to select a military commander to lead the punitive expedition against the Herero. Kaiser Wilhelm II selected Lothar von Trotha against the advice of practically every 'expert,' military and political, and Lothar von Trotha's assumption of the command of the Schutztruppe would set into motion the events which ultimately culminated in genocide. Nevertheless, the picture of the Kaiser which emerges is that of a dilettante, whose sporadic interest in or enthusiasm for the imperial project at all times necessitated distraction, lest the Kaiser embroil himself in the kind of public relations disasters for which he was well-known. See Fitzpatrick, "Kaiser Wilhelm II and the limits of the royal prerogative in German South-West Africa," 77-96. However, Kaiser Wilhelm's relative lack of interest in the affairs of German South-West Africa does not seem to have carried over to the Ottoman Empire. In addition to his enthusiastic self-affirmation in 1898 as a friend to the world's 300 million Muslims, he made a second visit in 1917, and seems to have been an enthusiastic proponent of German propaganda efforts to secure an Ottoman declaration of jihad in the initial stages of the war. For our purposes, this is mainly relevant insofar as it provides an indication of the kind of imperial potentate Wilhelm II was perceived to be, and what ramifications this may have had with regard to Germany's implicit designs on the Ottoman Empire. For Liman, Kaiser Wilhelm II was the supreme sovereign of the Germans; any extension of German influence in the Near East was or would be done in the name of 'His Majesty the Kaiser.' Aldrich and McCreery's assertion of a historical link between the institution of monarchy and imperialism serves to underline the importance of Kaiser Wilhelm to the German imperial project in the Ottoman Empire, in stark contrast with the 'republican French' and the 'parliamentarian British.' This is one of the few instances in which Liman seemingly affirms the popular conception of German colonialism as quintessentially different from and superior to other European forms. However, it is of comparatively minor significance to the general thrust of Liman's narrative, in which the British and the Germans are both emissaries of 'European' civilization.

to ‘His Majesty the Emperor and King’ to his audience throughout the memoir. Critical decisions, including accepting command of armies and attempting to resign on multiple occasions, all of which were rejected, were not taken without the Kaiser’s explicit approval.[176] One of the few moments of genuine emotion exhibited by Liman in his memoir, aside from the typical distress and vexation which one might expect to accompany the burden of such a command, constitutes an instance of disappointment, and perhaps even shame. In December 1916, Liman was called to Germany to deliver reports on the military situation in the Ottoman Empire. During this time, he met with the Kaiser, who was by Liman’s estimation somewhat poorly informed on the role of the German Navy submarines in the recent Gallipoli campaign. When Liman attempted to disabuse the Kaiser of his notions, the Kaiser apparently took umbrage, and ended the conversation shortly after, leaving Liman rather taken aback.[177] It was an incident which Liman would not forget. In October the following year, the Kaiser visited the Ottoman Empire, and among other things toured the battlefields at Gallipoli. Liman delivered a short lecture on the campaign to the Kaiser and his retinue, and expressed no small amount of satisfaction as he noted that he explained “the limited activity of the *U*-boat war in the Dardanelles and the reasons for it, without his Majesty appearing in the least displeased.”[178] Liman evidently set great store by the Kaiser’s goodwill. By contrast, Gerold barely mentions the Kaiser in his own memoir. This does not mean that he doubts the efficacy of the German monarchical system; nor, in fact, does it mean that Gerold’s memoir is absent any semblance of hierarchical obligation. Compared to Liman, who

[176] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 217, 309-312.

[177] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 191-192.

[178] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 237-238.

had personal dealings with the Kaiser and considered himself an "emissary of the emperor," Gerold's principal 'authority figure' is Erich von Falkenhayn, whom he writes to on a number of occasions to solicit advice or else to convince his superior officer that the German imperial entanglement in Persia is a futile endeavor.[179]

If Liman believed in, as did Kaiser Wilhelm II, the impending "'victory of monarchy over democracy,'" the same attitude was operative in his assessment of internal political conditions of the Ottoman Empire.[180] In a departure from his other observations of Ottoman administration and justice, Liman found in Sultan Mehmed V Reşâd "a most kindly and liberal sponsor," who was "unassuming," knowledgeable, and wise.[181] Few other characters in Liman's memoir, save a handful of officers under his command at Gallipoli and in Palestine, would be the recipients of such unqualified praise. In equal measure, Liman deplores the apparent powerlessness of the Sultan in the face of the Committee of Union and Progress, as well as the total want of propriety to which the old monarch was frequently subjected by his social inferiors.[182] Despite Kaiser Wilhelm's exhortation to Liman that "It

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[179] Gruesshaber, *The 'German Spirit' in the Ottoman and Turkish Army, 1908-1938*, 177. For a *few* examples, see Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 110, 121, 135.

[180] Apparently, in the midst of the Spring Offensive of 1918, the Kaiser told his entourage that should "'a British parliamentarian come to sue for peace, he must kneel before the imperial standard, for this is a victory of monarchy over democracy.'" Although in hindsight the confidence of some of the German leadership may seem egregiously out of touch with reality, it is an important reminder that well into 1918, the outcome of the war had not yet been decided. This also complements Liman's assertion that, despite the more dire situation in the Middle Eastern theater, until September of that year the Ottoman forces were able to hold out against the British. See Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, 618.

[181] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 13.

[182] It should be noted, however, that the particular episode which gave rise to the aforementioned observation was largely the result of Enver's perceived insolence, and that, given the personal animosity between the two men, which is a running theme throughout the memoir, demonstrating an instance of Enver's inconsideration early on serves almost as a kind of rhetorical foreshadowing, in that it sets the stage for a narrative in which the reader can expect a continued exhibition of impropriety on the part of Enver. Only Talaat Pasha seems to escape Liman's censure. See Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 16-18, 71.

must be entirely immaterial to you whether the Young Turks are in power or the Old Turks," Liman nurtured a marked preference for the latter, a fact which was not helped by the seeming incomprehensibility and institutional opacity of the Committee.[183] Similarly, he regarded the assessment of Hans von Wangenheim, the German Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire until his death in 1915, that the Young Turks would swiftly restore order, as entirely too optimistic.[184] For his part, Gerold was no different. The Turkish officer with whom he was most closely connected, Halil Pasha, struck him as a total "revolutionary" (*Revolutionsmann*), an appellation which heavily suggested that Gerold did not doubt Halil's eagerness for battle, but rather his overall training and competency; from his perspective, Young Turk officers won their posts on the basis of their political loyalty, rather than their martial abilities.[185]

It should be noted that, unlike Liman, Gerold actually had an apparent gift for linguistics, as well as a burgeoning interest in the Orient. He had previously studied Arabic and Turkish, and knew a great deal about the history of the region.[186] His knowledge was placed on full display in his narrative aside to his readers about the difficulties of attempting to read maps written in the Arabic script, which lacked vowels; even his fellow Turkish officers could not seem to grasp the topography of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire.[187] In 1913, Gerold was tapped to serve in

[183] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 11.

[184] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 25-26.

[185] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 126.

[186] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 75.

[187] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 128.

the Ottoman Empire, but he declined, citing his belief that it would be a thankless endeavor. The Gallipoli campaign would change his mind.[188]

Whatever his predilections towards monarchical leaders, it cannot be said that Liman pays no attention to the wartime struggles of the ordinary people of the Ottoman Empire. Of course, as befits the memoir of a senior German military officer, *Five Years in Turkey* is littered with snapshots and vignettes of the high politics of German-Ottoman diplomacy and military coordination. It is these accounts for which the memoir is best known in the historiography of the First World War. As mentioned above, the practice of plumbing the depths of *Five Years in Turkey* and other similar memoirs for their observations on the Ottoman Empire and its peoples is but a recent development, and even then these recollections are typically utilized for their wealth of information on the oft-lamentable fighting conditions of the ordinary Ottoman soldier, itself admittedly a question of considerable import. This make sense, given that Liman's memoir is concerned in the main with military affairs, and that the material wellbeing of the men under his command was one of his foremost concerns as a commanding officer in the midst of military conflict.

Liman's memoir is overwhelmingly focused on military and diplomatic affairs, and as such stands as an overwhelmingly masculine narrative. Women feature only in the abstract, as numberless, faceless victims of either Allied bombardment or kidnapping by Greek brigands on the coast of Asia Minor.[189] Even Liman's own daughters, who accompanied him to Istanbul, are granted no mention

[188] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 66.

[189] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 95, 189.

in the memoir;[190] evidently, such a topic was deemed unsuitable or perhaps inappropriate for the composition of what was ultimately a paean of military struggle and ephemeral triumph. Furthermore, effeminacy, a characteristic associated in imperial European discourse with the people of the Orient, scarcely makes an appearance in the pages of Liman's memoir. The only time that the ordinary men of the Ottoman Empire make any appearance in *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad* is when, while riding through the Mesopotamian desert, Gerold encounters a concentration camp holding "unfortunate" Armenian deportees.[191] Although prompted to digress into a narrative aside, Gerold ultimately acknowledged that he and his compatriots could do but little. Beyond this, his primary concern is with the wellbeing of the men under his command.

We would also do well here to acknowledge the substantial generational gap of fourteen years between Liman and Gerold, as well as possible ruptures and continuities with regard to formative influences in their earlier years. Prior to their entry in the military, both authors would have experienced an academic environment in which "imitation of the rational, secular, masculine, and above all the beautiful Greek was the means of German cultural greatness," and in which "the aristocratic, secular, aestheticized wisdom of the Greeks… was understood to be the sine qua non of the educated man."[192] Gerold directly references his knowledge of classical Greek, while noting that it did not serve him particularly well in his capacity as a military

[190] Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*, 43.

[191] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 91-92.

[192] Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 72-74.

attaché to the Greek Army- he had only a meager understanding of modern Greek.[193] Liman does not reference his education at any point in his memoir.

Furthermore, the similarities in the *Bildung* ("formation") of the two men should not obscure clear temporal differences between the eras of their youth. After Liman completed gymnasium, he would have entered the army around the time of the founding of the German Empire in 1871, or a few years afterwards. By the time Gerold was old enough to enlist in the military after his studies, the German Empire had been in existence for nearly a decade. Gerold would come of age in the time of the German Empire's first forays in the realm of colonial expansion. Liman was old enough to remember when a unified Germany was little more than an idea, whereas the realization of that idea was all that Gerold knew, although both authors continued to evince strong affinities with local identities, a testament to the federalist arrangement of the Second Reich. Nevertheless, it is important to note that Gerold was in part a product of the Wilhelmine period, during which the German public sphere was increasingly suffused with imperial fever and the aforementioned Torschlusspanik.

In all, the "narrative self' of Liman, as portrayed by the author Liman, is punctilious, dutiful, and honest to a fault. The German general is a creditably stoic leader of men, who inadvertently became the victim of intrigues borne from ignorance or spite. Other sources sketch a decidedly different image. Liman was, as we can deduce from his constant verbal tussles with Enver Pasha and various German diplomatic and military officials, extremely difficult to get along with. "Impatient and cantankerous;" "naïve and shortsighted;" endowed in apparent

[193] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 33.

abundance with "'great nervousness' and a tendency 'to judge everything from a personal point of view;'" "close to insanity;" and, finally, generally given to "nervousness, jealousy, and suspiciousness:" these are the words which the contemporaries of Liman von Sanders chose to label the general.[194] For all the credit Liman would receive for his competent leadership in the field, such tactical acumen evidently came at a high price. Granted, the indefatigable general labored under difficult conditions, which would be apt to provoke the ire of many. However, it cannot be denied that Liman had a talent for exasperating and offending Ottoman and German alike. It must also be acknowledged that Liman's suspiciousness was subject to self-perpetuation. Once Baron von Wangenheim's attempt to have Liman removed as chief of the military mission failed, it was only natural that Liman would have reacted with suspicion to anything he saw as a threat to his position, whether real or imagined.[195]

[194] See Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, Chapters II and III, *passim*.

[195] The attempt to dislodge Liman from his command at Gallipoli, if not from his post in the Ottoman Empire entirely, was the culmination of long-standing grievances between Liman, Enver Pasha, the German Ambassador Hans von Wangenheim, the German military attache Otto von Lossow, and the Ottoman army chief of staff Bronsart von Schellendorf. At root, these long-standing grievances sprang from different interpretations of Liman's position as chief of the military mission. Regarding the latter two, Liman was repeatedly incensed when Bronsart and Otto von Lossow proved willing to maintain their positions and differences of opinion against his authority, particularly by siding with Enver, who, admittedly, was their immediate superior. After the disastrous Battle of Sarıkamış in the Caucasus in the winter of 1914, an offensive which Liman had opposed and which Bronsart had supported as Enver's chief of staff, Liman believed that Bronsart should be removed from his post. Trumpener suggests that Liman was only partially motivated by the desire to punish Bronsart for his role in the "abortive offensive," and that, among other things, he was annoyed that Bronsart had submitted a report informing the German Embassy to the effect that he should not receive the Iron Cross. Throughout these months, Liman vacillated between engaging in contretemps with and completely ignoring the German Embassy and Hans von Wangenheim. Furthermore, in the eyes of the German Embassy, Liman had a marked preference for Ottoman officers, which may seem unsurprising in light of the fact that they were not typically pawns of the chicanery and subterfuge which the Germans seem to have habitually employed in outmaneuvering one another; this marked preference was an object of considerable annoyance to Hans von Wangenheim, who thought that privileging Turkish officers risked encouraging Turkish national chauvinism and belief in their own competence, thereby obviating the need for a German presence in the Ottoman Empire. Liman was wont to accuse other Germans of the same failings. Eventually, after Liman had left Istanbul to take command of the Fifth Army at Gallipoli, a plan was hatched to replace him with either Colmar von der Goltz or Otto von Lossow in the fall of 1915. Liman reacted with predictable fury when he became aware of the plan to oust him, and, with the surprising support of Enver, was able to thwart any attempts to do away with

On the other hand, a rather more intriguing criticism was directed at Liman by one of his subordinates, Kress von Kressenstein, who was one of the highest-ranking German officers on the Sinai-Palestine front. According to Klaus Wolf, Kress von Kressenstein "characterized [Liman] as incapable of adapting to foreign conditions and barely able even to grasp the oriental way of thinking."[196] The reader will readily appreciate the irony of that statement, especially since this was precisely the charge which Liman levelled against his fellow Germans! That the existence of an 'oriental mindset,' which was tangible and knowable, was taken for granted by many Germans is unsurprising. It is the particularities of that oriental mindset, and their orientation within the broader colonial discourse, which will constitute the main focus of the succeeding two chapters.

1.7 The structure and themes of Five Years in Turkey and Vom Balkan nach Bagdad

The memoir itself is divided into twenty-four chapters, which are loosely organized with reference to chronology or otherwise to significant or noteworthy events. Hence, for example, there are two chapters solely devoted to the Gallipoli campaign, whereas another covers the entire year of 1916, and which is further subdivided into the developments on each of the various military fronts. The formation of Yıldırım is an event apparently deemed significant enough by Liman to merit an entire chapter devoted to the subject. Finally, beginning with Chapter 16, which covers the events on the Palestine front during the month of March 1918, eight of the nine remaining

him. The episode only served to further heighten his paranoia and distrust. See Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 73-89.

[196] Wolf, *Victory at Gallipoli 1915*, 16.

chapters follow the same template of scrutinizing developments on the Palestine front on a monthly basis, until the war's end in October 1918.

Vom Balkan nach Bagdad, by contrast, has only ten chapters, five of which have location names (Athens, Constantinople, Baghdad, etc.) as the chapter title, and the other five of which feature significant events which form the basis of the chapters' content (Enver Pasha in Baghdad, Collapse, etc.). *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad* is unique in that there is a considerable narrative gap in Gerold's memoir. After the third chapter, which ends with the completion of the Battle of Bizani in February of 1913, Gerold's memoir resumes the narrative almost three full years later, when he begins his journey to the Ottoman Empire in 1916. There is no easy way to account for this. My guess is that Gerold was cognizant of the fact that developments on the Western Front in Europe had already been the subject of considerable scrutiny by the German reading public. His title "From the Balkans to Baghdad" suggests that he hoped to offer his readership a rather more exotic narrative account than other German military authors.

As the war dragged on in the memoir, Liman increasingly utilized communications he received or dispatched to undergird his narrative, oftentimes quoting them in full.[197] Of course, the decision to omit or include specific telegrams was deliberate, and there can be no doubt that Liman cherry-picked a great deal.[198]

[197] In his epilogue, Liman writes "In the foregoing notes I have mostly let the facts speak for themselves." Without question, his progressively greater reliance on these communications would give his audience the impression of doing just that: letting the facts speak for themselves. The question is which facts are allowed to speak for themselves, and which are not allowed a voice? See Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 407.

[198] There are two instances in which Liman specifically addresses the reader, and informs them that he is 'guilty' of omission. One such instance was evidently a rather rude communication he received during one of his numerous quarrels with Enver Pasha. The other is a blanket statement, in which he explains that in discussing the campaign on the Palestine front from the time he assumed command of Army Group F until the end of the war, "the non-essential details are omitted." We may readily surmise that, as any 'Great Man,' Liman was all too eager to accommodate evidence which presents

However, it must be acknowledged that these communications add a ring of authenticity to Liman's narrative, regardless of the inherent truth which they purport to convey.

Generically speaking, *Five Years in Turkey* most closely approximates an apologia, a defense of the author's actions; however, certain elements of the confession genre are also present throughout the memoir.[199] There was much from which Liman evidently felt the need to defend himself. In large part, his internment and trial at Malta on the basis of accusations levelled at him by the Greeks and Armenians constitute the essential context for the composition of the memoir. Liman's own peculiar rhetorical self-defense will be explored as part of the larger analysis of his view on the Ottomans. Understandably, Germany's tacit complicity in the Armenian deportations was something which Liman sought to distance himself from. How successful or convincing he is in this endeavor is another matter entirely.

himself in the best possible light, and that a great deal many omissions exist apart from the two instances cited above. See Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 250, 312.

[199] In categorizing *Five Years in Turkey* and *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, I have borrowed the generic classification system of Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, whose *Reading Autobiography* is the standard work on memoir-literature. According to their definition, an apology is "a form of self-presentation as self-defense against the allegations or attacks of others, [which] justifies one's own deeds, beliefs, and way of life." As we can readily imagine, this genre in particular lends legitimacy to the appellation of memoirs as 'ego-documents,' and is the preferred style of memoir-composition for many Great Men. However, both memoirs also exhibit some similarities with the confession. As defined by Smith and Watson, "the confession is addressed to an interlocutor who listens, judges, and has the power to absolve." For example, when Liman suggests that he is merely presenting the facts, and that "every one can form his own opinion from them," he is in fact issuing a surreptitious appeal to the reader, who he hopes will take his view of events. These are the two genres which Liman and Gerold most likely had in mind as they wrote their memoirs; how the audience would have read his memoir is another matter. The 'exoticism' of the location, the heroism of the German officers and soldiers abroad, as well as the considerable interest the German public took in military exploits in the immediate postwar period suggests that these memoirs may have in some respects been read as a travel adventure. This is a genre that I will return to in the succeeding pages. Finally, I have utilized and will continue to utilize the term "memoir." I believe that, as there is little distinction between the two, the term "life-narrative" would also be appropriate. I would not classify this as an "autobiography," since the subject treated constitutes but one of the many episodes in the life of Liman von Sanders and Gerold von Gleich. Autobiographies are typically all-encompassing in their treatment of the life of the author. See Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography*, 183-184, 192, and Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 250.

Gerold, on the other hand, did not have the bitter scores to settle that Liman did.[200] Yet, his narrative reads in a manner very similar to that of Liman's. In *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, Gerold promulgates two main arguments. One is that Germany ultimately gave Austria too free of a hand, which invariably meant that when Austria was not satisfied with Serbia's attempts to abide by the ultimatum in the aftermath of Archduke Franz Ferdinand's assassination, Germany was inevitably dragged in. The second is that Germany's involvement in Persia was a useless attempt at expanding imperial influence. In this respect, Gerold's memoir also largely resembles an apologia: he hopes to explain the mistakes of German foreign policy, while faithfully accounting his innocence.

The nature of the Ottoman Empire's military collapse was another matter which Liman attempted to explain, and in doing so save face. The war, or rather information pertaining to the war in the Middle East, was evidently subject to all sorts of misunderstandings and misrepresentations in Germany itself, and Liman expends a great deal of effort in setting the record straight by highlighting the conditions which led to the eventual disintegration of the Ottoman Army.[201] These

[200] Reichmann, "'Tapfere Askers' und 'Feige Arabers:' Der osmanische verbündete aus der Sicht deutscher Soldaten im Orient 1914-1918," 14.

[201] The episode with the Kaiser described above is but one example of how inaccurate appraisals of the military-political situation in the Ottoman Empire manifested in German officialdom. Liman was most likely of the opinion that more nefarious than an ill-informed Kaiser were those German 'experts' who actively sought to influence German military policy in the Ottoman Empire and beyond on the basis of such appraisals. In particular, the German special missions dispatched to Persia, Mesopotamia, and Afghanistan were evaluated by Liman as having "in common far reaching but ill-defined plans and great sums of money;" money which was sorely needed by Germany and the Ottoman Empire for other purposes. The financial and political support of these missions by the German foreign office only exacerbated matters, while nevertheless lending a touch of legitimacy to the proceedings. The geopolitical and military inexpediency of such adventurism was a point which Liman would raise in the memoir time and again, especially as the war wore on. In addition, the reconquest of Egypt was a source of "fantastic mischief" in Germany, rife with misconceptions as to the practicability of such a campaign. These episodes would appear to somewhat complicate Suzanne Marchand's assertion that "military and business interests retained the upper hand when it came to making colonial policy." Evidently, military officials did not always wield the authority to allocate human and material resources to one endeavor or another, even in wartime. Of course, this is as much a testament to the antagonism between military and political authorities as it is of the limits of the

conditions were material and political, and were deeply intertwined with the relative lack of industrialization in the Ottoman Empire as well as with the poor decision-making of the military leadership. Of course, in expounding the multifarious factors which led to the military failure, Liman also justifies his own role, and thereby effectively abdicates any kind of responsibility for what occurred in 1918.

There can be no question that the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and Germany's culpability in that collapse, is of paramount importance to Liman, and constitutes the preeminent theme in the memoir. Many sub-themes, including Liman's implicit rivalry with Enver Pasha, the misconceptions surrounding the role of the Germany Navy in the Gallipoli Campaign, and the critical decisions made by Ottoman headquarters, to list but a few, fall under the rubric of the broader 'question of 1918'. This becomes all the more noteworthy when we consider that the memoir was written for a German audience. It would no doubt have come as a surprise to the readers of the memoir that Liman found almost as much fault in the conduct of Germany as in the Ottoman Empire. Liman spares neither the Ottoman nor the German military leadership in his memoir; it was not the failure of one, but rather the shortcomings of both, which greatly contributed to the final decision in 1918. As Liman writes in his conclusion, "Turkey and her leaders must be held to account for not making their aims conform to the available means. Germany is to be blamed for the lack of calm and clear judgement of what was within the powers of Turkey."[202] Specifically, he held that factional infighting among the German military and diplomatic officials had hampered the execution of a coherent geopolitical strategy in

powers of the former. See Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 39, 61-62, 169-173; Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 335, 446-463.

[202] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 407-408.

the Ottoman Empire, which in turn had hindered the extension and/or entrenchment of German influence.[203] In addition, he claimed that the German officers were made to shoulder a burden of responsibility incommensurate with their superficial understanding of the prevailing conditions of the Ottoman Empire.[204] The implication is clear and unambiguous: future German endeavors in the Orient would need to be accompanied by sober analyses of the region and its people, and thereby avoid the specter of "*fata morgana* and *One Thousand and One Nights*." As Liman himself bluntly put it: "The foregoing criticisms are supported by a long chain of facts extending through five years and it is well to make them public in order that we may learn from the past for the future."[205]

1.8 Conclusion

The chief object of the following chapters will be to understand Liman's depiction of the Ottoman peoples as colonial propaganda. To this end, delineating differences between the Germans and the Ottomans in a manner which denigrates the latter constitutes the primary focus of chapters one and two. Chapter one will focus on the themes of Oriental laziness, childishness, decay, and cunning. Chapter two will primarily address the themes of Oriental despotism, deceit, fanaticism, and nationalism; however, it will do so by exploring the 'Turkish' relationship with three

[203] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 28-29.

[204] To give one such example, the Germans, thinking themselves to be complimentary, dispatched a shipment of freight to Turkey, and marked the cargo with the destination of "Enverland." Good intentions aside, equating the Ottoman realm with the sole figure of Enver was bound to arouse the fury of his many rivals and enemies. Furthermore, it is clear that Liman sees the inception of the Yıldırım Army Group (Army Group F) as the juncture at which the German assumption of responsibilities in the Ottoman Empire exceeded reasonable bounds, thereby risking the longer-term strategic goals of the Reich. See Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 30-32, 193, 221.

[205] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 29.

of the Ottoman subject-peoples: the Arabs, the Greeks, and the Armenians. If the first two chapters overwhelmingly address Ottoman inferiority to Europeans, the third chapter will address a peculiar focal-point of commonality between the Germans and the Turks: identification as a warlike race, through a comparison which although ostensibly flattering, was in fact derived from previously extant colonialist discourses.

CHAPTER 2

INDOLENCE AND THE 'TURKISH MINDSET'

In heaping criticism upon German officials who flattered themselves as well-informed on the Orient and its people, or who otherwise completely lacked any experience whatsoever, Liman never gave pause to consider that his own experiences and observations were as little grounded in 'genuine understanding' as those he castigates.[206] This section will explore an aspect of Liman's memoir which has been ignored in the scholarly literature, namely, his largely-non-military observations on Ottoman society and its people. As will be demonstrated, Liman's rhetorical sketches of the above largely conform to colonialist depictions of non-European peoples, and comfortably joins the contemporary meta-narrative of Oriental inferiority and Occidental superiority.

These observations can be subdivided into ruminations on the typical Asiatic personality, the well-known trope of Oriental despotism, a conspicuous lack of fanaticism commonly ascribed to Islam, as well as the image of the Orient as a faded dreamland somehow not subject to the normal rules and processes governing the conduct of nations and peoples. While there is a considerable overlap between the aforementioned themes, the schema suggested above is generally applicable, and will be utilized throughout.

[206] For example, Major General Hans von Seeckt, who became the new chief of the Ottoman general staff in 1917 had "only a theoretical knowledge of Turkey." This theoretical knowledge could have been based on what former German reformers of the Ottoman Army had written, much of which formed the basis of Liman's own understanding of local conditions. On the other hand, it is not implausible that the basis for this "theoretical knowledge" was no more sophisticated than a Karl May novel. See Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 238.

Like any discursive analysis, it will be the aim of this section to show that these discourses did not exist in a void, but were rather inextricably intertwined with the historical context, which is to say, the end of the First World War in 1918. The discourses would have been unmistakable to those who read the memoir. Without necessarily being conscious of it, Liman's reproduction of colonialist discourse which establishes the inferiority of the Ottomans serves as an implicit justification for a continued German presence in the Ottoman Empire. In this capacity, rather than looking backward and reconstructing a subjective past, as memoirs are generally intended to do, *Five Years in Turkey* looks forward, to a quasi-alternate future which may have been, and which was rudely snatched away in 1918.

2.1 The Ottomans through German eyes

2.1.1 Turkish indolence and German industriousness

Establishing the inferiority of the Ottomans was critical to the broader project of undergirding the narrative of the desirability of continued German tutelage in the Middle East.[207] At the outset of the memoir, Liman's depiction of his hosts was less than charitable, and he missed no opportunity to draw his audience's attention to the inherent sloth of the Turk. Early in his tenure as chief of the military mission, when attempting to exhort his charges in the Ottoman Army to action, he was met with a wave of what he deemed to be "convenient" excuses: "…there was less a lack of funds, than of a sense of order and cleanliness and diligence. In those days the Turk disliked to be called on by the German officer to exert himself and used excuses in

[207] Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, xxii, 352.

the attempt to prolong his musing existence."[208] Although Liman acknowledged that there was an aspect of antipathy on the part of the Turks towards what they perceived as German imperiousness, it is plainly evident that he believed that, left to their own devices, the Turks would soon relapse into disorder and indolence and resume a merely passive "musing existence," which in his mind constituted their natural state of being. A 'sense of order, cleanliness, and diligence' was alien to the Turk; it was something that had to be instilled, preferably by peoples who exemplified the above traits. Of course, Germans and indeed most Europeans would qualify for the task of 'civilizing' the Turk.[209]

Far from attempting to introduce a more nuanced picture of the Turks to his audience, Liman further asserts that the underdeveloped state of Ottoman Empire's railways was a consequence of "oriental indolence," as well as a result of vague fears that German influence would erode the privileges of the Turkish officials employed to monitor and facilitate the empire's lines of communication.[210] As opposed to the

[208] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 21.

[209] When Liman utilizes the term 'European,' he is almost as imprecise as when using the term 'Turk.' In spite of the ongoing hostilities, Liman was generally liberal in his treatment of European peoples including the British and the French. One detects a certain kinship and cultural affinity Liman felt with these peoples; part of his sympathies may have stemmed from feeling himself to be in a similar position to other Europeans who bore the thankless burden of lifting up benighted peoples of the earth. With this in mind, one suspects that Liman would have understood the term European to encompass most of Western, Northern, and Central Europe, including especially Germany, Britain, Sweden, and Austria-Hungary. Liman hardly ever references Russia, save for the early and occasional mention of the Russian ambassador Mikhail Nikolayevich von Giers' protests against Liman's appointment to command of the Ottoman First Army in 1913; his mentions of Russian military advances in the Caucasus during the war can hardly constitute an appraisal of that country as a whole. Nevertheless, Liman claimed that "It was plain before the war that the relations of the officers of the German mission with the embassies of the Entente could not become close. But they were correct throughout." Had Liman left it at this, the reader might assume little. However, Liman expends some effort in describing amicable relations to some extent with various French, Bulgarian, Italian, Dutch and even Russian diplomatic persons. Even after the war, Liman described various British officials, such as General Curry, General Fuller, and British High Commissioner Admiral Calthorpe, in warm terms which heavily suggest no lingering animosity. In short, the designation 'European' as conceived by Liman likely encompassed most if not all nationalities which were not Ottoman, or otherwise of Asian extraction. See Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 402-403, Chapter 2 *passim*.

[210] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 43.

practical problem of a perennial shortage of funds as well as the more complex dynamic of imperial and commercial competition over railway construction in the Ottoman Empire, two nearly self-evident and mutually inclusive explanations for the poor infrastructure of the empire, Liman evidently found "oriental indolence" a most convincing reason for the patent lack of progress in the empire. Indolence is construed as a peculiarly Oriental attribute, one which Liman never ascribes to either the Germans or the British, his wartime enemies.[211] So much is this the case, that Liman asserts that the deficient transportation infrastructure of the Ottoman Empire resulting from 'Oriental indolence' is "unintelligible to German conception."[212] "Loose Turkish methods," ostensibly the culprit for the inadequate supply lines to the various fronts, are merely a cover for the traffic in goods to population centers, tangible if implicit evidence of the small-minded greed of the Turkish functionary.[213]

Furthermore, Liman does not scruple to attribute indolence and laziness to culture, in addition to inherent "Turkish characteristics." German officers, expecting that their orders would be carried out with precisely the same degree of efficiency as they were accustomed to in Europe, found to their dismay that the Turks thought that "all this terrible German haste [was] superfluous." Although Liman did not quite think the Turks to be completely beholden to their faith, to say nothing of possible fanaticism, he cites the Quranic proverb "'All haste is the devil's'" as proof positive of Oriental, specifically Turkish, indolence:[214] "The sacred precepts of this religious

[211] For example, Liman uses words such as 'tenacity' and 'energy' when describing the British landings at the Gallipoli peninsula, which suggests that these are general 'Occidental' traits, in contradistinction with the Asiatic character. See Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 75-76.

[212] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 366.

[213] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 247.

[214] I have been unable to locate any such phrase in the Quran itself. Although it may have been a hadith, it is very likely that Liman was not well-informed on this point. Nevertheless, that he takes its'

book here," he claims, "as in many other matters, furnish a key to the Turkish character."[215] It is difficult not to be awed by the confidence with which Liman is able to ascribe the root characteristics of the Turk to the moral injunctions of a single book, albeit a highly significant one. That he would likely not attempt a similar exercise in reducing the Germans to the Bible only further testifies to the perceived existence of a Turkish or Oriental essence, which was knowable if only the European plenipotentiary could be bothered to familiarize themselves with its characteristics, rather than treating the Turks as though they were Oriental Germans. Of course, what appeared to Liman and others as the "infinite placidity" and incessant prevarications of the Turks could have been anything from various registers of politeness and etiquette in Ottoman society to foot-dragging in the face of German imperiousness, rather than the mere idiosyncrasies of a foreign Turkish character, cowed before the Quranic injunction to avoid rushing into anything, rendered helpless by fatalism, and crippled by laziness.[216]

Gerold's memoir is rife with narrative asides on the essentialist characteristics of the Oriental. What Liman calls "indolence" or "a musing existence," Gerold calls "passive resistance." Unlike Liman, Gerold draws attention specifically to ways in which the German might circumvent these frustrating tendencies of the Oriental. In his words, "the passive resistance that is common in the Orient cannot be overcome with severity [*Schroffheit*] or with intrusive instruction.

origin from the Quran as axiomatic is illuminating. Josef Drexler cites this exact phrase in his own memoir, adding that the Turkish word *yavaş* ("slow") is the "most-used word in Turkey." See Drexler, *Mit Jildirim*, 5.

[215] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 223-224.

[216] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 224.

Patience and adroitness [*Geschicklichkeit*] achieve far more."[217] In other words, Gerold is generating salient information on how to navigate the different cultural or behavioral registers of the Orient. By including this in his memoir, Gerold might have hoped to influence future German endeavors in the Orient. Although possible, this seems rather less likely than the implicit criticism embedded in the statement; by emphasizing a proper manner of dealing with the Oriental, Gerold is suggesting that other Germans did not avail themselves of either patience or adroitness in their conduct with the 'Other.' Furthermore, Gerold's term adroitness is admittedly an odd one, given the subject matter being discussed. In employing "adroitness" or "skillfulness," it is almost as if the German has to manipulate the Oriental to achieve meaningful results. The Oriental needs to be duped, tricked, into overcoming her naturally passive self. There are some slightly gendered undertones in what Gerold is saying. The Oriental is constructed in a manner akin to a reluctant lover, who needs to be "skillfully" cajoled by her lover before bending to his wishes. In a sense, Gerold is feminizing the Orient; a rare instance in a memoir which, like *Five Years in Turkey*, almost completely lacks a female presence.

Gerold carries the assumption of passive resistance as an elementary trait of the Orientals and the analogy of a feminine Orient still further in the concluding remarks of his memoir.

> In order to assert oneself with the Orientals, a consistent alternation between shrewd compliance in irrelevant matters and unyielding insistence in important matters is needed. Only rarely does mere brashness help with these masters in the lazy tackling of things. I have appreciated the fact that the Turks viewed the mere presence of the German officers as a rape.[218]

[217] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 33.

[218] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 177. Gerold also claims that the Orientals are "masters in passive resistance." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 92.

Admittedly, Gerold's advice on how best to coax the Orientals out of their natural passivity is overshadowed by his usage of the word "rape" (*Vergewaltigung*) to describe the effect that the Germans had on their Turkish allies. Aside from the obvious equation of the Turks with femininity and the Germans with masculinity, the term 'rape' not only serves to cast the Turks as victims, but it also humanizes them through the 'shaming' of their rapist, the officious German officers. As opposed to treating the Turks as abstract 'Oriental' others whose socio-cultural peculiarities are construed as signatures of inferiority, Gerold demonstrates an unusual capacity for empathizing with the 'Other.' As opposed to Liman, who is not generally given to scrutinizing the causes of friction between the Germans and the Turks, Gerold possesses enough introspection to locate at least part of the problem of communication between the Germans and the Turks in the former, rather than the latter. It is not merely burgeoning Turkish national pride that bristled as a result of German interference, but German imperiousness which contributed materially to the strained relations between the two allies. Although it is not entirely accurate to view Gerold's appraisal as anti-colonial, it nonetheless possesses distinct anti-colonial undertones, albeit subtle, surreptitious ones couched in a narrative framework which ultimately does not challenge or undermine the discursive hierarchies which set the Germans above the Orientals and further legitimizes the necessity of those hierarchies. The existence of a "wrong way" of "handling the Orientals" implies that there was a "right" way of doing so. That too many Germans, including Gerold himself, did not know the latter is a further indictment of German unpreparedness for expansive and involved imperial endeavor. Ultimately, Oriental "passive resistance" remained something that had to be circumvented, if not overcome.

Even where the Ottoman Army was concerned, culture and custom were construed by Liman as an excuse by which the efficient pursuit of duty was subordinated to 'national' predilection. After a fire in Istanbul, Liman noted that many of his officers who had family in the capital "ominously" disappeared for a furlough, which, "according to Turkish custom… may not be denied," and which ostensibly lasted for months at a time.[219] Having written this in July 1918, near the tail-end of the Great War, Liman almost exhibits a hint of disbelief at the fact that, this late in the war, officers would vanish for extended periods of time and effectively abandon their obligations. Even though some of the officers were undoubtedly motivated by familial concerns, this did not seem sufficient grounds from Liman's point of view to abandon their posts as defenders of the realm, particularly as that realm was threatened by hostile powers. Even more problematic, however, was the fact that 'custom' here actually facilitates laziness and the shirking of one's responsibilities. In a sense, certain established or otherwise long-standing local conventions became a function for enabling the Turkish propensity for indolence, as though the rules were tailor-made to allow for these eventualities. Such a state of affairs, the reader is meant to understand, would be unthinkable in a European context.

In a similar vein, the disinclination of Turkish civil authorities to burden themselves with the task of repairing a bridge that had recently been washed away is confidently ascribed to an instinctive adherence to "genuinely Turkish custom." On a visit to Antalya, Liman remarked that where the Turkish officials were efficient, the

[219] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 320.

roads were in an adequate state; otherwise, they were impassable, or "mere trails."[220] If Turkish mastery of their environment, to say nothing of their considerable apathy, evinced such dreadful lack of initiative, it is not implausible that the reader of Liman's memoir would conclude that the domains of the Ottoman Empire might potentially be utilized in a superior fashion through a German diligence. The reader is helped along to this conclusion by Liman himself, who somewhat tellingly remarks that the Germans subsequently built a "new and better" bridge.[221] Similarly, the "indefatigable" work of German engineers on the railroad allowed an acceptable flow of war material and manpower to the Sinai-Palestine front to be maintained, while "indefatigable" Germans drilled water wells in the arid regions of today's Jordan.[222] Finally, at the very end of the war in October 1918, as the battered remnants of the Yıldırım Army Group prepared to embark on a general retreat from Aleppo to Adana, the "vigorous" efforts of a one Major Mohlsen restored a modicum of order to the lines of transport.[223] The neglected potential of the natural environment and the squandering of developmental opportunities, to say nothing of the torpidity of the local inhabitants, served as an important focal point of propaganda for colonial enterprises. As the logic went, since the Germans were capable of introducing and encouraging progress in the Near East, it followed that

[220] Despite the general picture of infrastructural disorder in the Ottoman countryside, it was in Antalya that Liman "saw the unusual picture of a well-kept Turkish city." The mutasarrif (it almost seems predictable, given the metanarrative of *Fünf Jahre Türkei*) had fallen out of favor with the CUP as a result of protesting "energetically" against the confiscations and requisitions of the military. In contradistinction with the indolence and capriciousness of numerous other Turkish officials, the identification of this mutasarrif with energy and order is tantamount to an identification with the Germans. This may explain why Liman, upon finding that this mutasarrif was later conscripted as a soldier, saved him by seconding him to the military mission as an interpreter. See Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 153.

[221] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 68-69.

[222] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 314.

[223] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 392.

they had legitimate claims to an 'inheritance' in that region. The precise nature of the would-be 'inheritance' is the subject of some ambiguity, but suffice it to say the Germans would in one form or another feel entitled to reap the reward for their assumption of the mantle of Kulturtraeger in the Near East. This was almost certainly not Liman's conscious meaning, but the seemingly innocuous use of language and imagery which attest to Ottoman inferiority simultaneously locates the possible rejuvenation of the 'sick man of Europe' in the industriousness of the Second Reich and its military-political plenipotentiaries.[224]

On his way to Baghdad, Gerold found the opportunity to remark on the German vision for the Near East, particularly Mesopotamia. Gerold directly cites Fürst Bernhard von Bülow's work *Deutschen Politik,* written in 1916, where the Foreign Minister and later Chancellor of the German Empire is noticeably optimistic about the potential for German-led development in the region. Mesopotamia, in the view of Fürst Bernhard von Bülow, was the "'oldest and most productive cultural area on earth…' an area which, through the Baghdad Railway and 'German entrepreneurship would be opened up,' and which 'in fertility and future opportunity could not be surpassed.'"[225] Reminiscent of the Pan-German League's vision some two decades earlier, this gives us an inkling of what German officialdom hoped to achieve with their German inheritance: like British India, the Ottoman Empire was to be a rich repository of raw materials as well as a captive market for German manufactured goods; like British Egypt, or the Egypt of ancient history, the source of

[224] In the words of Suzanne Marchand, in contrast with armchair orientalists who were merely interested in adding to the pool of scholarly knowledge on the Orient or in otherwise collecting various artifacts, some rather more activist imperial agents and orientalists "wanted to *change* the Orient," either as a result of national chauvinism or otherwise as a result of a genuine desire to raise the culture of the inhabitants. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 151.

[225] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 91.

a steady supply of cereals. Although Gerold explicitly acknowledges German imperial plans in the Near East, he is quick to point out that such realities have not yet arrived. Hence, the amusing story of a German doctor who had a mind to book a "sleeper train" from Istanbul to Baghdad. Nevertheless, the potentialities of German industry and their application to the Near East lay tantalizingly close in the German imperial imaginary.

2.1.2 A case study of the Ottoman Army medical service

More discomfiting manifestations of this inherent laziness and aversion to progress are apparent in Liman's sobering analyses of the multifarious shortcomings of the medical service in the Ottoman Army. There, the medical personnel only took the temperatures of sick officers, a courtesy which they did not consider worth extending to the rank and file.[226] Hospital beds were overcrowded, wards were filthy, and patients were strewn haphazardly on the floor; a lamentable situation which resulted in a high mortality rate. However, the most egregious offense was the extreme lengths the surgeons and nurses went to conceal the pitiable state of the debilitated. Having protested against the rather unsatisfactory conditions which prevailed in the hospitals he inspected, Liman narrated what other horrors lay in store: "Now I would sometimes find several rooms in the hospital locked and the surgeons conducting me would state that the keys were lost. When I ceased to accept this excuse and insisted on having the rooms opened, I discovered that these dark rooms had been filled with the seriously ill and with moribund patients in order to hide them from me."[227] In his

[226] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 23.

[227] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 22-23.

own words, "the sick, the weak, the poorly trained were concealed so that the German general might not see anything ugly or unpleasant to complain of."[228]

There is a great deal which can be garnered from this snapshot of Ottoman medical practice. On the one hand, the plight of the infirm as narrated by Liman justifies a maintenance of if not necessarily an increase in German influence in the Ottoman Empire. It bears emphasizing that if conditions in the Ottoman Empire were satisfactory, that would obviate the need for a comprehensive German presence. Liman's choice to include these reflections in the memoir can be understood as a conscious attempt to emphasize the dire need for sweeping reform in the Ottoman Empire. In this respect, it must be recognized that Liman had an incentive to depict conditions in the Ottoman Empire at their worst.

Motives aside, what strikes the reader, then as well as now, is not the deplorable conditions of the hospitals and the suffering of the patients, but the callousness of the staff. Rather than owning up to the embarrassing conditions which prevailed, the staff settle upon the expedient of stuffing the dead or dying out of the way in a locked room; from the way Liman constructs the scene, the staff behave like children attempting to conceal evidence of their wrongdoings. Liman situates the miserable state of the hospitals in the broader context of the disastrous Balkan Wars, but the message which he ultimately conveys is that the staff bear a considerable part of the blame for the state of the patients. Here, 'oriental indolence' becomes malicious negligence; the actions of the doctors and nurses are not merely the consequence of ineptitude, but rather suggest an inherent lack of humanity. The treatment (or lack thereof) of the seriously ill is positively inhumane, and it can be

[228] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 20.

reasonably assumed that readers of the memoir would have been shocked and outraged, as Liman himself was. By laying a heavy emphasis on the inhumaneness of the Ottoman medical staff, Liman implicitly conjures a collective civilizational space, in which exists a rigid demarcation between the humane, professional European, and the inhumane, incompetent Oriental.

Moreover, as mentioned above, Liman notes that the medical personnel only take the temperatures of the sick officers, and do not spare a similar concern for the common soldiery. While this observation is part and parcel of the much larger picture of malicious Oriental indolence and inhumanity described above, the attention which the nurses and doctors lavish upon the officers suggests something else. It is possible to read this as a testament to the existence of an almost unnatural servility and deference for authority and social-standing on the part of the Turks. Of course, this should be taken with some nuance. While obedience can certainly be viewed as one of the fundamental aspects of the Oriental character in the mind of Liman, there were limits to this obedience, as the military collapse of 1918 and the constant desertions throughout the war make abundantly clear. However, a close reading of the memoir suggests that Liman views both of those counterexamples as circumstantial exceptions, borne of a crisis which placed men in a situation that was simply beyond the limits of human endurance. Exceptions notwithstanding, the natural inclination of the Turk is towards submission.

Gerold supplements this picture with his own particular experience. Upon his arrival in Mesopotamia, Gerold was met with suspicion on the part of many Turks, few of whom knew the nature of his business or his high position. However, once he was granted the rank of "Pasha," "they outdid themselves in approachability and

amiability."[229] Doubtless, Gerold was amazed by the complete transformation of the attitude of the Turks towards him after his attainment of the title of Pasha. However, the episode in question again hints at the importance of hierarchy and obedience to the Turk, who are constructed in both memoirs as a people comfortable with the notion of a social hierarchy. Although it may be pointed out that this is not particularly radical in the military, which is a highly stratified institution, that can have little bearing on the situation, since Gerold apparently met with disdain until he gained the rank of Pasha, despite the fact that his military rank never changed. The title of "Pasha" then was a kind of sociocultural capital, which allowed Gerold access to preferential treatment that he would not have received otherwise, regardless of his high military rank or his position as the chief of staff of the Sixth Army. Again, the tendency of the Turks would appear from Gerold's memoir to be towards subservience.

This is confirmed by Liman's least flattering assessment of the Ottoman medical service: "The sense of duty, of devotion to the service without distinction of person, was foreign to most of these gentlemen. They were used to being supervised and watched and they needed it."[230] The fundamental problem is this: if a sense of duty and obligation to one's fellow man was lacking in the Turk, how best to instill such traits? Thorough education in a reformed Ottoman Army, imbued with the 'German spirit' and under the aegis of German influence, was likely what Liman envisioned as a long-term remedy to these deficiencies in the Turkish psyche.[231]

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[229] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 114.

[230] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 23.

[231] Gruesshaber, *The 'German Spirit' in the Ottoman and Turkish Army, 1908-1938*, 46-52.

However, before this became a practical reality, most Ottomans would remain at the mercy of the capriciousness of their compatriots.

Liman's microcosm of Ottoman society, the military, perfectly illustrates this point. The barracks of the soldiers were infested with vermin, the men were not used to bathing, and the rooms were not properly ventilated. Liman uses the term "primitive" to highlight the almost total inadequacy of existing arrangements. Most disconcertingly, however, "the officers were not in the habit of looking out for their men and controlling them."[232] Again, the necessity of being "controlled" attests to Liman's aforementioned belief in the considerable deference of the Turks in the face of authority. While this deference would naturally have been more acute in the military, as will be shown, Liman's observations on the problems and potential remedies of the Ottoman military could to a large extent be applied to Ottoman society. Firm authority would introduce order to the anarchic conditions which prevailed in the Ottoman Army, and through the army, the empire as a whole.

As Liman depicts them, the Turks are a 'people without a leader,' in dire need of a 'supervisor', but lacking one. In this sense, Liman constructs a preexisting situation in which the Ottoman polity languishes in a historical void, reduced to mere passivity while awaiting its 'supervisor'. The narrative formulation of Liman speaks volumes about the inadequate leadership and authority of the existing Ottoman powerbrokers, the Committee of Union and Progress, but also leaves the reader with few doubts regarding the identity of the would-be 'supervisors' of a Turkish renewal. The German military mission, and by extension German influence in the Ottoman Empire, acts as a narrative deus ex machina in Liman's memoir. The Ottomans

[232] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 20; Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 125.

subject one another to various cruelties, while blindly stumbling towards a national renewal. The Germans appear, almost as if by divine providence, ready and willing to assist. Although it is an admittedly simple literary device, it is nonetheless effective at impressing upon the reader the patently foreign indolence and inferiority of the Ottoman people.

2.1.3 The Turks as children, the Germans as adults

A related, but distinct characteristic of Liman's depiction of the Turks is his tendency to infantilize them. Concurrent with this is a surreptitious but unmistakable emphasis on the paternalistic role of the Germans. At the high level of grand strategy, Liman views the Turks as mere children, who, sidetracked by the prospect of an even greater prize, forgets the one held in their hands: specifically, Liman held that the military special missions dispatched to Afghanistan, Mesopotamia, and Persia, which were ironically organized by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the blessing of the German Embassy in Istanbul, risked distracting the Turks to such a degree that they would neglect the defense of their own territory in order to pursue what could only be ephemeral successes in Iran and beyond.[233] This is not to say that the Turks needed German encouragement in the matter. According to Liman, Enver held "phantastic (sic)…yet noteworthy ideas" about potentially launching an attack on British India.[234] 'Fantastic,' in this context, can be defined as "imaginative or fanciful; remote from reality."[235] Flights of fancy denote a childlike mentality, which cannot necessarily distinguish between reality and unreality. Both the Ottoman

[233] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 61-62.

[234] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 53.

[235] See https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/fantastic.

leadership and Germans are guilty of such transgressions, but to varying degrees and for very different reasons. It is important to note that while apportioning blame for these hastily conceived military adventures to Germany, Liman ultimately realizes that in the absence of proper guidance, or worse, in the presence of improper guidance, the Turks can only behave as their temperament dictates, which is to say, behave in a childlike manner. Evidently, it would seem that Liman did not rate the Turkish ability to logically prioritize the defense of their empire very highly. In short, the Germans partook in unrealistic ventures because of ignorance and a facile understanding of the Ottoman Empire and its people; the Turks, by contrast, went along with and enthusiastically supported such ventures because, being by nature impractical, they would invariably behave like children.

Furthermore, it was completely in keeping with this process of infantilization that the Turks were concurrently perceived as given to exaggeration. He cites the case of Fakhri Pasha, whose repeated pleas for relief and insistence of the desperate conditions of his garrison at Medina are construed as merely "customary Turkish exaggeration." Liman rather patronizingly points out to the reader the tenacity of Fakhri and his men in successfully defending Medina until the Armistice, which was no insignificant feat of arms, as conclusive proof that the Turks had a propensity for exaggerating.[236] The implication is that the Germans, in contrast to the fanciful denizens of the Orient, were factually grounded and capable of dispassionate judgement in critical situations.

[236] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 291.

2.2 Searching for the exotic in Five Years in Turkey and Vom Balkan nach Bagdad

2.2.1 Tribal 'Fantasias'

The enduring association of the Orient with the strange and exotic is dutifully perpetuated in *Five Years in Turkey*, despite Liman's pretensions to an understanding of the Near East untarnished by romantic notions. In his ethnographic observations on the Druze peoples of Greater Syria, the tribal warriors appear as little more than a caricature of barbarians, less bound and motivated by morality than by the promise of material gain.[237] When Liman first meets with a delegation of Druze sheikhs, the Druze retinue made a flamboyant show of their entry, "riding a fantasia around [Liman] with much discharge of guns."[238] Coupled with the constant visitations of the Druze deputation throughout the ensuing night, which Liman took to be evidence of "an extraordinary interest in my person," the reader is presented with the unmistakable image of a quasi-frontier society, a bizarre interpolation of something reminiscent of the Wild West into the contemporary Ottoman Empire. Liman's depiction of the tribal retinue on horseback whilst firing their rifles into the air was more or less indistinguishable from that of any other nomadic people who remained as yet un-settled; a cultural curio from a bygone age, an anachronism. Moreover,

[237] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 370. The Druze are a monotheistic sect living predominantly in the area of Mount Lebanon and Jabal al-Druze in Syria. Although the religion was originally an offshoot of Ismaili Shia Islam, it is now considered to be distinct. During the war, in Greater Syria a famine broke out, which was caused by the Allied blockade in conjunction with the requisitions by the Ottoman government and a locust infestation. The famine resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths, while many fled the coastal areas into the Druze interior, seeking succor or freedom from the repression of Cemal Pasha. As Liman himself narrates, the Druze vacillated between nominal loyalty to the Ottoman Empire and the temptation of British gold, but were ultimately marginally involved in the war itself. See Fawaz, *A Land of Aching Hearts*, 30, 96, 243, 254, 256; Schatkowski-Schilcher, "The Famine of 1915-1918 in Greater Syria," 229-258; Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 211, 224; Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 116-117; Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria*, 207-225.

[238] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 363.

Liman's choice of the word "fantasia," which can be usefully defined as "something possessing grotesque, bizarre, or unreal qualities," further reinforces the reader's association of the Orient with unreality.[239] In fact, in the whole scene, the only anchor of reality is the person of Liman himself, who either by virtue of his foreignness or his prominent official standing attracted the attention of the Druze tribesmen. Here, the gaze of the Oriental 'Other' is taken to be a form of awe, or even wonderment.

2.2.2 Oriental Greed according to Gerold

Liman's depiction of the materialistic Druze tribal warriors, riding "fantasias" and motivated by the prospect of pecuniary gain, finds echoes in Gerold's own experiences with the Bakhtiari tribesmen of Persia, who were ostensibly meant to assist Ottoman forces in Mesopotamia in liberating Iran from the thrall of the Russian and British Empires. As a matter of course, these warriors needed adequate incentive to join the fold of the Ottomans. According to Gerold, the monies provided had to be in gold, since "paper money was never able to bedazzle the eye of the Oriental."[240] Here, the fact that the suspicious Orientals are not lured by paper money mingles with the indelible impression that the Oriental weighs social interactions primarily by gain. Alternatively, the fact that the Orientals are implicitly bedazzled by gold suggests a latent need to bedazzle them, if one hoped to make any headway; this impression is echoed in Josef Drexler's memoir, where he extols the utility of *baksheesh* ("bribery") to expedite matters.[241] Although similarly pertaining to the

[239] See https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fantasia.

[240] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 76-77.

[241] Drexler, *Mit Jildirim*, 6.

conception of the Oriental as greedy, this is somewhat different from the behavior of the Turkish officials in the Arab provinces, who are the very picture of rapacity, in that Gerold construes this as a general Oriental attribute. Furthermore, gold seems rather antiquated in comparison with paper currency, thus reinforcing the image of the Bakhtiari tribesmen as *Basargesindel* ("bazaar-rabble"), to use Gerold's expression, haggling over the price of their own loyalty.

2.2.3 Authorial hubris and historical amnesia

In other instances, too, Liman constructs narrative episodes in which, to the eyes of his intended audience, his literary personage is seemingly the only facet or 'anchor' of reality in an unreal environment. Interestingly, sometimes authorial hubris would lead to situations in which the reverse was the case. During the Gallipoli campaign, Liman received an intelligence report from the Ottoman military headquarters which suggested that the strategic plan of the British was to cross the peninsula at Bolayır into the Sea of Marmara, thereby bypassing the Ottoman defenses of the Straits and leading to the capture of Istanbul; Liman is quick to dismiss this report, saying, "This is probably taken from the 'journey around the world in eighty days.'"[242] Evidently, Liman found a literary comparison, from a late nineteenth-century French novel no less, most appropriate for conveying to his audience the surreal essence of certain wartime phenomena in the Ottoman Empire. Although it is not clear whether the communication to Liman was dispatched by his German compatriots employed at the Ottoman military headquarters or by their Turkish colleagues, his usage of the expression "Turkish headquarters" invariably links the Turks to this patently fanciful

[242] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 122.

appraisal of British operative intentions, which seem to spring right out of the pages of a Jules Verne adventure novel. The Orient is once again construed as a site of unreality, or more appropriately, where reality becomes fantasy.

However, there is some irony in this, insofar as what appeared to be unreal may in fact have been real. Again, Liman does not tell the reader in what manner the British were supposed to cross the isthmus, but it can be assumed from the incredulousness with which it was met that the method was deemed nigh impracticable. Nonetheless, the action of crossing a peninsula bore a symbolic significance which, although apparently lost on Liman, would not have been lost on his Ottoman contemporaries, 'Turkish' or otherwise. Even today, the manner in which Mehmet Fatih conquered Istanbul is the subject of popular television serials and public celebrations. Historically speaking, Istanbul has been vulnerable to precisely such a strategic maneuver as crossing a peninsula to circumvent enemy defenses. This had been done in 1453 by the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet Fatih, whose army dragged boats across land and into the Golden Horn, behind the Byzantine chains which had blocked access by the sea. Because of his presumption of being knowledgeable about the Orient, Liman rejected the possibility that such an occurrence was possible, despite the fact that a very similar operation had ultimately succeeded. The origins of the concerns of the Turkish officials at the military headquarters seemed to Liman more plausibly derived from contemporary literature, as opposed to the Ottoman's own past. In his narrative, history itself is consigned to the realm of fantasy.

2.3 Space and decay in the Ottoman Empire

2.3.1 The city of Istanbul through Liman's and Gerold's eyes

In contrast with his observations on the people of the Orient, the physical space of the Ottoman Empire, oft remarked upon by foreign visitors, elicited very little comment from Liman[243]. Typically, any remarks Liman issued on the environment in which he found himself were made with a view to providing a reader with the salient features of the topography as they pertained to military matters. Otherwise, his rather sparing impressions were limited to the already-beleaguered capital Istanbul and Asia Minor.[244] The ostensible decay of the city of Istanbul lent an air of faded splendor to the German vision of the Orient, which can be said to have borne the appearance of not only unreality but also past reality. This is a subject which Liman does not dwell on at any considerable length; that he does at all supports the notion that he, like his readers, subscribed to the narrative of Ottoman decline. In the now-distant past, there was grandeur in the imperial city of sultans. Now, there is only squalor. Liman's description of the pitiable condition of the horses in Istanbul, who had no hoof care and were suffering from glanders, serves as an analogy for the downtrodden inhabitants of the city, if not for the inhabitants of the empire as a whole. The beautiful buildings of Istanbul, "well known to every visitor to Constantinople," were now inundated with trash and refuse, poignant reminders of a-once triumphant empire now reduced to dire circumstances.[245] The dilapidation of

[243] For an excellent example of what a German soldier in Liman's place might have written regarding the beauty of the Ottoman capital city, see Steinbach, *Strolling Through Istanbul in 1918*, 20-41.

[244] For example, see Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 69-70, 78-79.

[245] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 21.

the city and its poor upkeep again implicitly suggests disorder, which in turn implies the need for the introduction of order, which could only feasibly come from outside. As is the case with the state of disrepair of the transportation infrastructure throughout the empire mentioned above, the deplorable state of the capital seems to call for German aid in an effort to restore the city to its former glory. Furthermore, the "desolation," as Liman would have it, of the city of Istanbul provides its readers with the larger picture of a polity weary with war, having just endured the fallout of the Balkan Wars in 1912-1913. This could only be accentuated by the outbreak of another war, which transformed Istanbul into a sepulchral city.[246]

Strangely, Gerold had a difficult time accepting the capital city of the Ottoman Empire as anything other than a "Greek city." Comparing Istanbul to those cities in Anatolia which were pure emanations of "Turkishness" (*Türkentum*), Gerold claimed that "neither Mohammed the Conqueror nor his successors were completely able to wipe out the Greekness [*Griechentum*] of Istanbul to the point of total disappearance." He then went on to add that "a picture of this is Aya Sofya, with its mostly painted-over mosaics and its large crests emblazoned with the names of the Caliphs."[247] There are several things to unpack here. First, unlike Liman, Gerold does not suggest that the Ottoman capital city is in a sorry state of decline; in fact, on balance his view of Ottoman decline is markedly less pronounced than is the case with Liman. Second, Gerold here has begun to equate Anatolia with "Turkishness." Whereas the cities on the Aegean coast and Istanbul were monstrous hybrids, those of Anatolia presented the image of "pure Turkishness." The significance of this

[246] For a sense of the refugee problem in Istanbul, particularly in the later years of the war, see Steuber, *Jildirim*, 40-41.

[247] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 78.

association will become still more significant when it is explored how the people of Anatolia were consistently viewed by Liman and Gerold as producing the finest foot-soldiers of the Ottoman Army.

Although Gerold mentions the typical set-piece of Aya Sofya, an integral part of any "Travel Modality" involving the Ottoman Empire, he does not linger on its singular attractiveness or imposing silhouette. Instead, he makes the pointed observation that Byzantine mosaics mingled uneasily with grafted-on reminders of the first four Caliphs, as though the latter were put up in a deliberate attempt to draw attention away from the former. In a sense, by dividing the city of Istanbul into cultural spheres of Greek and Turkish influence, Gerold is denying the possibility of an Ottoman synthesis between the two. Furthermore, in so doing he lends credence to the notion that the Ottoman Turks were an alien presence in their own capital city. This foreshadowed the end of the First World War and the Allied occupation of the city of Istanbul, when, as we shall see from Liman's account, some Greeks in Istanbul took to celebrating the Ottoman defeat with great displays of Greek national feeling and ostentation.

2.3.2 Oriental decay in the German collective memory through the cemetery at Tarabya

There is perhaps no more poignant or evocative site which solidified the German association of the city of Istanbul with death and decay than the German cemetery in Tarabya. One notable casualty of the war who was interred there was General Colmar von der Goltz, who died of typhus just before the final victory of the Ottoman Sixth Army at Kut al-Amara, Mesopotamia, in 1916. 'Universally' grieved by much of the Turkish officer corps, many of whom he was responsible for training,

Goltz was buried at the cemetery located on the grounds of the now-former German Embassy in Tarabya, which Liman considered to be "one of the most beautiful spots in the world."[248] Even today, the German cemetery at Tarabya remains a monument to the sacrifices of the Germans who fought and fell alongside their Ottoman comrades, far from the land of their fathers. On the other hand, in the time of the Great War the siting of numerous German graves in the city of Istanbul can only have reinforced the perception of that city as a funerary city. In a sense, Liman's account of the city of Istanbul as a place more past than present, more dead than alive, contributes to the in-progress creation of a collective German memory of wartime loss inextricably associated with the physical space of Istanbul. At the same time, it also reinforces the already-existing perception of the Orient as the tomb of history, a memorial to the past, yet inexplicably existing in the present.[249]

There are several alternative readings of Liman's appraisal of the physical space of the Ottoman capital. On the one hand, the narrative of the city of Istanbul as a nexus of Oriental deterioration and decline complements what has previously been said regarding the temperamental and cultural degradation of the inhabitants of the empire. It bears repeating that a generally miserable state of affairs served to legitimize the German presence in and tutelage of the Ottoman Empire and its inhabitants. On the other hand, the fact that the Germans were inextricably linked to the physical space of the city of Istanbul through the embassy and its accompanying graveyard of wartime heroes served to partially divorce the narrative of Ottoman

[248] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 169.

[249] According to Ruth Bernard Yeazell, who deconstructs European art and literature concerned with the Harem, which is acts as a discursive microcosm of the Orient, the quintessential 'pastness of the Orient' was a common trope of Orientalist discourses. Ironically, even though the proper term which was often used was 'timelessness,' this timelessness assumed the guise of the "past as present." See Yeazell, *Harems of the Mind*, 233-242.

decline from that of the eventual salvation by way of the Germans; in other words, the Germans too had a stake in the decline and death of the venerable city. The narrative of Ottoman decline is thus to some extent uncoupled from the implication of German resurrection, by virtue of shared German loss in Istanbul. However, this is an anomaly in the memoir, a likely manifestation of the Ottoman-German *Waffenbrüderschaft* ("brotherhood-in-arms"). Although the narrative of Ottoman space as manifest evidence of Ottoman decline is more nuanced than other aspects of Liman's discourse on the "Turkish mindset," on balance it squares with the importance of a Turkish renewal under German auspices far better than it accommodates the Germans in a shared destiny of an Ottoman fall.

2.3.3 Historicity in *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*

Unlike Liman, whose narrative largely avoids succumbing to the antiquarian or tourists' gaze of the Orient, Gerold is more explicit in acknowledging the allure of historical memory and ancient pasts in his travels in the region. This becomes particularly acute in March 1916, when he began to venture into archaic "Iraq." There, he encountered

> great ungainly barges, so-called *Schachturs*… [and] *Keleks*, inflated rafts, of the kind that had already been common at the time of the Assyrian Empire. Because numerous bridges between Ras al-Ayn and Mosul had collapsed, [Gerold] chose the path alongside the Euphrates, even though the Tigris-route would have been more attractive for historical reasons.[250]

Later, upon arrival in Baghdad Gerold refers to it as "the old city of the Caliph."[251] It is clear that Gerold views Mesopotamia as a place locked in stasis, unchanged and

[250] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 90.

[251] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 96.

unchanging since the time of the ancient Assyrians. Quite apart from the inherent suggestion of primitive antiquity, Gerold enjoyed the unaffected pageantry of 'simpler' times. Similarly, the crowds that mourned the death of Colmar von der Goltz recalled in the mind of Gerold the grandeur of medieval Baghdad in the time of the Abbasids; a relic of the Islamic golden age. It could be that Gerold was aware of all this due to his familiarity with the history of the Near East, which might explain why such observations are more present in his memoir and not those of someone who knew little about the Near East save his own experience, like Liman. In any event, by drawing attention to these quaint and idyllic scenes of life in the cradle of civilization, Gerold is turning "the strange into the familiar," penetrating "the remote" and making "it accessible," and supplanting "the ridiculousness of [the] scene with the rational and the useful;" in so doing, he is taking note of a distinct way of life that will soon be lost.[252] Sooner or later, it is understood by the reader, the fringes of the Near East, even those that have clung to the past, are destined to be dragged into the 'civilized world.' This constitutes a rare moment of sentimentality in two very unsentimental life-narratives, and is at odds with the broader narrative of the desirability, even necessity, of European progress. On the whole, it must be acknowledged that both Liman and Gerold were rather more concerned with conveying to their audience the idiosyncrasies of the 'Turkish or Oriental mindset,' and how these traits manifested themselves through various persons in the Ottoman Empire. It is to these persons that we now turn.

[252] Krobb, "'*Welch' unbebaumtes Land und riesengrosses Feld:'* Turkey as Colonial Space in German World War I Writings,' 13-14.

2.4 Glimpses of the 'Turkish character' through Great Men

The relatively high rank and social standing of Liman von Sanders enabled him to move in circles of consequence and fraternize with various members of the Ottoman military and political elite. His brief sketches of these 'Great Men' not only provide the reader with a picture of the foibles of the 'Asiatic character' as personified by individuals, but also reveal (if somewhat inadvertently) the prejudices and preconceptions of the author. Leaving aside the personage of Enver Pasha, whose verbal tussles with Liman cast a formidable shadow upon both the memoir itself and secondary sources treating with the memoir, Liman touches on such personalities as those of Prince Said Halim Pasha, Cemal Pasha, and Ismail Hakki Pasha, to name but a few.

2.4.1 The dignified Oriental: Prince Said Halim Pasha

By no inconsiderable margin when compared to other colleagues, Liman accorded Prince Said Halim Pasha a rather favorable depiction in his memoir. The Egyptian Grand Vizier spoke perfect French, "combined the attitude of the Asiatic grand seignior with that of the modern diplomatist," possessed "most engaging manners," and was "of absolutely irreproachable character."[253] Although it is only possible to speculate as to precisely what the attitude of the Asiatic grand seignior might be, the term 'grand seignior' was used, of course, as an Occidental appellation for the Ottoman sultan.[254] On the basis of this, we may surmise a range of possible options,

[253] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei,* 13.

[254] According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, the term 'grand seignior' means "a former sultan of Turkey." See https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/grand%20seignior. On the other hand, and rather more interestingly, the Oxford Dictionary suggests that, going back to the origins of the term in French, literally meaning 'great lord,' grand seignior in a more contemporary context means something closer to "a man whose rank or position allows him to command others." This

including a certain imperiousness, as well as comfort and confidence with power. While Liman may have been surprised or even impressed by the intriguing manifestations of classical Oriental ostentation and nobility melded with a linguistic mode of expression befitting modernity, which in itself evinces a willingness to engage with the Europeans on their terms, one suspects that Liman thought rather more highly of Said Halim Pasha as a result of his "moderate views" and his "consummate" ability to reign in the more imprudent impulses of his Young Turk colleagues. This is not to say that 'moderation' was exceptional to the Asiatic character as understood by Liman, but rather that the political situation engendered a broader radicalization of society, and would eventually unleash a kind of popular nationalist fury, a development which was not entirely welcomed but which was fully recognized by Liman himself. Of course, in such a context, moderation can only become a rarity. Furthermore, Liman was unique in that he did not ascribe fanaticism as a unique characteristic of the Muslim Turks. Lack of moderation is, perhaps, less an Oriental trait than a universal one, an emotive symbol of the times.

In a sense, Said Halim Pasha provided Liman with a mirror image of himself, distorted by the Oriental character of the object. As we have seen, Liman thought a great deal in terms of hierarchy and social rank, and one of the likely principal reasons why Said Halim Pasha escapes the ire of Liman von Sanders is precisely because he was of noble origin, a kind of social equal to Liman himself, who held a noble title. In addition, the fact that Liman chooses to include that Said Halim Pasha was also detained by the Entente after the war, a detainment which Liman held to be patently absurd given Said Halim Pasha's laudatory conduct during the war, suggests

definition holds a clue to what the attitude of an Asiatic grand seignior might reasonably consist of. See https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/grand_seigneur.

a sort of rhetorical kinship over a shared injustice. Furthermore, Said Halim Pasha, although an important representative of the Ottoman state at that time, nevertheless represented 'Old Turkey,' to use the expression of Kaiser Wilhelm II as conveyed by Liman, as opposed to his colleagues. By comparison, many of the other Young Turks were mere upstarts, potentially unwelcome parvenus in the geopolitical arena.

2.4.2 The secretive Garibaldi: Cemal Pasha

Case in point is Cemal Pasha, whose portrait in *Five Years in Turkey* is rather less flattering. Cemal Pasha, by way of reminder, was without question one of the most prominent members of the inner circle of the Committee of Union and Progress. He was the Minister of the Ottoman Navy, Commander of the Fourth Army, and governor of Greater Syria.[255] According to Liman, "Though apparently somewhat of a Garibaldi, he unquestionably combined great intelligence with a very determined attitude. He always impressed me as unwilling to confide his ultimate thoughts and aims to another mortal."[256] There is much in the way of semantics which can be deconstructed here. In the first instance, "though" should be read as "despite." Unlike Said Halim Pasha, who symbolized in Liman's mind "Old Turkey," Cemal Pasha's manner was altogether closer to that of Italian nationalist cum revolutionary, Giuseppe Garibaldi. Symptomatic of the new order which the Young Turks were trying to establish, Cemal Pasha's ostensible radicalism belied a considerable mental

[255] Cemal Pasha's memoir, which was translated and published in English in 1922, is an incredibly rich ego-document, whose breadth rivals and perhaps even surpasses that of Liman. See Djemal, *Memories of a Turkish Statesman, 1913-1919.* A pathbreaking analysis of Cemal's tenure as governor of Greater Syria can be found in Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria*.

[256] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 14.

dexterity, an assessment which is another indication of Liman's generally elitist attitude towards mass participation in politics.

The second part of Liman's sketch of Cemal Pasha, regarding Cemal's reticence to reveal his thoughts, leads the reader to another of the alleged chief qualities of the Asiatic personality: suspicion and guile. These would be particularly manifest after nearly three years of wielding considerable influence in Syria, when, accustomed to "a position something like that of Viceroy," Cemal viewed the assumption of command of Army Group F by Erich von Falkenhayn with skepticism if not outright jealousy.[257] Similarly, according to Liman, Hafiz Hakki Pasha, who some three years earlier took command of the Third Army after the disastrous defeat at Sarikamis, was lacking in "deep knowledge" but was quick-witted and intelligent. Moreover, in apparent behavioral congruity as a "typical representative of the educated upper stratum of the Far East," he never voiced his own opinion in its entirety, in contradistinction with the forthright German.[258] The likening of the denizens of the Near East with those of the Far East testifies to the existence of a definite notion of Asiatic characteristics, and in this respect it is very likely that Germany's colonial experience in China loomed large in the German Orientalist imaginary.[259]

[257] In his own memoir, Cemal caustically refers to Erich von Falkenhayn as "'the author of the Verdun affair,'" and was furious with the intrusion of the German general into a military and political sphere where he had held almost complete control for three years. See Djemal, *Memories of a Turkish Statesman*, 190; Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 229.

[258] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 55.

[259] Wu, "Engineering Empire: German Influence on Chinese Industrialization, 1880–1925," 153-168.

2.4.3 A revolutionary of his word? Halil "Kut" Pasha

The Ottoman official with whom Gerold had the most regular contact was Halil Pasha, a relatively young man who was an uncle of the Ottoman Minister of War and Vice-Generalissimo Enver Pasha, as well as the main author of the Ottoman victory at Kut al-Amara, where in late April 1916 the Ottoman Sixth Army had encircled and forced the capitulation of the General Charles Vere Ferrers Townshend, whose Sixth Poona Division, named after the Indian city of Pune, constituted the bulk of the British forces in Mesopotamia; with the exception of Gallipoli, it was the Ottoman Empire's most stunning feat of arms, and materially dented British imperial pride.[260] Although, as mentioned earlier, Colmar von der Goltz would meet his end while campaigning in Mesopotamia, neither Liman nor Gerold shied away from acknowledging that the credit for the final result largely belonged to Halil. Gerold found the commander of the Ottoman Sixth Army to have been "honorable" in his dealings with the enemy, and when he met Halil in person, he was greeted "with charming politeness in fluent French."[261] Much like Said Halim Pasha, the picture which emerges of Halil Pasha is that of a well-educated high official with formidable politeness.

However, this veneer hid a revolutionary of the same kind as Cemal Pasha, whose reticence bordered on deception. Halil "formally… took every advice gratefully and with the greatest politeness, and usually pretended to follow it. In fact, however, this did not always happen."[262] From Gerold's point of view, Halil proved

[260] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 169; Strachan, *The First World War*, 121-124; Tucker, *The Great War, 1914-1918*, 187-189; Kayalı, "The Ottoman Experience in World War I," 888-889; Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 110-115, 149-151; Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 129-130; Jeffery, *1916*, 201-206; Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 243-274.

[261] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 112, 115.

[262] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 114.

to possess the same inability to keep promises that, according to Liman, was a hallmark of Ottoman officialdom.; this would prove to be particularly problematic in the case of Ottoman-Arab relations, which, as will be shown in Chapter 2, Liman believed to the result of the same prevarication and lack of honor pertaining to promises that had been made. In the case of Halil, this lack of honor generates tension with the earlier image of his gentleman-like behavior towards Charles Townshend. Gerold's impression of Halil did not improve as time went on. The two bickered over the extent of Gerold's powers as chief of staff of the Sixth Army, although Halil always maintained the greatest politeness throughout. Gerold came to the conclusion that Halil's personality was less that of a soldier and more of a "young minister of today's parliaments… who had great willpower and determination, but little actual expertise, who aims to rectify the latter deficiency through occasional independent measures without [soliciting] prior advice."[263] Especially from the latter portion of Gerold's assessment, it is easy to divine how cases of friction would have developed between the two men. Leaving aside Gerold's views of parliamentary politics, which like many of his colleagues may have ranged from tolerance to contempt, the comparison of Halil with a "young minister" is not particularly flattering. Although Gerold is willing to credit Halil with "willpower" and "determination," two traits in stark contrast with the sluggish indolence of the Oriental, it is evident that Halil's lack of experience, particularly military experience, is inherently problematic; Halil's persona was more akin to that of a politician than

[263] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 129. Compare Gerold's perception of Halil with that of Halil's nephew, Enver Pasha: "[Enver] was a man of unusual energy and strength of will, a first-class revolutionary, but a military dreamer [*Phantast*], no commander [*kein Feldherr*]." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 144.

that of a military man, which was not altogether desirable considering that he wielded command of the Ottoman Sixth Army.[264]

This view was further confirmed, and the previous view of Halil overthrown, by his continued indulgence of English prisoners taken at Kut, who apparently behaved with considerable insolence towards German and Turk alike though failing to show the anticipated indications of deference. Halil's stated reason for allowing this was to show "that the Turks are a highly-civilized nation."[265] The image of Halil suddenly changes from what it was before. In the first place, we can infer from Halil's actions that extant discourses posited the Turks as 'barbarians' and 'savages;' Halil clearly hopes that his very public display of magnanimity will counteract some of the negative reputation which the Turks had historically accrued. From Gerold's standpoint, the picture of Halil which now emerges is that of a highly-skilled albeit somewhat calculating political operator, for whom honor and mercy are not worthy concepts in themselves but rather means to a political end: that end is the alteration if not negation of Orientalist discourses of the Turks as uncivilized. However, his apparent willingness to toy with important notions such as honor can only have reinforced the impression that he and his actions were disingenuous and insincere. Later on, Gerold would dismiss Halil's attempts at reassurance of his appreciation of Gerold's work and advice as "cheap flattery."[266] Gerold's view is very much a subtle commentary on the same Young Turk Revolution which Liman found to be equally suspect. Men like Enver and Halil had gained their positions of influence through

[264] Halil scrupulously cultivated an image of himself as a man of military bearing, but this façade was not likely to convince someone with extensive military experience like Gerold. See Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 137.

[265] The original text is "*dass die Türken eine hochzivilisierte Nation seien*." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 138.

[266] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 160.

their political maneuvering and loyalty to the Revolution, and decidedly not as a consequence of military talent or seniority. Like Liman, Gerold preferred the proverbial "Old Turkey" to the revolutionary new one.

2.4.4 The curious case of Topal Ismail Hakki Pasha

Liman elucidates rather more clearly some of the characteristics of the typical "Asiatic" through his description of the person of the Intendant General, Topal Ismail Hakki Pasha. Surprisingly, his treatment of the man in charge of requisitions for the military was not lacking in either a sense of humor or respect. Regarding the latter, Liman's sympathies for the Intendant General most likely sprang from his shared sense of having a similarly thankless task. The two aspects of Ismail Hakki which stands out the most in Liman's account is his physical appearance and his personal habits. Topal Ismail Hakki Pasha's "features inclined to the Mongolian type, and the keen alert eyes betrayed the shrewdness of the Chinese trader."[267] As to the rest of Liman's picture of Ismail Hakki, it is primarily spent on the nature of the Intendant General's work and the difficulties involved, but above all on the indefatigability with which Ismail Hakki contended with these difficulties. The Intendant General, Liman stresses, did all that he could under "Turkish circumstances" with great energy, and was one of the few Ottoman statesmen who regularly worked long hours at the War Ministry.

In the first instance, Ismail Hakki's appearance was evidently striking to someone such as Liman. Ismail Hakki's features suggested that he was of Mongolian extraction, or rather "type." The choice of the word "type" is one of the few instances

[267] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 56-57.

in which Liman can be said to hint at a worldview in which race constitutes an integral part. On the other hand, the phrase "shrewdness of the Chinese trader" is rife with meaning derived from Orientalist and colonialist contexts.[268] As far as is known, Liman never went to the Far East. The question then arises: what contributed to the formation of the definite mental image of a shrewd Chinese trader? First of all, it cannot be discounted that Liman knew people, either diplomats or fellow military officers, who were in China for the purpose of either quelling the Boxer Rebellion or else administering Germany's imperial possessions there. Second, the specificity of the Chinese-trader caricature is heavily suggestive of a kind of extant stereotype, likely derived from the German and European colonial experience. Undoubtedly, there is a perception that merchants and traders were clever by necessity of their line of work. However, this seems too coincidental in light of how many Ottomans were similarly viewed as clever and canny, irrespective of their profession.

Rather, the stereotype of the conniving Chinese merchant can be taken as a confirmation of the association of the 'Oriental' with deviousness and trickery, a deduction rendered evident by Liman's decision to embark on a direct comparison between a native of the Near East and some hypothetical Far Eastern counterpart. Though such a comparison might raise eyebrows, in Liman's time, if we are to judge from the unceremonious manner in which he makes the pronouncement, such a caricature would have come across as self-explanatory and immediately intelligible to its intended audience. Furthermore, although shrewdness was an inferior trait befitting the 'lesser' peoples of the world, it is noteworthy that here Liman chooses to cast this trait as a positive boon for Ismail Hakki's work. Forced to lay his hands

[268] "The 'slitty eyes' of the Chinese were… viewed not merely as a physical characteristic, but an outward manifestation of an inner character marked by wiliness, perfidy, and deceit." Kuss, *German Colonial Wars and the Context of Military Violence*, 142.

on anything he could get ahold of, Ismail Hakki would occasionally if inadvertently become the architect of amusing circumstances, which included gifting Liman with six bottles of wine that he had seized from a gift which had been addressed directly to Liman! On the other hand, Liman does not ever address the misery wrought upon the civilian population of the Ottoman Empire by the requisitions, but it is almost a given that he would have wholeheartedly endorsed the justification of 'military necessity.' Amusing or sobering instances aside, it is plainly evident that the picture of Ismail Hakki Pasha as a shrewd, 'Mongoloid' merchant who neatly fit into a preconceived European mental image of the Far Eastern colonial subject is proof positive of German quasi-colonialist discourse at work in the production of memories on the Ottoman Empire, and that having derived from Orientalist discourse emanating from German colonial contexts elsewhere, Germans reading the memoir could reasonably anticipate encountering similar behavioral 'antics' in their Near Eastern ventures, based on the description of Ismail Hakki.

Conversely, noting the assiduous manner in which Ismail Hakki conducted his business when compared with his colleagues can be interpreted as nothing less than a glowing commendation of the Intendant General's industriousness. Ismail Hakki is depicted as singular among his colleagues in adhering to a conscientious work schedule, and according to Liman it cannot be said that he spared any effort in his drive to provide the military with the necessary material and foodstuffs.

From this we can make an important observation regarding the German view of the Ottomans as whole, particularly of Ottoman officialdom. That the Ottomans in general, and the Turks in particular, have already been established as a lazy menagerie of peoples is shown above, with Ismail Hakki as one of the few exceptions. This is because he maintains a regular work schedule when other

Ottoman government functionaries merely put in an appearance at the workplace, if they show up at all. In this sense, it can be posited that some Ottoman bureaucrats have not successfully internalized modern temporal regimes which dictate a regular work schedule.[269] Since the establishment of a modern temporal regime which strictly regiments how one allots one's time to tasks, the lack of adherence to these regimes signifies either laziness or, more tellingly, a conspicuous incompatibility with modernity itself. Put simply, what seems as endemic laziness among the peoples of the Orient, already a mark of inferiority compared to the diligence of the Germans, becomes an indication of an inferior civilization, inferior because it has not yet passed the boundary into modernity. Of course, with the existence of modern ideological systems such as nationalism, it would naturally be more accurate to suggest that the Ottoman Empire was in a state of transition from pre-modernity to modernity. However, the inescapable association of pre-modern temporal regimes with pre-modernity (and therefore inferiority) would not have been lost to Liman, his contemporaries, or indeed to the readers of his memoir. Ismail Hakki Pasha is the exception to the rule precisely because he conforms to expected norms of modernity the workplace.

2.5 Cunning and suspicion

2.5.1 Art and Artifice as Anti-European

However, Liman draws an important distinction between the Turks and their German allies, which is apparent from his portrait of such figures as Cemal Pasha and Ismail

[269] Wishnitzer, *Reading Clocks, Alla Turca*, 124-150.

Hakki Pasha. Whereas the Germans appear as acting in a straightforward and candid manner, the Turks are depicted as employing guile and various rhetorical artifices, presumably with the intention of gaining the upper hand in their interactions with the Germans.[270] While this may bear a superficial resemblance to the earlier descriptions of Turkish prevarication, as well as a general penchant for making excuses, the fact of the matter is that the association of Oriental peoples with cunning and guile is well-established.[271] Hence, Ihsan Pasha of the Sixth Army is described as "influential and shrewd, but tricky and German-hating."[272] It is fairly unambiguous that the comparison between German energy and Turkish indolence has clear ramifications in terms of establishing a narrative of Ottoman inferiority. The trope of Turkish cunning performs the same narrative function, but does so rather more surreptitiously. "Cunning" and "guile" were attributes that were viewed as quintessentially un-European, all the more so because their opposites, "honesty" and "straightforwardness" were strong indicators of an essentially bourgeois masculinity. Openly voicing one's own convictions testifies to an assertive, confident masculine ideal which eschews adopting any kind of deception or art as 'ungentlemanly,' or even effeminate.[273] The added layer of gendered meaning in Liman's memoir affirms

[270] Jealousy and suspicion towards the Germans on the part of the Turks often led to German exclusion from military decisions, and Liman suggests that the Turks concealed numerous affairs from the Germans. See Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 31-32, 264. Gerold suggests that much, though not all, of what he heard in the Orient "counted upon extensive gullibility." He then added "You have to get used to such things in the Orient." The meaning is evident: Orientals were deceitful and well-practiced in the art of deception. While a novice interloper in the Orient might fall for such a ploy, Gerold is rather more well-versed in the underhanded practices of the Oriental. Again, the importance for Gerold and other Germans in the Orient lies in knowing when the Oriental is exaggerating or lying. See Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 39.

[271] See for example, Hillman, "Of Snake-Catchers and Swamp-Drainers," 17, 22.

[272] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 169.

[273] A more specific episode reinforces the femininity of the Turkish people in the mind of the reader. While inspecting the Aegean coast, Liman was quartered in the home of a Turkish oil manufacturer, where he experienced the "strange custom of the grown sons of the house waiting on the table."

the at-times duplicitous conduct of Ottoman officials, but more importantly reinforces the notion that Turks may not adhere to European notions of masculinity, which de-facto renders them inferior to their European counterparts.

Gerold encountered 'evidence' of Oriental perfidy well before his military service in the Ottoman Empire. In Selânik after the handover of the city from the Ottomans to the Balkan coalition in 1912, Gerold was confronted with the case of an ingenious Turkish resident who had displayed a German flag in his window in the hopes of avoiding billeting Greek soldiers. A passing Greek officer took considerable offense, snatched away the flag, and explained "somewhat unparliamentarily" "'I [shit] on your flag!'"[274] While the German consul was understandably perturbed by the disrespect shown to the German ensign, Gerold was also taken aback by the lack of honor involved in the whole affair. In his view, the Turk involved had little right to hang a flag with which he had nothing to do; the Greek officer escalated matters considerably. Both parties demonstrated a worryingly loose interpretation of "honor," and the Turk in particular evinced a capacity for surreptitious subterfuge in order to gain a material advantage.

Nevertheless, although Gerold understood a certain indecorum and reticence to be natural facets of the Oriental character, as does Liman, he is decidedly more introspective into the causes of friction between Germans and Ottomans:

> In differences of opinion between Germans and Turks it would not only be fundamentally unjust to assume the latter is wrong, but also incorrect. More than other nations, the German has an ingrained tendency to teach others, and did not always find the happiest medium. The naturally far more reserved

Domestic service, long considered the domain of women in both Ottoman and European contexts, here takes on an unusual manifestation in that the men serve their guest. While there is no evidence to suggest a complete gender role-reversal, the male assumption of typically feminine responsibilities in the domestic sphere both testifies to the endemic 'unmanliness' of the Turks and reinforces the perception of the aforementioned Oriental tendency towards servility. See Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 50.

[274] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 44-45.

> Oriental is doubly sensitive to the unreasonable actions of intrusive teachers. Nothing was more misguided and unsuccessful as when a German came to Turkey with the firm intent of 'whipping the sluggish Turks into shape…' Even with clear-thinking officers in Germany, through egoistical literary advertising combined with the disposition of the German towards a surfeit of good self-assessment, the peculiar error was nurtured that the Turks were dying with admiration and gratitude for Germany.[275]

As Florian Krobb has pointed out, here Gerold "assumes the role of a good colonialist… If authentic colonial knowledge had guided activity in colonial environments, [Gerold] claims, the outcome of the war might have been different."[276] Gerold never makes such a claim explicitly; but the implication is that the Germans had an unfortunate tendency to arouse the ire of their allies, whether through imperiousness or just a lack of knowledge pertaining to "the Oriental character," which materially hampered the war effort. This should not distract us from the fact that, on the one hand, there existed an essentialized Oriental character which through empirical observation could be defined, and on the other hand, that excessive zealousness in dealing with the Ottomans was an extremely common accusation, which German officers who had served in the Ottoman Empire heavily utilized in casting aspersions on one another. Both Liman and Gerold were quick to accuse other German officers (usually without mentioning names) of mishandling the more sensitive Turks. After the war, Liman's nemesis, Otto von Lossow, who was the military attaché to the Ottoman Empire, accused Liman of precisely the same failing.[277] One the one hand, the proliferation of so many similar assertions points to the unpreparedness lurking behind the German imperial entanglement in the Near

[275] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 94.

[276] Krobb, "'Doch das orientalische ist es ja eben, was uns interessiert:' Colonial Desires and Ottoman Space: War Memoirs as Post-Colonial Discourse," 176-177.

[277] Gruesshaber, *The 'German Spirit' in the Ottoman and Turkish Army, 1908-1938*, 177-178.

East: when the war ended in failure, many Germans were quick to trade blame and point fingers as to why. With the Ottoman Empire, it seems to be the case that while everyone had a roughly cohesive notion of the Oriental mindset and how best to interact with it, no one was convinced that their own attitudes might have been a contributing factor in the frictions between the Germans and the Turks.

Can it be said that Liman and Gerold were part and parcel of the communication problems? In all likelihood yes, but not to the same extent. Liman was wont to associate difference with inferiority, and similitude with superiority. Hence, where the Turks were different from the Germans, they are 'Other' and inferior; where they are similar to the Germans, such as a shared martial prowess, they are superior in comparison with other peoples of the Orient, like the Arabs and the Persians. Because of this, Liman criticizes individual Germans who lacked the proper expertise to 'handle' affairs in the Ottoman Empire, but he does not question the overarching assumption of German superiority which drives these constructions of Oriental, particularly Ottoman, alterity. Gerold does not limit his blame to the failings of individual Germans; the real culprit is a pervasive attitude of superiority inherent in the German essence, which predisposed the German to attempt "instruction" of the Turks at an ontological level. It is one thing to say that Gerold did not evince instances of belief in German superiority; it is another thing entirely to say that he was not cognizant of these failings, as well as the limitations that they produced. In this respect, Gerold forms a subtle yet distinct counternarrative to Liman, who largely does not acknowledge this problem and continues to indulge in the very paternalist fantasies that Gerold criticizes.

To that end, while Turkish cunning and guile were expressions of an 'Oriental' façade which precluded European modes of bourgeois masculinity, they

also evinced an abiding suspicion of the Germans.[278] On the one hand, it is hardly surprising, given that German motives for buttressing the Ottoman state were not entirely altruistic. The later events of the war on the Caucasus front and the de facto transformation of Georgia into a German protectorate testify to the extent of German colonial ambitions, as well as to the decisive divergence of Ottoman and German imperial interests.[279] The final rupture was, of course, forestalled by the complete military collapse of the Central Powers in the fall of 1918. On the other hand, for their part the Ottomans had their own objectives, which did not entirely coincide with German operational and strategic ones. Some Ottoman statesmen thought it necessary or even desirable to exclude the Germans from the loci of decision-making. Hence, "characteristic of Turkish ideas," the Germans were never afforded a glimpse at the internal mechanism of the Ottomans state.[280] This can only be interpreted as another manifestation of the patent lack of trust which sharply demarcated much of the interactions between the German and the Turk.

Gerold attributes the "unsurmountable suspiciousness" of the Turks to two specific socio-cultural dimensions: One is their quintessentially Oriental (Asiatic) character, which was in continuous opposition to the European, while the other is the consequence of Muslim antipathy towards Christians.[281] According to Gerold, mistrust of this kind was innate and endemic in Turkish interactions with the Germans, and could not be wholly overcome. In this regard, it is the alterity of the

[278] Here I refer to the work of Wilson Chacko Jacob, who chronicles and deconstructs the emergence of a colonial subjectivity in Egypt which was a native response to hegemonic imperial discourses of Oriental femininity and lassitude. See Jacob, *Working Out Egypt*, 1-26.

[279] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 268; Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 215-216; Lieb, "German Middle East Policy and the expedition to Georgia, 1918," 97-115.

[280] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 38.

[281] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 129-130.

Germans, as both Europeans and as Christians, which hinders the ability to communicate and seek common cause with their Turkish allies. Compared to Liman, Gerold is only marginally more willing to discuss the subject of Islam, which nevertheless appears in *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad* to constitute a much more significant facet of the Turkish identity than Liman allows. According to Gerold's view, the opposition between Islam and Christianity is a driving force of Turkish suspicion in their interactions with Christians. When one thinks of Muslim-Christian relations of the Ottoman Empire, it is difficult not to immediately think of the Armenian deportations. Admittedly, Gerold met many Christian peoples during his time in the Balkans, who implacably hated the Turks; for their part, the Balkan Wars can only have further poisoned relations between Muslims and Christians in the Ottoman Empire, particularly in light of the numerous Muslim refugees who were displaced in the ensuing violence. However, Gerold's view of Muslim-Christian opposition could also have been caused by the fact that he saw the Armenians as victims of this antipathy. As will be discussed in Chapter 2, while riding through the desert towards Baghdad, he passed by the Armenian *Konzentrationslager* ("concentration camps"), though he claims he could do nothing to alleviate the suffering of those interned inside. In any event, Gerold interpreted religion as laying the foundations for further mistrust and deceit, which is somewhat different from Liman's own view on the relatively negligible impact of Islam on internal or external affairs in the Ottoman Empire.

However, it was less a matter of religion than national sentiment and cognizance of German imperial ambitions which directed the course of Turkish suspicion on the fringes of the Ottoman Empire. Here we turn to a man about whom relatively little is known, Duke Adolf Friedrich zu Mecklenburg, who Gerold met

during his time in Mesopotamia and who was in charge of one of a Sondermission to agitate among the Persians and stir up sympathy for Germany. When Gerold recommended the Duke as the head of a detachment of Turkish soldiers, he was unequivocally rebuffed by Halil: "As a revolutionary Halil had an outspoken antipathy towards princes, as well as the strange, unspoken hunch that as a former governor of Togo the Duke wanted to conquer a new colony in Persia!"[282] Later, Gerold admitted that "it would be an insult to Turkish national feeling, if [the Duke] were to appear at the head of Turkish soldiers with his 'great tropical hat.'"[283]

There can be no doubt that Ottoman anxieties regarding German colonial ambitions in the Near East were considerable. Nevertheless, Gerold's usage of the exclamation mark here strikes the reader as disingenuous. German officers of high rank are not typically known for utilizing punctuation in a frivolous manner when composing their memoirs; exclamation remarks are reserved for situations when the author wants to make a statement to his audience. In this case, that statement is to suggest that Halil's suspicion of the Duke of Mecklenburg was preposterous and without foundation. Yet, Gerold's implicit message here is proved disingenuous by his own admission as to why the Turks did not like or trust the Duke. The image of the Duke with his sola topi, which was the common headgear of European soldiers in Africa, struck the Turks as the very pageantry of colonialism in action; this would be exacerbated if he were to actually command a force of Turks, in which case their position would be akin to that of colonial soldiers from any other European empire.

[282] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 125-126; Krobb, "'Doch das orientalische ist es ja eben, was uns interessiert:' Colonial Desires and Ottoman Space: War Memoirs as Post-Colonial Discourse," 178-179.

[283] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 151.

Both Gerold and the Turks were aware of this fact, which constituted the principle reason why Gerold never renewed his suggestion that the Duke be given a command.

However, it should be pointed out that Gerold reinforces the stereotype of the Orientals as suspicious and crafty, but as a general principle, and not only in their interactions with the high-handed foreign interloper. This occasionally led to rather humorous circumstances. Gerold had read some news to the effect that, at the Siege of Kut, the Ottomans had left around 3000 English corpses after some particularly valorous combat. Gerold elaborates: "Turkish figures are to be accepted with caution. Enver once explained that one has to generously round up in the military reports, since, from the start, the suspicious reader in the Orient will generously round down the figures."[284] From this picture, there are two possible extrapolations. The first is that the Ottoman state was used to producing statistics of considerable unreliability and dubiousness. What makes this more interesting is that it is done deliberately with the notion that the population at large will not trust the official figures in any event. This shows a not inconsiderable incredulity of the 'Turks,' even of their own government. Once again, the concept of "truth" in the Orient takes on a kind of fluidity inconceivable for men like Gerold, who are presumably not especially accustomed to questioning the information produced by their own government; colonial affairs were typical exceptions. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the German presence did not call forth hitherto unknown characteristics of the Oriental; it merely exacerbated them.

Gerold evinces a healthy distrust of all propaganda, but particularly for that produced by Persian expats with an eye to effecting German and Ottoman imperial

[284] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 98.

involvement in their homeland. In the Istanbul newspaper *Chavar* Gerold read news to the effect that every day, "the Persian clergy would read aloud German military reports in the mosque. All was in bright enthusiasm for the Germans and for the Kaiser. Every month 3000 English were killed by the Persians."[285] Here, Gerold is only partially concerned with the patent untrustworthiness, which appeared to be a characteristic more pronounced in the Persian than in any other Oriental. This statement was made with the explicit aim of drawing attention to the warning signs of futility involved in the German political agitations and military adventures in Persia. It can be readily assumed that at least a few Germans were taken in by such propaganda. Ultimately, Germany would have almost nothing to show for it.

Furthermore, Gerold took aim at the perfidy of the Persians. Once German involvement in cooperation with the Ottomans was assured, the Persian political leaders began to "play the Germans and the Turks against one another, so that they would become suspicious of one another."[286] When Gerold makes a statement of this kind, or when he claims that a Persian politician that he met was "ambiguous," he is doing more than merely affirming the cunning and manipulative nature of the Oriental. Far from reiterating the themes of Oriental prevarication and duplicity which is the subject of so much complaints on the part of Liman, Gerold is casting the Persians as 'more Other' than the Turks. From his perspective, Turkish suspicions of the Germans, and vice-versa, were not wholly the result of nefarious German designs or natural Oriental proclivities, but rather the consequence of deliberate intrigue on the part of some Persians to sow discord between two brothers-in-arms. This attitude is commensurate with Gerold's general bearing in treating with

[285] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 103.

[286] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 104.

the Persians; with one exception, they prove in his memoir to be the general exception to his critical constructions of the Orientals. Neither Liman nor Gerold ever questioned the importance of the German involvement in the Ottoman Empire, which is more that can be said for their views on Persia. Like Liman's narrative treatment of the Greeks in Chapter Two, this dismal picture of the Persians carries with it a stark warning about the superlative untrustworthiness of the Persians, and the lack of any advantage that can be gained from further imperial involvement in the country.

2.5.2 When the German becomes Orientalized

However, an important caveat is in order: although the Turks typically appear as crafty and the Germans as frank, there were naturally exceptions. Liman was witness to as well as a participant in numerous power struggles between and within the German military and diplomatic corps in the Ottoman Empire, which entangled among others Liman and two German Ambassadors. Both Count Wolf-Metternich and Richard von Kuhlmann, with whom Liman was on relatively good terms, fell victim to "German intrigues hatched in Constantinople" by German instigators who manipulated the flow of information from the Ottoman Empire to Berlin and conspired with Enver Pasha. Liman succinctly explains his choice of the word "intrigue:"

> I am calling the expression of fault finding and disparaging criticism of the highest responsible officials and officers serving abroad 'intrigue' because it consisted in sending home secret reports without the knowledge of the parties concerned. Moreover the actors were persons standing in rank far below those whom they were criticizing.[287]

[287] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 15.

On the one hand, the relatively low 'rank' of the people responsible for these intrigues, which only further heightens the shamefulness of their connivance, explicitly functions as an affirmation of Liman's class prejudice and the importance which he bestows upon social standing. More important, however, is the general disapproval Liman evinces for the very act of backbiting. Such artifice was clearly not behavior expected from or becoming to officials and officers in the service of the Kaiser abroad. Although this paragraph undoubtedly reinforces the narrative of Liman as the victim of malicious attempts to remove him and his allies from their positions, a narrative which is woven throughout the memoir and deeply embedded in his account of the multifarious disputes with Enver Pasha, the broader implications of the impropriety of deception and art, as opposed to openness and candor, for Liman's view of the Turks and the Ottoman Empire cannot be ignored.

In his evaluation of the similar trajectory of reform embarked upon by the British naval officer Admiral Limpus prior to the outbreak of the First World War, Liman opined that he was insufficiently informed on the matter, and, in an almost offhanded manner, remarked that "In the orient any calumny is possible and false rumors… grow after the manner of an avalanche."[288] The Orient is depicted as a spatial oddity in which truth is swallowed up or otherwise obscured by limitless shades of half-truths and lies; it seemingly does not conform to Liman's preexisting expectations of a 'typical' society, 'typical' here signifying Liman's primary frame of reference, which was European civilization. An Orient where truth is a concept as foreign as energy or initiative is juxtaposed with Germany, where precisely the

[288] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 13.

opposite is presumably the case. If this is indeed Liman's view of the Orient, it is little wonder that the denizens of the Orient were, to him, reticent and artful.

The spectacle of Germans acting in the manner expected of Orientals raises an intriguing conundrum. While the Germans aimed to prop up the Ottoman Empire as an ally through reform and military assistance, it also hoped to expand its own influence in the region, and reap the political and economic rewards therein; an invariable byproduct of the complex process was the "Germanization" of a part of the ruling strata in the Ottoman polity.[289] However, unlike other quasi-colonialist contexts, this was not a one-sided process, but in actuality dialectical. The Ottomans did not merely become to some extent "Germanized;" some Germans became "Ottomanized," or, more broadly, "Orientalized." As far as Liman is concerned, it is for this reason that these wayward Germans adopted such distasteful measures as those described above; intrigue was part and parcel of the Oriental political toolkit, and some Germans acquiesced before local custom, or appropriated it for their own designs.

Another example will better illustrate the point. Liman complained to the Imperial Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg that some Germans were too eager to flatter their Turkish allies, and that such flattery, consisting mainly of "exaggerated praise of Turkish cultural progress," risked inflating the ego of the Turks to such a

[289] Marchand claims that scholars of the Orient were "most useful in the implementation of 'indirect' colonialism, the practice of working with and through local customs, institutions, and officials rather than seeking wholesale and immediate Europeanization." The distinction between the two methods goes to the heart of contemporary debates in German expatriate circles regarding "kaffirization," postwar blame-trading of being too indulgent or too harsh on the Ottoman allies, and the extent to which it was understood as advisable to impose European standards and cultivate European expectations in a non-European context. See Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 346-348. Despite claiming sensitivity to Ottoman alterity, Liman provides little indication that he was particularly accommodating with regard to his hosts. As shown above, his reflections on the difference between the Ottomans and Europeans rarely resulted in a positive or even understanding view of the former.

degree that they would no longer would be receptive to German guidance.[290] Gerold, too, complained that as time went on, the self-esteem, arrogance, and insolence of the Turks and the Persians vis-à-vis the Germans increased appreciably.[291] By framing this as a furious vexation, Gerold makes it clear that he perceives both parties, although undoubtedly the Persians more so, as inferior to the Germans. One example Liman gives of this unwelcome development of Turkish self-assurance is that of the German-Turkish Amity House in Istanbul, established by Ernst Jackh, which he viewed as "courting" Turkish favor.[292] In another instance, Liman met three men wearing fezes, who greeted Liman in the Turkish manner, before his discovery of their being "honest Germans." This "aping," as Liman calls it, of Turkish mannerisms was unwarranted if not completely beneath German dignity and bearing; as Liman put it, "A certain reserve was more esteemed and respected by the Turk, and appeared to me more worthy of the German name."[293] Simply put, the Orient has 'Orientalized,' or had the potential to 'Orientalize,' the Germans, an outcome most decidedly at odds with the German project of 'Germanizing' the Ottomans. [294]

It is evident that efforts to maintain a hierarchy between the Germans and their Turkish proteges, in other words, the superiority of the former, were placed in jeopardy by Germans who adopted the modes of expression, dress, and behavior of

[290] Liman held that the death of certain esteemed Germans, such as General Colmar von der Goltz, had a similar effect on the 'ego' of the Turks. See Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 132-133.

[291] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 148.

[292] See Fuhrmann, "Germany's Adventures in the Orient: A History of Ambivalent Semicolonial Entanglements," 134-136.

[293] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 150-151.

[294] Anxieties about 'going native' were not exclusive to the Germans. Prominent British figures were often accused of the same phenomenon, with many being dismissed as eccentrics. Two prominent examples are T.E. Lawrence and nineteenth century Turcophile cum Member of Parliament David Urquhart.

the Turks. In effect, stooping to the level of donning a fez or employing guile risked blurring the meaningful distinction between the superior German and the benighted Turk, a distinction on which, as Liman and Gerold were keenly aware, rested German quasi-colonial ambitions. "Going native" was institutionally frowned upon in Imperial Germany, and those who were viewed as having "gone native" were often subject to official mistrust. This is expressed in the concepts such as Verkafferung, *Verchinesung* ("Sinicization"), and, of course, *Vertürkung* ("Turkification").[295] Indeed, the plethora of so many parallel conceptions of "going native" in German colonial discourses evince a deep and profound cultural anxiety about identifying too much with the 'Other.' The charge was a serious one; hence, Gerold's apparent displeasure that, during the Battle of Bizani in 1913, the High Command suspected him of being a "Turk-lover."[296] Although he does not repudiate the claim outright (which, given his warm relations with the Greek Crown Prince, cannot have been a realistic assessment), his awareness of this as a potential hinderance to his work as well as his institutional standing in the military is evident. Regarding the broader picture of "German work" in the Ottoman Empire, if the Germans stooped to the level of the Turks, the implicit message of German superiority would be lost, and the Turks would begin to question the necessity of the German role in the Near East. A likely consequence of this would be the loss of influence and prestige in the region.

[295] Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting*, 60. Although Vertürkung is the historically appropriate concept for "going native" in the Near East, the pejorative term from which Verkafferung derives is ultimately more expressive in conveying the contempt in which Liman and Gerold held such men.

[296] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 51.

The same basic principle is operative in the case of the Ottoman Empire's entanglement in Iran:[297] Liman was of the opinion that these expeditions would come to nothing, and that when they did, respect for the German officers would suffer as a result.[298] Several times, Gerold mentions that the "German character" would be put at risk by indulging in frivolous military adventures in Iran. Quite unlike Liman, Gerold's only mention of Orientalized Germans was spurred by his meeting with the man ostensibly in charge of the Persian nationalist army, Nizam al-Saltanah. Prior to his meeting with Nizam, Gerold had heard and seen far too much about the dismal military performance of the Persians to have a completely open-minded opinion of the man responsible for filling the heads of German policymakers with visions of a liberated and friendly Persia. Nizam was apparently as unimpressive as his brand of political machinations. According to Gerold, "externally, in his black lamb wool hat, Nizam recalled the 'caftan-types,' who drew attention to themselves in Karlsbad and Kissingen before the war."[299] In other words, Nizam's appearance is reminiscent of Germans who adopted Oriental garb in order to make a fashion statement.[300] Gerold's disapprobation and contempt is palpable here: paradoxically, instead of taking Nizam's mode of dress as an authentic example of Persian sartorial conventions, Gerold immediately equates it with that of similar, self-abasing

[297] Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 318-319; Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, 59-60; Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 152-153.

[298] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 135.

[299] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 148.

[300] Alternatively, this could be a thinly-veiled instance of anti-Semitism. The 'fur' hat and the caftan are both common and distinctive attire of Eastern European Jews, particularly Hasidic Jews, who follow very particular and strict sartorial conventions. Given that Jews are not mentioned at all in Gerold's memoir, I do not think this is as likely as some Germans imitating Oriental vogue; however, it should not be discounted entirely.

imitations in his own homeland. Nizam's 'costume' is denied cultural authenticity; it becomes a parody of a parody.[301]

In the view of both Liman and Gerold, the ostensible solution to the problem of Orientalized Germans was to be sought in upholding the Germans and the reforms they introduced through the application of "German principles" as a kind of example which the Turks could then emulate.[302] Here Liman contradicts himself, as he suggests that Enver committed an error in assuming that the unrestricted application of German methods could act as a panacea for the problems of the Ottoman Empire, an error also committed by certain German officers, who would not willingly adjust themselves to the multifarious idiosyncratic conditions operative in the Ottoman Empire.[303] Interestingly, Liman also suggests that Enver became more intractable as more German officers were added to his staff.[304] Faced with this paradox, it is only possible to speculate on the basis of Liman's inconsistency regarding the necessary extent of German methods and principles in reforming the Ottoman military, and thereby the state. One suspects that Liman believed that the Germans on Enver's staff who had a detrimental effect on the generalissimo are of the same breed of the self-effacing sycophants who, on the one hand, adorn themselves in faux Oriental costume and pantomime the mannerisms of their host, and who, on the other hand, stoop to the kind of devices and artifices expected in the Orient. Put another way, these are 'Orientalized' Germans, who adopt the trappings of Oriental characteristics,

[301] Gerold would later castigate Nizam as an "*unfähiger, geldgieriger Emporkömmling*" who was nothing more than a puppet that was being utilized by the Turks to squeeze as much money as they could out of Berlin's coffers. Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 161.

[302] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 5.

[303] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 30.

[304] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 20.

though in actuality they know little to nothing about the Orient and its people, something which Liman and Gerold prided themselves on. In short, the façade of these pretenders only serves to disgrace the German name and further hinder German work in the Ottoman Empire.

Finally, as the German-Ottoman alliance became increasingly fraught with tension in the later war years, Liman sought to be recalled to Germany: "… I am placed in a position which is difficult and unbecoming the senior Prussian general here in the eyes of the Turks, against whom I have maintained my position for four years and four months, with much strife."[305] With the erosion of his position, Liman evidently believed that it was not merely his own reputation that was at stake, but that of all Germans in the Ottoman Empire. The attempt to divest his powers onto another official, if successful, would have greatly blunted German prestige, upon which the Germans themselves counted to cow the Ottomans. Although it is only possible to speculate as to what Liman meant when he advised against withdrawing German troops "for political reasons," it can be reasonably assumed that, having invested a great deal of military, political, and diplomatic resources into the alliance with the Ottomans, a withdrawal would be tantamount to an abandonment of Germany's longer-term goals in the Near East.[306] Not to mention, from the perspective of the Turks, the act of pulling out of an active military theater could only expose the facade of German military might to reveal a 'paper tiger'. These are likely the political reasons to which Liman refers, and if this is the case, the evidence for the importance of a hierarchy between the Germans and the Turks, not to mention

[305] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 219-220.

[306] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 234.

other peoples of the Ottoman Empire, in the mind of Liman becomes rather more tangible.

However, that Liman fought tenaciously to maintain his position against the "Turks" attests to what historians have pointed out since Ulrich Trumpener's classic work: the Ottomans were not mere puppets of the German Empire, but had their own strategic priorities, and vigorously negotiated their position in the alliance throughout the Great War. The Turks, in the grips of a nascent nationalism, would not be so easily cowed by German 'prestige' as Liman may have hoped. Germany's quasi-colonialism in the Near East was not uncontested, as we can see from Liman's concerns regarding the German place in the hierarchy.

CHAPTER 3

DESPOTISM, NATIONALISM, AND ISLAM

In spite of the longstanding Western associations of Oriental or Eastern systems of governance with despotism, it is difficult to say whether Liman wholly subscribed to these notions.[307] Liman's narrative is inconsistent on this point, and although some of his criticisms of the Ottoman state do not resort to the crude caricatures of an arbitrarily oppressive regime, others evince a definite familiarity with the concept of an Oriental, tyrannical government where the rule of law and the rights of the subject-citizens was foreign.[308] Granted, Sultan Mehmed V Reşâd was scarcely a

[307] Since the early modern era, it was believed in certain European circles that the polities of Asia were peculiarly autocratic. According to the necessary corollary, it was further posited that the subjects of these polities were abjectly submissive in the face of such overwhelming authority, and that they were held in the perpetual thrall of the sword, which was widely imagined to be the sovereign's chief tool of dispensing justice. As European states edged towards various forms of republicanism, democracy, and enlightened monarchy, the political systems of "the East" were increasingly viewed as the opposite of what "Europe" was meant to embody. Although Marchand, citing Nina Berman, acknowledges "recurrent recourse to stereotypical scenes of oriental decadence, violence, despotism, and sexuality in eighteenth-century representations of the Turks," she also reminds the reader that the same discourses were extant in European criticisms of their own leaders. See Curtis, *Orientalism and Islam*, 1-49; Tzoref-Ashkenazi, "Romantic Attitudes toward Oriental Despotism," 280-320; Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 15-16.

[308] The tone is set for the reader very early in 1913, in the first chapter, when Liman received a letter from an Arab officer who had been arbitrarily arrested and detained without charge. The poor man evidently "feared that he might be simply made to disappear." Liman presented evidence of this to Enver, who somewhat sheepishly assured Liman that the matter would be investigated. Liman asserts to his reader that, at the very least, his personal intervention on behalf of the officer would result in "a hearing and initiation of legal process." Therefore, practically from the outset of the memoir, the reader is acquainted with the 'Turkish' system of justice, with all the attendant incompetence and arbitrariness which were commonly viewed as the defining characteristics of non-European systems of governance. In addition, Enver's embarrassment comes across as another instance of infantilization, in that the Ottoman statesman is depicted similarly to a child who, caught in the act of wrongdoing, has to fess up. It is of some significance that, from the perspective of the reader, the only recourse the officer has to justice is by appealing to the better nature of an influential, foreign military officer, who was himself a complete newcomer in the Ottoman Empire. The implication is fairly unambiguous: justice and fairness in the Ottoman Empire is only possible if a European deigns to get involved. See Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 8-9.

"Bloody Sultan" akin to Sultan Abdülhamit II.[309] On the other hand, one could conceivably argue that such a comparison was relatively meaningless, given that as far as Liman and his contemporaries were aware, the aged Sultan was a mere figurehead, with real political power the prerogative of the Committee of Union and Progress. Though this was likely the case, it also meant that Liman's main critiques of Ottoman governance zeroed in on individuals in specific contexts, as opposed to focusing on the Ottoman state in its entirety, which is to say, through the figure of an all-powerful monarch. In short, although individuals acting on behalf of the state as its executors may have been guilty of maladministration or even cruelty, the relatively multifarious loci of power in the Ottoman Empire meant that the Ottoman state as a whole was not necessarily tarnished as a consequence.

3.1 Orientalism and oriental despotism in Greater Syria

3.1.1 Introduction to Liman's view

For example, relatively early in the memoir Liman makes a note of Cemal Pasha's heavy-handedness in his capacity as governor of the province of Syria. His policies, which Liman refers to as "harsh measures," ultimately elicited the animosity of many Arabs, Christians, and Jews against the Ottoman state.[310] Nevertheless, these are the actions of a single individual, and are recognized by Liman as harmful to long-term Ottoman interests. The culmination of this maladministration would be the Arab

[309] Due to the excesses committed against Ottoman Armenian communities by the Kurdish irregular cavalry detachments in the 1890s, Western contemporaries gave then-Sultan Abdülhamit II appellations like "Abdul the Damned." Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 152.

[310] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 110.

Revolt which broke out in 1916. Liman viewed the event as an ultimately preventable "fiasco," the blame of which fell almost singularly on the shoulders of Cemal.[311] In general contradistinction to his treatment of the Greeks, Liman is somewhat sympathetic to the Arabs, though his critique of the "Arabian policy" of the Ottoman state, which rendered most of the local population hostile by inclination if not necessarily by action, does not go so far as totally disavowing his Turkish comrades-in-arms. Nevertheless, he understood the very real limits imposed on the Ottoman imperium with the outbreak of the Arab Revolt, which had active Allied support, and found it unrealistic that in spite of the shifting geopolitical landscape the Turks "believed they could make the world and the Arabs look upon the Sinai peninsula as a Turkish pawn."[312] To some extent, it is evident that Liman adhered to the narrative of centuries of 'Turkish' dominion in the Arab lands, and viewed the relationship between the Ottoman polity and the Arab provinces as characteristic of a one-dimensional colonial arrangement, as opposed to a hierarchy of relations governed by a complex system of negotiations between the center and periphery. Since the Ottoman state was an empire, it is hardly surprising that this was the conclusion he drew. When Liman proposes that the Sinai Peninsula was meant to remain a 'Turkish pawn,' he is both tracing the physical boundary of the Ottoman dominions as well as implying that the Arabs themselves are, in fact, Turkish pawns.

[311] It should be recalled that Cemal Pasha was given the epithet "butcher" for his harsh repression of Arab nationalists during his tenure as governor. M. Talha Çiçek refers to Cemal's rule as a "reign of terror." See Çiçek, *War and State Formation in Syria*, 28; Kayalı, "The Ottoman Experience in World War I," 891.

[312] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 141-146.

3.1.2 Narrating Turkish oppression of the Arabs

One episode related by Liman is especially striking, and reveals a great deal about his view on the Ottoman Empire's governance of its subject-peoples. It also constitutes one of the only times in *Five Years in Turkey* in which Liman strays into a strictly political, largely non-military aside. The event which occasioned his narrative monologue was his reception in May 1918 of intelligence that Enver intended to offer him the position of governor of Syria after Cemal's departure. Technically, Liman uses the expression "internal political power in Syria," but it is reasonable to assume that this entailed the assumption of the governorship.[313] This prompted Liman to try and account to his German readers how this bizarre circumstance came to be. The attempt is worth quoting at some length:

> Maladministration of centuries, the corruption of high and low officials (with a few exceptions) and the total lack of discipline of the Turkish gendarmery had brought about a state of general dissatisfaction. The poor inhabitants, no matter of what religion, were exposed to any license and spoliation, which were increased under wartime conditions. This people, living in an ancient civilization and which had laid down its just demands in the fifteen articles of the Beirut reform program, enjoyed fewer rights… than ever. How was an orderly administration of justice possible in a country where not even the judges understood Arabic, the local language!... The development of commerce and industry, instead of being favored and fostered by the government, was at the mercy of the intrigues of Turkish officials unless they were bribed. It is not surprising that by far the greater part of the people longed for orderly conditions regulated by law, such as were possible only under the protection of some European power since no Turkish promise had ever been kept. The differences between Syrians and Turks are perhaps best characterized by the Syrian adage: 'Wherever a Turk sets his foot, there the earth becomes unproductive for a century.' The Turkish government… declined to give assurances… of local autonomy… and instituted a tax of grain which was impossible for Syrian and Arabic conditions.[314]

[313] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 234.

[314] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 234-236.

The above account stands in marked contrast to practically every criticism of the Turks hitherto advanced by Liman. When Liman suggests that laziness was an inherent aspect of the Oriental essence, or when he propounds the notion that guile and shrewdness were Oriental, and therefore inferior, attributes, he does so from the standpoint of a foreigner issuing commentary on mannerisms ostensibly far removed from his own. However, when Liman takes the Turks to task for their misrule of their subject peoples, he does so from the standpoint of an ally of the very same Turks he censures. The impact of this distinction is not to be underrated. In the former instance, Liman assumes a de-facto natural position of superiority; by virtue of being a European, he is able to weigh in on the inferiority of his charges while maintaining the requisite narrative distance to absolve himself from the innate flaws of foreign peoples. In the latter instance, on the other hand, Liman recognizes that Turkish misrule in the Arab provinces was not inevitable. Although it might be reasonably expected that the Turks could not help being lazy or clever, due to those being intrinsic aspects of their nature as an Asiatic people, Liman constructs the disastrous "Arabian policy" as more than a mere outcome stemming from an amalgam of multiple flaws in the Turkish character, but as the consequence of poorly conceived governance resulting from ultimately preventable incompetence and willful rapacity.[315] This renders Liman's criticism more vociferous than other opprobrium

[315] The poor decision-making of several Ottoman-Turkish officials in the Arab provinces notwithstanding, the intrinsic traits of the Turkish character as conceived by Liman tend to give the reader the impression that they were most definitely a contributing factor to the poor state of relations between the Arabs and the Ottoman state. An example of this would be an offer made by Sharif Faysal in the latter half of August 1918, in which he proposed to put his forces at the disposal of the Ottoman Fourth Army and effectively switch sides in the war, provided that the Ottoman state first made assurances to the effect that it would support the creation of an independent Arabian state. Although Liman avers that he could not properly evaluate the sincerity of the Sharif's offer, he nonetheless requested that Cemal Mersinli open negotiations and that Enver Pasha provide the requisite guarantees in accordance with the Sharif's wishes; this would imply a willingness to err on the side of believing the offer of the Arab potentate to be genuine. With this in mind, despite the fact that the Ottomans likely had good reason to be suspicious of the offer, hence the lack of a response,

directed against the Turks. It is the more vociferous precisely because the circumstances leading to the Arab Revolt may have been averted, and because the consequences of such a failure was borne by Ottoman and German alike.

3.1.3 An instructive comparison with "Lawrence of Arabia"

The above assessment of Turkish rule in the Arab provinces bears a remarkable resemblance to a similar observation made by one of Liman's wartime enemies, British officer T.E. Lawrence. A comparative exercise is useful here in that it demonstrates the linkages between German and British orientalist discourses. Indeed, the similarity in general import is such that the two excerpts could conceivably have originated from the same polemic. Lawrence wrote that the Ottoman state was a "military government," and that "Turkish rule was gendarme rule, and Turkish political theory was as crude as its practice."[316] The heavily martial overtones in Lawrence's description brings with it all the anticipated authoritarian disregard for the civilian sphere. Lawrence wrote the lines as a perfunctory background to what he

when Liman suggests that "the Turks distrusted the offer," this comes across to the reader as yet another instance of Turkish wariness and artifice. If this was the case, it would mean that Turkish suspicion and guile would be in large part responsible for quashing an opportunity to in part rectify relations between the Ottoman state and the Arabs. This is only one possible reading of the episode which Liman relates; but, given the importance Liman attributes to the characteristics of the people of the Orient, it is one which is not implausible. Liman's view of the Arabs differs somewhat from that of professional Orientalists in Germany. On the whole, the Arabs were inextricably linked with the religion of Islam, and the Quran was conceived by German Enlightenment thinkers like Herder as a kind of national poetry equal to the works of Homer and Ossian. At once as noble savages and as the progenitors of a seemingly-rational religion, the Arabs and the foundations of early Islam would remain at the center of German studies on the Orient well into the twentieth century. Their status as an ancient Semitic people also heightened the value of comparisons between them and the Jews of the Old Testament, a comparison which was historical, religious, and philological. Although there is something Romantic in Liman's identification of the Turks with tyranny and the Arabs with some kind of longing for freedom, the fact remains that Liman not only decoupled his discussion of the Arabs from his discussion of Islam, but he was also primarily interested in the modern ramifications of Arab-Turkish relations, and did not evince much interest in historical Islamic civilization. This was in marked contrast with the general tendencies of German oriental scholarship. See Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 262; Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 26-27, 43-51.

[316] Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 44.

views as the inevitable initiation of the Arab Revolt by Sharif Husayn. His memoir *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* was written a little less than a decade after Liman penned his own memoir, in 1926. Largely because Lawrence had by his own admission a "fluent pen, a free speech, and a certain adroitness of brain," the image of the Arab Revolt as depicted in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* would become the cornerstone of a popular myth, at the very center of which was, of course, Lawrence himself.[317] In the same vein, it could be said that Liman was incontestably the chief protagonist of his own memoir, as Great Men typically are. However, in this instance, the ego behind the ego-document paled in comparison with that of Lawrence. Furthermore, compared to Liman, Lawrence undoubtedly possessed a greater knowledge of the Arab provinces in the Ottoman Empire, knowledge which ultimately stemmed from his academic and archeological forays in the region. Lawrence had studied crusader castles in Ottoman Syria for his thesis at Oxford, first visiting the region in 1909.[318] It is undoubtedly in these trips, made between 1909 and 1914, that we can trace the origins of his views on the Turks and the Arabs.

In letters to missionary friends in the region, he described his few encounters with the Turks, most of which occurred in situations typically involving mortal peril, whether exchanging fire at a distance with "'a huge, cruel-looking Turk,'" or fleeing from would-be robbers, either "'cruel Kurds or Turks.'"[319] When Turks make an

[317] Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 23.

[318] The conclusions of Lawrence's thesis are most intriguing. In the nineteenth-century, it had become an accepted fact that the Crusaders had learned the art of castle-building from the Byzantines, and that Richard I had even imported Syrian workmen back to Europe to construct fortresses. In comparing medieval castles in France and England to those in Syria, Lawrence concluded that the Crusaders had already largely mastered the practice by the time they went to Syria. The implications of this are perhaps best stated by one of Lawrence's professors, Professor Ernst Barker, who noted the overthrow of the established view and remarked that "…instead of the East affecting the West, it was the West that had affected the East." Mack, *A Prince of Our Disorder*, 53-54.

[319] Mack, *A Prince of Our Disorder*, 73-74.

appearance in his prewar correspondence, they are predictably violent and crude, the bearers of a miserably low culture. The reader of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* will immediately recognize such sentiments, beyond which Lawrence apparently never significantly evolved. Another striking continuity between his earlier and later writings was his predilection to romanticize his own experiences, to the extent that a comparison was made by a friendly Syrian schoolteacher between Lawrence's writing and the *One Thousand and One Nights*. It would seem that, from the European perspective, *One Thousand and One Nights* was the paradigmatic Oriental text, to which all writings pertaining to the subject would invariably be compared. The reader will recall Liman's earlier reference to the very same text, which would suggest that Liman's cultural frame of reference regarding the Orient was not substantially different from that of Lawrence.

Nevertheless, during the Balkan Wars, Lawrence parts ways with his usual narrative sophistication to declare that "'the Turks are such helpless stupids (sic),'" who were desperately trying to raise recruits for the defense of Thrace even as the Ottoman state was stumbling towards all-but inevitable collapse, and who remained wholly "incapable of good government."[320] In short, the Turks were a mean people, rather more worthy of pity than contempt. Indeed, to some extent Lawrence pities the Turks in the same manner in which one would exhibit pity for a mere beast, particularly when he dwelt on the poor conditions in the Ottoman Army.[321]

Lawrence casually posits that the Turks were the "slowest of the races of Western Asia," a "child-like people."[322] The reader will take note of Lawrence's

[320] Mack, *A Prince of Our Disorder*, 104-105.

[321] Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 56.

[322] Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 55.

infantilization of the Turk, similar to how the Turks in Liman's own memoir are implied to lacking in certain mental or emotional faculties as a consequence of their childlike behavior. In Lawrence's view, the Turks had not significantly evolved beyond the age in which the Ottoman dynasty had first become masters of the Near East. To say the least, progress was lacking, and a lack of progress was a sure indication of inferiority. His belief in the inherent and generally expressed characteristics of different peoples or "races" is even more explicit than in Liman's own memoir. Clearly, Lawrence would have agreed with the notion that the Turks were beyond reform, and ultimately destined to disappear from the world-historical stage.

The people or 'race' who would help usher the Turks off the world-historical stage were the Arabs. Suffice it to say, Lawrence's view of the Arabs was sanguine in the extreme, insofar as non-Europeans could be held in high esteem. From his very first trip to Syria in 1909, he "had begun to identify himself with Arab ways and Arab life."[323] Pages could be spent delving into the various ways in which Lawrence held the Arab in a kind of reverence. Nevertheless, there is something which is rather striking in his treatment of the various 'types' of Arabs. To say that Lawrence did not hold the Westernized Arab in a particularly high regard would be a gross understatement. "'The perfectly hopeless vulgarity," wrote Lawrence to his family, "of the half-Europeanized Arab is appalling. Better a thousand times the Arab untouched.'"[324] Put differently, Lawrence was of the opinion that to imitate European mannerisms was to somehow debase the meritorious Arab essence. Indeed, he later compared English and French attitudes to the internalization of Western mannerisms

[323] Mack, *A Prince of Our Disorder*, 75.

[324] Mack, *A Prince of Our Disorder*, 92.

by non-Western peoples: "We looked upon imitation as a parody; they as a compliment."[325] There are multiple ways in which one might read this statement. One potential reading would be that imitating the mannerisms of Europeans was a futile exercise, precisely because the non-European, defined in relation to the European, could only ever remain non-European, despite his best effort. Lawrence's complex and ambivalent attitude to European society could possibly support this argument, insofar as he may have at least partially considered it better that the two cultural spheres of the European West and the Islamic East remain separate.

The question now arrives as to what is to be gained from this comparison, or from an analysis of Lawrence's writings on the matter? Several answers present themselves. The first is that it affords us the opportunity to see how two authors of considerably different temperament and situation would compose two very similar narratives on the reign of the Turks in 'Arabia.' The similitude in the two depictions points to a shared cultural register from which Liman and Lawrence drew in experiencing, understanding, and ultimately representing the Turks, Arabs, and the Orient to their audiences. The nuances of power-sharing between local *ayan* (Arab notable) families and representatives of the central government, now well-known to scholars on the Late Ottoman Empire, were evidently unknown to both authors; consequently, the picture which they paint is one of unvarying subjugation. Furthermore, the similarity of the two as regards certain stereotypes of the Turks and the Arabs suggests that both were susceptible, as many European writers on the Orient were, to embracing extant tropes regarding Turkish despotism and Arab victimhood. Alternatively, if they were not necessarily susceptible to adopting these

[325] Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 347.

tropes before their arrival in the Ottoman Empire, the specter of confirmation bias is not an easy one to dismiss out of hand. The origins of this "confirmation bias" could well have been the aforementioned shared cultural register utilized by both authors when envisioning and depicting the Orient in a manner which contained references to such things as popular literature on the subject. An example would be *One Thousand and One Nights*, which was either referenced directly by or otherwise mentioned in connection with both authors.

Furthermore, the similarity of the two depictions, in conjunction with the specific temporality of Lawrence's account in his early writings, heavily suggest that many of the stereotypes which both authors employ of the peoples of the Ottoman Empire, whether Turkish, Arab, or otherwise, had been formed before the outbreak of the war. This has ramifications equally important to both Liman's denigration to the Turks and sundry Orientals and his high estimation of the Turks in other respects; the latter will be discussed in due course. As to the former, it is beyond question that Lawrence did not significantly alter his pre-war views. With Liman it is more difficult to tell, especially when we take into account the fact that his writings specifically on the Arabs and the governance of the Arabs only begin in 1916, with the onset of the Arab Revolt. Of the prewar reform movement in Beirut, Liman likely became aware well after the fact, possibly as late as 1918 when he assumed command of the Syrian theater. Nevertheless, in the absence of concrete evidence, it is not possible to wholly discount the notion that Liman may have been appraised of the situation regarding the Arab reform movement earlier, perhaps even as early as his arrival in the Ottoman Empire. Regardless, there is a continuity with the earlier views which he expresses on the Turks before the outbreak of the war, which hints at the potential of relatively little impact upon his views by the specific contingencies

of the war. Put simply, Liman's views on the people of the Ottoman Empire could have been entrenched by the war's beginning, or perhaps even before his arrival in the Orient. If this were the case, the impact of the war on Liman's writing of the memoir with reference to the qualities of the people of the region would either be negligible, or possibly further confirm his biases and prejudices.

3.1.4 Legitimizing Arab discontent

In contradistinction to Lawrence, Liman was writing to explain to his audience how it came about that the reticent and guarded Turks would consider allowing a foreigner, albeit an ally, to assume an important post in one of the core provinces of the Ottoman Empire, in what was undoubtedly a last-ditch effort to accrue goodwill among the local populace which had not joined in the revolt. There can be little doubt from the phrase "maladministration of centuries" that Liman was at least familiar with the trope of the 'Turkish yoke,' if he did not subscribe to the notion in its entirety. In any event, he is willing to legitimize that most foundational rhetoric of Arab nationalism, that the Arabs had been subject to unremitting, alien Turkish tyranny in the guise of the Ottoman state for centuries. In doing so, he paints every Arab in the broad brushstrokes of a population driven to rebellion, implacable in their hostility to the Ottoman state, and unshakably loyal to the Sharifian movement, though their disloyalty need not have been. This ignores the far greater number of Arabs who remained loyal to the Ottoman polity until the war's end, to say nothing of the Arabs who served in the Ottoman Army.

The picture the reader of *Five Years in Turkey* receives of Arab-Turkish relations is anything but consistent. The existence of Arab disgruntlement is beyond dispute, but when Liman construes Turkish "license" and "spoliation" as

indiscriminate, with both Muslim and Christian Arabs alike falling victim to Turkish grasping, he is effectively vacillating between casting the political tensions in the Young Turk-era Arab provinces as a struggle between two emerging nations, and an eruption of discontent by long-suffering subject-citizens against an unjust overlord. While acknowledging the appeals to legitimacy through the language of religion on the part of both parties, Liman is not able to comprehend the basis of the Arab Revolt in anything other than secular terms. Liman, much like the reader, is caught in the paradigmatic transition from multi-ethnic empire to nation-state, much as the Arabs and the Turks were.

The implications of this are not easy to pin down, but one might hazard a few impressionistic observations. In the age of nationalism, the proto-nationalist bent of the Arab Revolt was certain to garner sympathy if not recognitions of legitimacy from extant nation-states, including Germany and England. On the other hand, even if the Arabs were viewed less as a burgeoning nation and more of an aggrieved contingent of subject-citizens, Liman constructs the background to the Arab protestations in a manner such that the reader cannot but help be convinced of Turkish perfidy. Interestingly, despite the patently obvious fact that the Arab Revolt constituted base treason against the Ottoman state, Liman is noticeably hesitant to equate the revolt with disloyalty to the Ottoman state. In other words, as Liman depicts it, the Arabs were revolting against Turkish autocracy, but not against the Ottoman order as such, though the end result was much the same.

3.1.5 Gerold's perfunctory view of Arab-Turkish relations

Gerold's view of the Ottoman dominion of the Arab provinces is inconsistent, yet generally in line with Liman's own views. Gerold drew a direct line of separation

between the Turks and the Arabs by suggesting that, in addition to the "deep opposition" by the two, the Arab lands had never been fully incorporated into the Ottoman imperium.[326] According to Gerold, even in peacetime the extent of the Padishah's influence in Mesopotamia was largely contingent upon the goodwill of the local population, and "the Valis of Baghdad considered it their primary task to use their office to enrich themselves. Those who did not were counted as fools."[327] Finally, to support his assertion, Gerold suggested that the lack of adequate maps directly contributed to the tenuous hold of the Ottomans on the Arab provinces.[328] Regarding the latter remark, I have found it useful to refer to Catriona Kennedy's conceptualization of "military topography," in which the "increasing emphasis on landscape and topographical drawing in military curricula… [was interconnected with] vision and technologies of perception in territorial acquisition and domination."[329] Knowledge of terrain or an area was inextricably connected with the project of empire; the boundaries of this area would be fixed, and the terra incognita within would be discovered and ordered. Incomplete knowledge entailed incomplete dominion, which Gerold posits to have been the case with the Ottomans in Mesopotamia. Furthermore, by stressing the incomplete incorporation of the Arab lands in the Ottoman imperium, Gerold is effectively suggesting that the Arabs have never been genuine subject-citizens of the Ottoman Empire, particularly since it is they themselves that deign to allow the presence of some form of Ottoman suzerainty, however weak it may have been. From Gerold's perspective, this further

[326] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 100.

[327] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 153.

[328] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 156.

[329] Kennedy, "Military Ways of Seeing: British Soldier's Sketches from the Egyptian Campaign of 1801," 200.

suggests that the Turks are an alien presence in the Arab provinces; considering the fact that Greater Syria and Mesopotamia had been parts of the Ottoman Empire since the sixteenth century, it is unlikely that the Turks would now be able to bridge the gap between the two "races." In other words, Gerold de-legitimizes the Ottoman hegemony in the Arab world, although he does not point to the Europeans as potential rescuers of the Arabs. The greed of the Valis is mirrored by that of the gendarmes in Liman's own account.

3.1.6 Eulogizing the Victim

The remainder of the reproof can be divided between Liman's view of the Arabs and that of their Turkish overlords. According to Liman, the Arabs were an "ancient" people, evidently deserving of greater consideration than they had hitherto received. Here, by referencing the antiquity of the Arabs, Liman could conceivably be said to be utilizing the rhetorical device of ethos, thereby legitimizing Arab claims of mistreatment. Furthermore, Liman intentionally eschews neutral language when he portrays the demands of the reform movement in Beirut as "just," which in turn nudges the reader towards accepting the narrative of Arab innocence and Turkish perfidy.

In their racial makeup, Liman found the Arabs to be an admixture of "Semitic elements" and "pure Arabic stock." The distinction between the two is unclear, and although it is possible that Liman had Bedouins in mind when he refers to "pure Arabic stock," in which case the Arabs were viewed as an amalgam of pastoral-nomadic tribes and the urban population, who were more "Semitic," this can only be a conjecture. Again, it bears noting that this aside constitutes one of the few instances in which Liman uses language which betrays a worldview predicated on race.

Liman further cements the European association of the people of the Orient with trade by indicating that the Arabs were a people inclined towards mercantile endeavors. Indeed, he wrote that "the real Syrian is a shrewd trader." The reader will recall Liman's earlier comparison of Ismail Hakki Pasha and the 'shrewd Chinese trader.' Evidently, the Chinese and the Arabs both were people given to commercial pursuits, in which, as noted before, 'shrewdness' was a positive boon in profit-oriented ventures. In addition, only the "real" Syrian was a merchant; one wonders what Liman would have thought of Syrians engaged in other professions. We will later see what he thought of Arab soldiers in the Ottoman Army. Liman distinguishes between Christian and Muslim merchants, but he notes that both were enterprising, thereby demonstrating initiative independent of an external source. Taken holistically, Liman had a fairly high esteem for the Arabs, and viewed them as an industrious people who had no greater wish than to be left to their own devices, if not necessarily supported by the state in their commercial endeavors. Despite the fact that they are Oriental peoples, because of their industriousness the Arabs appear to be largely unconnected with earlier assertions that people of the East were indolent and lazy. On the other hand, shrewdness appears to be a universal trait among the peoples of the Orient.

3.1.7 A picture of oriental despotism and "gendarme rule"

In contrast with the Arabs, the Turks are the very picture of greed and rapacity that is embedded in the discursive trope of the Oriental despot. Arbitrary and corrupt, the Turkish officials and gendarmerie seemed to be placated by nothing other than the petty exercise of power at the subject-citizen's expense and their own personal enrichment. In some respects, the dysfunctional picture which confronts the reader,

in which even the local officials are unfamiliar with the language spoken by their wards, leads to the question as to whether the state of affairs in Greater Syria was the result of base incompetence or willful exploitation. Whatever the answer, it would appear that Liman would have heartily agreed with the notion that 'the Turks' were wholly out of touch with the aspirations of their non-Turkish subjects.

The Turks were also patently untrustworthy, if we are to give credence to Liman's assertions. He boldly proclaims that "no Turkish promise had ever been kept," a proclamation which, as the reader finds, is largely in accord with Liman's previous experiences, in which the Turks generally exhibit greater concern with issuing as many promises to their German allies as was in their power to pronounce. Keeping these promises, however, was another matter.

Liman's language is revelatory on this point. He says that the Ottoman state "declined to give assurances" of local self-rule to the Arabs. "Declined to give assurances" is a rather neutral turn of phrase, which surreptitiously suggests that there was some kind of politesse involved in the proceedings. In this scenario, as opposed to outright rejection, the proposition of autonomy in the Arab provinces was merely subject to polite refusal. Readers may reasonably question why Liman would use such an expression as would render the Turks at least somewhat civil. For reasons most likely related to his sense of affiliation with the Ottoman state and military, Liman found himself unable to wholly condemn the Ottoman or 'Turkish' officials responsible for the deterioration in Arab-Turkish relations. This would not be the only instance. However, the seeming politeness lurking behind Liman's phrase actually belies a kind of reserve on the part of the Turks. Eschewing a more blunt form of rejection, the Turks demurred in the face of Arab demands. Such demurral is evocative of the kind of reticence which Liman readily ascribes to the Turks, as

previously discussed. In this instance, as in others, reticence is a form of artifice employed by the Turks to either maintain an advantageous position in negotiations or else elude untoward commitments in one respect or another. Whichever may be the case here, it is evident that Liman ultimately views this comportment as dishonest, disingenuous, and dishonorable. More to the point, the Turks' dealings with their Arab subject-citizens were indicative of the kind of antithetically un-European conduct which Liman deplored.

3.1.8 The adage

The alleged Syrian adage cited by Liman, "Wherever a Turk sets his foot, there the earth becomes unproductive for a century," raises some questions, the most important of which concern authenticity and the question of the adage's meaning and implications. To begin, the possibility of a misunderstanding or mistranslation, instances of which were all too common if Liman is to be believed, cannot be discounted. Furthermore, one wonders precisely how this local axiom was conveyed to Liman, or how he was made aware of it. Put differently, the importance of Liman's source is inextricably linked with its authenticity.

One possibility is that Liman became aware of this phrase through one of his German compatriots, possibly even one of the so-called 'experts,' the very Orientalists whom he derides as ignorant with regard to the actual conditions in the Orient. Another other possibility is that Liman became acquainted with the phrase from one of his Ottoman (most likely non-Arab) subordinates. Two potential candidates could feasibly have been his chief of staff, 'Kiazim Bey,' or else one of

his officers, Cemal Mersinli Pasha.[330] In particular, Liman singles out Cemal Mersinli for his extensive experience in the Arab provinces. Reportedly, Cemal Mersinli even acted as an intermediary for the Arabs in their political negotiations with the Ottoman state. This would make Cemal Mersinli a prime suspect as the source of Liman's knowledge of the Syrian adage. Ultimately, in this case as in the previous one, there is no way to ascertain whether Liman's source for this apocryphal adage was a German officer or Orientalist, or else one of his Ottoman subordinates in the military. As previously noted above, the question of Liman's source for this saying has bearing on the authenticity of the saying itself. If it were to have come from the mouth of a Syrian or from one of Liman's officers who were familiar with the Arab provinces, the saying would almost certainly have been in use. If, however, Liman learned of this from a German, there is always the danger that the German intermediary may have misinterpreted or else misunderstood the meaning and import of the original utterance.

While it cannot be established with any definitive certainty how Liman became aware of this phrase, it is important for our purposes to recognize that, whatever the potential historical authenticity of the adage itself, in his narrative Liman unquestionably accepts the adage as genuine and practically self-evident. Of course, Liman is engaging in confirmation bias here, in that he expects to find instances of oppression by the Turks in the Arab context, and when he encounters

[330] To some degree, Liman sympathized with the Arabs, and he thought little of Cemal Pasha. One Ottoman officer who he held in somewhat higher regard was Küçük Cemal (Mersinli) Pasha, who in Liman's estimation "was considered wise and just" by the Arabs, who ostensibly took it upon himself to represent the Arabs in negotiations with the central government. Despite dismissively noting that there was "an infinite number of Djemals" in the Ottoman Army, the regard in which he held Mersinli Cemal was unmistakable. As a somewhat junior officer, however, it does not seem that there was much in Küçük Cemal's power to alter the Arabian policy of the Ottoman state. Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 214.

evidence which resoundingly confirms his expectations, he readily accommodates it in his narrative. The adage reinforces the consistency of his narrative of Ottoman maladministration in the Arab provinces.

There are multiple possible readings of the adage "'wherever a Turk sets his foot, there the earth becomes unproductive for a century.'" On the one hand, the adage can be read as a statement falling just short of a literal assertion: the introduction of the Turk into an area is invariably followed by the impoverishment of that area and its inhabitants. If we take what Liman says about the Turkish gendarmery, who seem to be the chief offenders of harmonious relations between the Arabs and the Turks, into account, then the impoverishment occurs because the Turks strip the land and the people of their wealth, much like a plague of locusts with no end.

Extrapolating further, the Arabs are shown to be hard-working and diligent in mercantile and industrial pursuits. They are veritable producers of wealth. As an interesting aside, the adage as worded by Liman contains imagery that is on the whole rather more suggestive of agriculture than the kind of urbanized economic activity which he delineates as the domain of the Arabs. The very 'earth' or soil becomes barren and infertile with the introduction of the Turk.

Furthermore, the Turks themselves do not produce wealth; they merely expropriate it from those who produce it. Taken in this light, it must be said that the complex history of Ottoman governance in the Arab lands is depicted in a rather simplistic light. The reader gets the impression that for four-hundred years, the Arabs have effectively been at the mercy of what appears to be a 'race' of armed policemen. Although the historical context of the Great War undoubtedly served to underline the connection between the Turks and the military, Liman's assertion that

military force was the sinew by which Ottoman authority was upheld in the Arab provinces largely echoes Lawrence's contention that Turkish rule was equivalent to military rule.[331]

Granted, some simplification is to be expected, as Liman is writing for a German audience which in all likelihood knew very little about the Middle East. However, from the manner in which Liman constructs the Turks, a reader could reasonably infer that neither agriculture nor industry was the chief sphere of occupation for the Turkish people of the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, the reader would be hard-pressed to point to a specific instance in the memoir in which Liman links the Turks with either of these livelihoods. Even in Western Anatolia, where Liman spent the majority of his time in the Ottoman Empire, there are considerably more mentions of Greek civilians than there are of Turkish civilians.

The primary intent of Liman in including this adage can only have been to further accentuate the dismal image he paints of "Turkish" rule in the Arab provinces; he does this here with a phrase ostensibly gleaned from the aggrieved Arabs themselves. This deliberate rhetorical decision underlines the near-ubiquitous reliance on the Orientalist trope of the 'Oriental despot' in Liman's memoir, with the mantle of the Oriental despot being assumed by the Turks. However, the phrase also has striking connotations which have broader ramifications for Liman's overall literary treatment of the Ottomans, particularly regarding the Turks. Although he essentializes Arab and Turk alike in assessing the political entanglements between the two, the Syrian adage he employs in his narrative digression hints at a much broader trend in the memoir; namely, that the Turks are rarely depicted as civilians.

[331] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 313.

The question then arises: If the Turks do not sow and reap crops, and if they do not manufacture and sell goods, then what precisely is the Turk good for? Liman's answer to this will be the subject of the succeeding chapter.

3.1.9 Offering a solution to the Arab question

The last element of this aside concerns Liman's proffering of a potential solution to the 'Arab problem.' The Arabs have languished under the centuries-old yoke of Turkish oppression, been subjected to every indignity, and had their lands and livelihoods despoiled by the rapacious and arbitrary Turkish authorities. From Liman's perspective, short of an uprising, the solution lay in outside help; specifically, European help. The Arabs have "longed for orderly conditions regulated by law, such as were possible only under the protection of some European power." The Arabs appear thus, yearning for the rule of law in a polity that has none, and the only semblance of hope they have is that they might be rescued from their plight by the merciful intervention of some benevolent European power. Liman does not specifically nominate the Germans as the would-be saviors of the Arabs, which is in keeping with his generally sanguine views of the British and the French, whom may best be characterized as 'wartime enemies yet cultural allies.' Nevertheless, there does not appear to be any compelling reason as to why Liman would not have also included Germany in the coterie of European nations tasked with the eventual liberation of the Arabs.

This is perhaps one of the most blatant examples of the 'savior narrative' in Liman's memoir. The Arabs do not evince much agency as Liman portrays them; it seems that they can only passively await deliverance from Turkish tyranny. If order and the rule of law are only possible under the aegis of European dominion, as

Liman claims, then the antithesis is also true- under the Turks, the Arabs know little but chaos and disorder. The juxtaposition of Turkish disorder with European order is neither innocent not unintentional, nor is the passivity of the downtrodden Arabs.

This kind of discourse, which posits non-European peoples and political entities as lawless and even submissive, ultimately serves to legitimize European domination of the non-European peoples in question. If Europeans could govern in a manner that is more just and orderly than the local potentate, it follows that the right to rule would fall to them, according to the colonialist logic of the period. Although it would require considerable mental gymnastics to assume that the Ottomans were viewed by even the most fanatical German colonialists with the same scorn as were certain tribes in German Southwest Africa, the rationale is ultimately the same, insofar as the inferiority or ineptitude of the natives invites or even necessitates European intervention. When one considers the fin de siècle social Darwinist theories which were in currency throughout Europe, it might be appropriate to venture that the Europeans felt that they had a moral and biological imperative to propagate what they unquestionably considered to be their own superior civilization(s). Whether or not the intervention would ostensibly be for the benefit of the natives, or whether more material considerations would predominate in the justification for such an act was largely contingent upon the specific context; Liman's rhetorical appeal on behalf of the Arabs suggests that a kind of lip-service to the benefits which Arabs would experience under European supremacy, however cynical, would be in the offing.

It is worth reemphasizing that Liman's depiction of the Arabs as hapless recipients of whatever fate metes out to them, and the Turks as capricious, petty despots, draws from well-established Orientalist tropes which are themselves deeply

embedded in colonialist discourse regarding the inherent superiority of European nations and the inescapable inferiority of non-European peoples. Of particular significance is the manner in which Liman portrays the Arabs as pliant and positively begging for European law and order. A reader of the memoir would not fail to draw the conclusion that, sooner or later, the Arabs must fall under European 'protection.'

3.1.10 Looking Backward or Forward?

However, the nature of the colonialist discourses situated within Liman's memoir, rather than resembling a more traditional form of colonialist propaganda in which knowledge produced on the inherent characteristics of native peoples constitutes a prerequisite to the actual future conquest of the land, is considerably altered by both the peculiar generic considerations of the literary form of the memoir as well as the inescapable historical context in which the memoir was written. The context referred to here is the historical moment when the war ended, and German soul-searching and the reckoning with the harsh reality of defeat began. As for the generic properties of the memoir, a memoir attempts to capture or record memories of the past.

The result is considerable tension within Liman's memoir: while colonial propaganda is forward-looking in that it anticipates and antecedes colonial rule, memoirs are backward-looking, insofar as the typical subject matter of a memoir is the past. Liman's memoir does not resolve the tension so much as accommodate both aspects of the respective genres. In some respects, *Five Years in Turkey* looks forward to a potential German/European role in the Orient, particularly since despite the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, the Ottomans have not ceased to be 'Ottoman;' which is to say, they have not properly transcended their non-European identity, and will therefore still be subject to European dominion.

However, the retrospective aspect of the memoir genre is considerably more noticeable in Liman's life narrative.

The reader may recall that Liman intimated that he was offered a high political position in Syria, which was heavily implied to be a governorship. Liman ultimately refused the offer, declaiming that he was considerably preoccupied with his military duties. In consideration of the state of the Palestine front in 1918, most readers would have no trouble taking the author at his word. However, from a literary perspective the ostensible offer of the governorship of one of the core provinces of the Ottoman Empire to a foreigner can only be read as the telos in a long progression of 'missed opportunities.' In fact, the German mantle in the Orient could be largely described as a singular 'missed opportunity': The Turks are grasping at nationhood, and stand ready-made for German tutelage. The Arabs, long-suffering under Turkish oppression, are beseeching European powers for assistance in their own liberation. Finally, all of the Ottomans, whether Turkish, Arab, Greek, or Armenian, remain woefully inferior by virtue of their laziness, effeminacy, and cunning when compared with European peoples.

As Liman was rather fond of pointing out to his readers, had the Ottoman and German military leadership but demonstrated greater prudence in formulating and executing operational goals, and had the Germans taken the trouble of getting to know the idiosyncrasies and peculiarities of the Ottoman Empire and its denizens, the outcome of the war in the East might have been radically different. In short, had history been kinder to the German Reich, its military plenipotentiaries would have been uniquely placed to capitalize on the extant wartime alliance with the Ottoman Empire by expanding its political and economic influence in the Middle East, if it did not necessarily commit to further military involvement. This expansion of German

sway in the region would have been largely facilitated by the fact that Germany would have been the de facto sole European hegemon, having brought the British Empire, the French Empire, and the Russian Empire to heel. Instead of this would-be glorious present, Liman and the German nation would have to content themselves with the mere memory of their lost semi-colonial outpost in "das Morgenland," and all of the attendant economic and political opportunities therein.

What makes this quasi-colonial regret truly remarkable is the fact that, strictly speaking, Liman composed a dirge for a colonial past which never actually existed. The Ottoman Empire was never a German colony, or anything remotely close to it, despite the influence wielded over its military by some officers like Liman, and despite the presence of a few German colonies on Ottoman soil. Instead, the Ottoman Empire is transformed through language and discourse into what Malte Fuhrmann refers to as a site of "German colonial desire." Ambivalent though the actual sentiments may have been, the manner in which Liman constructs his Ottoman subjects throughout the narrative unmistakably points to their status as a colonial people, which is to say that, by virtue of their benighted and inferior condition and the maladministration of the Ottoman state, the Germans were in some way destined to seize the reins of political supremacy in the Orient; the implication is that the result would be of benefit to German and Ottoman alike. Although the modern reader undoubtedly recognizes the fact that colonialism is usually little more than a cynical exercise of power, the justification of 'saving' the natives or 'raising them up' through instruction in European culture was of immense importance to the colonial project insofar it suggested to the reader in Liman's epoch rather more noble motives behind the endeavor than mere naked grasping towards material gain.

Despite the palpable despair of defeat and the sense of loss and regret regarding Liman's Ottoman Empire, *Five Years in Turkey* holds out to its reader the possibility of redemption. Precisely because much of the depiction of the Ottomans in their entirety relied upon orientalist tropes and stereotypes, and precisely because it is de facto a form of colonialist propaganda, the memoir looks forward to a time when Germany might be in a position to embrace its destiny in the East. Asserting the inherent laziness, cunning, or fanaticism of the Turk, Arab, or Greek constitutes far more than a mere innocent observation recorded by a foreign onlooker. Whether or not Liman knew what he wrought, he is producing intelligence and knowledge on the denizens of the Orient, information whose practical application is in the embarkment on and maintenance of a colonial enterprise. Although the generic peculiarities of the memoir entail a much more pronounced retrospective narrative bent, the aspects which point to *Five Years in Turkey* as a forward-looking paean cannot be ignored.

3.2 Ingratitude: The Greeks in the Ottoman Empire

3.2.1 Greek accusations against Liman and the Germans

Liman's memoir is littered with generally oblique mentions of accusations directed at Germans by the Greeks. For example, early in the Gallipoli Campaign, when Liman was quartered in the house of a former French consular agent, he claimed that the vast majority of the furniture was already missing with the exception of a table and mirror; in the coming weeks, most of the linen would disappear, as well as what little furniture remained. Upon recording that the Greeks accused him of theft, Liman rather sardonically remarked that "I had something better to do than to carry away

the round table and the wall mirror."[332] In a literary sense, early Greek accusations foreshadow the end of the narrative, when Liman is accused by the Allies of war crimes committed against the Greek population. Liman does not mention his trial at Malta in the memoir, but it is doubtless that he expected his audience to have been aware of it. Taken in this light, Liman appears in the readers' eyes as the perpetual victim of malicious rumors and slander, and the end consequence of his detainment at Malta is construed as the logical outcome of several years of being a target for false accusations.

Indeed, Liman suggests that mere association with the Ottoman military apparatus was grounds for suspicion on the part of "fanatical Greeks," who, it can be inferred, were inimical to 'Turkish rule.'[333] The reader will note Liman's choice of the word "fanatical." In contrast with the recollections of many of his European contemporaries and predecessors, Liman's memoir conspicuously omits any especial association between Islam and fanaticism. If anything, as suggested above with reference to Said Halim Pasha, fanaticism in Liman's memoir can be viewed as an Oriental trait; it is the result of a regional or cultural temperament, rather than an outward expression of piety. However, it is a trait which he all the more readily ascribes to Greeks.

The German experience with the Greeks was defined by more than mere suspicion. In 1916, a severe cholera epidemic broke out in the province of Izmir, and, according to Liman, the Germans were petitioned by Greeks "with tears in their eyes," who begged to leave Izmir. To the suspicion of the Turkish physicians and on the initiative of the Vali of Izmir, Rahmi Bey, German sanitary and medical

[332] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 57-58.

[333] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 52.

personnel were able to take energetic measures against the epidemic through measures such as establishing a hospital which served mostly Greeks. In spite of this, as well as of further missions by sanitary workers to the Vilayet of Aydin, the Germans "hardly ever received thanks for their work."[334] When the Armistice came, according to Liman, the disposition of the "Greek levantines" immediately changed for the worse, becoming aggressive and unconscionable, and after having shielded the Greeks from "innumerable cases [of] Turkish encroachments," having his picture hung in a Greek school and a banquet offered in his honor, Liman was ostensibly subjected to accusations, all of which were "pure inventions from beginning to end." Appealing to the reader, he wrote that "It may be readily understood that we preserved no particular sympathy for these characteristics of the inhabitants of the Turkish levant."[335]

A final example will suffice to demonstrate the 'Greek character' according to Liman, as well as the broader implications of this understanding for the memoir itself. After the war, the Greek population of Istanbul was quite ebullient at the prospect of Entente soldiers occupying the city: Greek flags were flown everywhere and parades were held:

> great crowds of levantine inhabitants… gave vent to their joy by throwing flowers to the officers and men, making a great noise, throwing hats and caps into the air, and embracing each other. None would have credited these demonstrations with any dignity, when considering that all these demonstrations had been tolerated without molestation in the capital of the country throughout the war."[336]

[334] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 146-147.

[335] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 147.

[336] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 321-322.

3.2.2 'Othering' the Greeks

There are several important things which can be gleaned from Liman's description of the Greeks. In the first instance, it is noteworthy that he uses the term "levantine," a term which, although holding no unique connotation in German, nonetheless emphasizes the Oriental nature of the Greeks, and consequently subverts a common tendency in European circles to consider the Greeks primarily in terms of their Christian identity, and therefore as coreligionists.[337] Furthermore, the lack of dignity which Liman ascribes to the celebrations of the Greeks in Istanbul surreptitiously pokes a hole in the narrative of Oriental despotism, given that despite celebrating their liberation from the oppression of the Turks, the Greek assertions of oppression were, according to Liman, exaggerated. Earlier, in reference to the campaign conducted by the Ottoman Fifth Army in 1916 to retake Uzunada, Liman noted that in the city of Izmir "enemy aliens were given full freedom of movement," which in turn suggests to the reader that "the Turks" were not as intolerant as some Greeks made them out to be.[338]

3.2.3 Oriental despotism and the Greeks

However, Liman somewhat contradicts himself with interspersed references to injustices inflicted upon the Greek community. The ostensibly baseless allegations of the Greeks against Liman are portrayed as all the more unreasonable when Liman dutifully notes that the Greeks were downtrodden by the "senseless harshness" of the Ottoman authorities.[339] Later, Liman again points out that the Greeks in Western

[337] Fawaz, *A Land of Aching Hearts*, xi.

[338] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 118-120.

[339] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 51.

Anatolia were "constantly being severely oppressed by the Turks."[340] Here, he gives the specific example of the arbitrary arrest of the scion of an eminent Greek family, which led him to a facility where numerous other prisoners were detained, many on trumped-up charges. Liman claims that he had "a glance into Turkish administration of justice," where "many a poor devil... felt himself at the mercy of a perfectly arbitrary administration of justice."[341] From the fact that Liman uses both the terms 'Turkish' and 'arbitrary' to describe the Ottoman administration of justice, it can be inferred that he believed the two to be inextricably linked. In other words, 'Oriental' justice was capricious and haphazard, much to the detriment of the subject-citizens of the well-protected domains. There is an implicit comparison with European legal systems, which we can assume Liman did not find to be arbitrary or otherwise deficient with respect to the rule of law.

Of course, context is integral, and the exigencies of modern warfare resulted in the intrusion of the state ever further into the lives of ordinary citizens. Censorship became ubiquitous in many of the countries at war, wartime privations as a result of requisitions were near-universal, particularly in the Central Powers as the war ground on, and authorities maintained constant vigilance against 'defeatism' or would-be treason. In short, it is possible that what Liman took for an arbitrary Oriental justice system was little more than the typically harsh measures wielded by state authorities against persons suspected of compromising or subverting the war effort. What appears as arbitrary may have actually been prudence.

Nevertheless, whatever criticism Liman heaped upon his German compatriots who knew nothing of the Near East, it is difficult to imagine that he would have

[340] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 170.

[341] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 171-172.

accused similar measures in Germany as "perfectly arbitrary." If anything, his sympathetic treatment of the requisitions in the Ottoman Empire by men like Ismail Hakki Pasha suggests that he would have understood and concurred with the necessity of strict measures in wartime. In other words, it is unlikely that Liman's appraisal of a 'perfectly arbitrary Turkish administration of justice' was grounded in the context of the Great War alone. Rather, the capriciousness of the Ottoman state seemed in part explicable by virtue of the government's 'non-Europeanness,' and the fact that therefore it was not wholly within the bounds of 'civilization,' according to Liman's conception. Although what Liman says seems to suggest if not echo extant tropes of Oriental despotism and the "Bloody Turk," it is altogether much more nuanced, and he does not resort to such crude statements as would condemn all Turks as barbarians or petty tyrants. Nuance aside, it cannot be denied that Liman inadvertently raises the specter of Oriental despotism in his memoir when he conveys to his audience the "hair-raising conditions" endured by certain subject-citizens of the Ottoman Empire.

3.2.4 The moral of German dealings with the Greeks

Although on balance Liman tends toward the view that Greek assertions of Turkish maladministration were overblown, he nonetheless acknowledges that there were some legitimate grounds for such claims. In short, Liman's narrative is inconsistent. This inconsistency was almost certainly deliberate, although it is only possible to infer as to why. It is possible that the Greeks were treated harshly, but not oppressed to the extent that was claimed after the Armistice. This seems overly simplistic, given that it does not account for the authorial voice of Liman, and his own personal experiences. On the one hand, Liman is tangibly constrained by his own narrative of

innocence, which necessitates his dismissal of the Greek accusations. Had these accusations been given any credence, Liman likely feared that he would have been implicated by association with the Ottoman authorities. Therefore, Liman cannot but suggest that the Greeks aggrandized their allegations of oppression. On the other hand, accounting for Ottoman oppression of the Greeks in the memoir does play a role in convincing the reader of Liman's sympathetic character. Noting the potential mistreatment of the Greeks by the Turkish gendarmerie buttresses the perception of Liman as a reasonable and punctilious authority figure, who, after attempting to shield the Greeks from mistreatment as well as protest against the problem of inequity in Western Anatolia, is unjustly met with vitriol and bitter invective. Liman depicts himself as a man caught between the proverbial rock and a hard place, that is, between his Turkish charges and his sense of justice toward the subject peoples of the Ottoman Empire.

Far from being merely suspicious, the picture which emerges of the Greeks of the Ottoman Empire is nothing less than a nation of ingrates.[342] At the very least, the chronology of the narrative metamorphosis of the Greeks from pitiable petitioners seeking the protection of foreign interlopers to deceitful plaintiffs with hyperbolic contentions of abuse at the hands of the Germans and the Turks leaves the reader with the indelible impression of the Greeks as a fickle people. Of course, by painting an entire people with such broad strokes, just as he does with the Turks, Arabs, and Persians, Liman engages in the colonialist practice of knowledge production through the categorization of peoples, relying on his own first hand observations to highlight

[342] While Liman also suggests varying degrees of ingratitude on the part of the Turks, in comparison with his caustic criticism of the Greeks, his attestation of Turkish ingratitude seems almost muted. Furthermore, much of the ingratitude appears to have stemmed from the person of Enver, whereas the Greeks in their entirety are denigrated as ungrateful. See Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 20, 116, 218-219.

the ostensibly inherent characteristics of people which might earmark them as potential collaborators in the event of a colonial enterprise. In this respect, it is abundantly clear that the Greeks can serve no greater purpose in Germany's vision of an expanded role in the Near East; quite apart from their status as potential clients of the British Empire, they were patently untrustworthy and almost singularly vindictive. Liman's treatment of the Greeks has all the indications of paternalistic sentiment provoked to fury by native resistance to German domination or interference.[343]

3.3 Fanatical or Faithful? Islam in German memory

3.3.1 Islam as a counternarrative of oriental inferiority

In a subtle subversion of what might be expected of a European commentator on Ottoman society and politics, Islam plays a conspicuously minor role in Liman's memoir. Indeed, his first mention of it is in 1914, when the Ottoman Empire drew on its' religious legitimacy in proclaiming jihad in order to rally Muslim support to the Sultan-caliph for the upcoming war. Although it was interpreted as "formerly… the strongest arm of Islam," Liman was less than impressed with the declaration of holy war: in patently obvious hindsight, it did not bridge the gap between the Turkish administration and its Arab subjects, its appeal to Muslims in the empires of the Allied powers did not translate to any meaningful military or political opportunities like mass revolts, and even the demonstrations celebrating the declaration were

[343] Fuhrmann, "Germany's Adventures in the Orient: A History of Ambivalent Semicolonial Entanglements," 138; Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting*, xix.

staged by the police, with the protestors being paid a few piasters.[344] Furthermore, there was a hint of farce in the declaration, given that the Ottoman Empire was allied with Christian powers like Germany and Austro-Hungary; equally farcical was Allenby's 'crusade' in Palestine, which, as Liman points out, was conducted with the support of many Muslim Arabs on behalf of Emir Faisal and Sharif Husayn.[345] Such demonstrations of religious fervor were not only unbecoming in the eyes of Liman: they were incongruous with the character of the Turks. "The really worthwhile Turk," Liman says, "with his formal reserve does not go in for noisy expression of his feelings."[346] Put another way, "formal reserve" coexists or overlaps with suspicion and guile, and acts as a kind of discretion. While this may make the Turk more prone to connivance and scheming, it also means that he is less susceptible to the kind of democratic expressions of discontent which was certain to elicit the disapproval of Liman. More importantly, however, this meant that fanaticism as an attribute was seldom applicable to the Turks, and if it was, it had no religious basis whatsoever, according to Liman.

In short, religion did not constitute a significant reason as to why the people of the Orient were inferior to those of the Occident. Islam no more made the Turks fanatics than Christianity made the Germans, Protestant or Catholic, 'crusaders of the faith.' This sets Liman apart from many of his contemporaries, for whom 'Islam' engendered, promoted, and indeed enshrined fanaticism. One can deduce this fact from the enthusiastic reception the proclamation of jihad received in Germany, where exaggeration and misunderstanding worked in tandem to exercise the minds of

[344] Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 437-441.

[345] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 34-35.

[346] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 35.

fanciful German orientalists, as well as the Kaiser himself, with images of hundreds of millions of Muslims, seething with righteous rage, to take up the call of holy war and rush to the aid of their caliph. As will be seen in the case of the Hijaz railroad and the Armenians, Liman understood that the Islam of the Ottoman Empire is no archaic holdover from the century of the Prophet Muhammad, but rather an ideological accoutrement to very modern notions of nationalism.

This is further reinforced by Liman's assertion that "for the deeply religious Anatolian soldier a holy war was not necessary; he would face death faithfully and bravely for his padishah without it." Liman saw religion as largely a private matter of individual conscience. Though he does not deny the religiosity of the Anatolian soldier that constituted the bulk of the Ottoman armed forces, he does deny that Islam had a determinative effect on their behavior, or that there was any significant intersectionality between politics and religion. Gerold fundamentally agreed with Liman, pointing to the negligible impact of the fetva in rousing the Muslim populations of the Entente colonies; in his view, "religious motives tore peoples apart more easily than they united them."[347] Muslims though they were, the Turks were not the rabid fanatics which the Allied powers dreaded and which the Central powers hoped to unleash upon their foes.

There is only one instance in Liman's memoir where one can glimpse a counternarrative to this assertion of a lack of fanaticism. It is also the only narrative aside which loosely pertains to a future which has now arrived, and is directly concerned with the present reality of the German and Ottoman defeats, as well as the

[347] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 100.

incipient Turkish War of Independence. In musing on the ostensible consequences of the bloodletting of the First World War, Liman remarked

> It may be that sometime in the future the holy war will have a more serious meaning and find its final expression in massacres of Christians, if the Entente holds the reins too tight in Turkey. Today Turkey is no longer assisted by allied Christian states which would check from the beginning, any extensive outward movement of Islam. For Turkey today it is only a question of Christian enemies and this might lead to consequences which the Entente in the final analysis does not seem to estimate at their true significance.[348]

Although Liman does not explicitly say it, I believe that lurking behind this stark warning about the future is a harsh and unequivocal indictment of the German propagandists, who time and again sought to weaponize the alleged fanaticism of Islam. Yet according to Liman, paradoxically the German presence in the (now former) Ottoman Empire had a moderating influence on their allies, insofar as the Turks would not indiscriminately attack Christians when they had a Christian state as an ally. However, with the defeat of Germany, the only Christians powers in the Near East were enemy Christian states, imposing their will upon a defeated and humiliated Turkish rump state. Taken together with Liman's disavowal of Muslim-Turkish fanaticism, it seems that, in Liman's view, the German propaganda during the war was not without effect. The same German propagandists and "experts" who drove German foreign policy in the Ottoman Empire had inadvertently unleashed the genie of intercommunal religious violence, and now they were not there to put the genie back in the lamp.[349] Liman's grim prediction of the future proved to be startlingly prescient: it accurately foreshadowed the bitter struggle between the Turks and the

[348] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 35-36.

[349] Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 442-445.

Greeks, and above all the *Mübâdele* ("population-exchange") which followed in 1923.

3.3.2 Islam and Turkish nationalism

Occasionally, the symbolic power of Islam even played a role in deciding certain strategic considerations. Leaving aside, as Liman claims he does, the rather dubious albeit widespread claim that the Ottoman thrust into Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus in the wake of the Russian military collapse was part and parcel of the Young Turks' Pan-Turanian or Pan-Islamic grand strategy, one of the only other times in which Liman addresses Islam is in reference to the Hijaz railroad, which after 1916 was continually endangered by the Arab Revolt.[350] The symbolic significance of a railroad which connected Syria and, therefore, the Ottoman Empire, with the two holy cities of Islam, and which was paid for with funds provided by subscriptions from Muslims around the world was certainly not lost on Liman. However, militarily speaking he viewed its continued defense, as well as that of Medina, as imprudent and untenable. In his opinion, the stubbornness of the Ottomans in their refusal to give up most of the Hijaz railway, as well as Medina, was only explicable with reference to the "Turkish national point of view;" military grounds could not furnish the necessary logic of carrying on a defense so deep in enemy territory.[351] Islam had now come to constitute a fundamental component of the Turkish national identity; religion here becomes a function of national expression, an indelible mark of modernity.

[350] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 256.

[351] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 207-208.

Of course, this interpretation of Liman's view of Islam generates tension with the view previously outlined with regard to Oriental 'laziness' and the "Quranic" injunction that "All haste is the devil's." In the former, religion does not govern the actions of man; in the latter, it provides the very legitimacy for the behavior and 'manners' of a people. Although the two cannot be easily reconciled, the tension which results between the two conflicting views of the role of Islam in the Ottoman Empire is a poignant reminder of the fact that colonialist discourse is not monolithic.

3.4 Establishing Guilt: The Armenians, and the Turks

3.4.1 Introduction

Liman's view on the tragic fate of the Armenians furnishes an important key to understanding his view of the peoples and politics of the Ottoman Empire. As previously mentioned, the German general was understandably eager to distance himself and his compatriots from the events of the Armenian deportations. However, as will be shown, his rhetorical defense (evasion may be a more proper term) encompasses a great deal more than just his denial of any involvement. Characteristically, he prefaces his analysis by stating that "This is not the place to establish the causes of the persecution of the Armenians."

> It is almost like a nemesis of fate, that the expulsion of the Armenians had such a repercussion on the Turkish Army…With all the condemnation and accusations rightly heaped upon the Turkish potentates, a just judge will not overlook that it was not the Turkish potentates that invented the Turkish-Armenian policy. They themselves had been raised and had grown up in the idea and believed they rendered the country a patriotic service for the future, by removing these elements hostile to the government. The intoxication, following upon the abrogation of the capitulations, led to the slogan 'Turkey for the Turks,' heated the passions, and blinded judgement. Cause for expulsion was frequently furnished by the Armenians joining the Russians, and by the many cruelties against the Mohammedan population proven

> against them. In the execution of the expulsions many of the terrible and damnable cases of ruthlessness may unquestionably be ascribed to the minor officials whose personal hatred and rapacity gave to the measures ordered from above, an enhancement of harshness that was not intended. In those regions of the Caucasus the lower Turkish officials, and, above all, the Turkish gendarmery, to whom fell the execution of the expulsion in the first place, were certainly not alive to the conceptions of European civilization.[352]

Liman then goes on to deny that the "levantine calumnies" against the Germans had any credence, and he cites the previously noted perception of Oriental jealousy and suspicion to buttress his claim that, due to the Turkish exclusion of the Germans from having any real influence, they cannot possibly have been involved in the massacres and deportations, and that, if they were aware of them, they could do nothing.[353]

3.4.2 Unpacking Liman's argument

At the risk of borrowing from the phrases of Liman himself, this humble essay is not the place in which to establish the extent of German guilt or innocence in the Armenian deportations. Our concern can only be with what the above statement reveals about his view of the Ottomans, both Turks and Armenians. In spite of the somewhat indirect manner in which he discusses the issue, Liman evidently felt that, given the gravitas of the event, it had to be addressed to some extent. His rigid demarcation of what is and is not appropriate subject material for his memoir evinces an apparent discomfort, if not necessarily guilt, with the topic of the Armenians. He validates the condemnations of the deportations, before ultimately lapsing into what may perhaps be considered the two positions most often used by 'denialists:' namely,

[352] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 157.

[353] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 158.

that the ‘excesses’ of the deportations were unintentional, and secondly, that the Armenians were to some extent the architects of their fate, given the massacres of Muslims committed by some Armenian auxiliaries, sometimes in conjunction with invading Russian armies.[354] While the first position attempts to shift blame away from the Ottoman state by suggesting that the outcome was accidental, the second suggests that the actions of the Ottoman state were those of self-defense, against a disloyal, potential fifth-column. In both cases, Liman elects to downplay the culpability and guilt of the Ottomans in general and the Turks in the highest offices in particular.

However, he also tries to contextualize the violence unleashed against the Armenians in the relatively recent development of a burgeoning nationalism. By citing the call of “Turkey for the Turks” and the jubilation following the Ottoman Empire’s emancipation from the predatory capitulations, which was received rather poorly by holders of Ottoman debt in Germany, Liman effectively places the burden of historical guilt on impersonal historical forces, in this case, nationalism, which the individuals involved cannot wholly be held responsible for.[355]

[354] This is not to suggest that the debate surrounding the term ‘genocide’ in the contemporary context existed during Liman’s time. However, the significance of the fact that the basic tenets of the ‘denialist’ argument were extant during Liman’s time cannot be dismissed out of hand.

[355] Liman’s chosen phrase symbolizing the specter of Turkish nationalism, “Turkey for the Turks,” bears a remarkable resemblance to “Turkey made Turkish for the Turks- *Yeni Turan*…” an assessment made by a fellow European, T.E. Lawrence. Both Lawrence and Liman would agree that the main impetus for the deportations was an incipient Turkish nationalism, with Lawrence remarking that “The Young Turks had killed the Armenians, not because they were Christians, but because they were Armenians.” Both authors were either unaware or make no mention of those Armenians whose lives were spared by conversion to Islam, a fact which in turn suggests “an inchoate Muslim nationalism” as the main ideological underpinning of the massacres. See Kayalı, “The Ottoman Experience in World War I,” 906, and Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 46, 48.

3.4.3 Gerold's view of the Armenian tragedy

On his way to Baghdad in the spring of 1916, in the hinterland of the town of Meskene in the Vilayet of Aleppo, Gerold encountered the Konzentrationslager of the "unfortunate Armenians," where

> the Turks were continually dragging new victims, women, children, and old men, who would be swept away in a terrible manner by spotted fever. Half-decayed corpses lining the streets were not a rarity. Our German feeling was disgusted by such cruelty. Even if the Armenians were really the rogues and cheats that our Turcophile propaganda portrayed them as, such wickedness was unheard of.[356]

Unlike Liman, Gerold makes very little attempt to justify the treatment of the Armenians at the hands of the Turks. In voicing the personal revulsion which he felt and insisting on its subordination to if not equation with national "feeling," Gerold exonerates his fellow Germans, their pro-Ottoman propaganda notwithstanding, and downplays the German involvement in the deportation and massacres. The same could not be said for the Turks, for whom no basis for their "wickedness" could be found that can be considered moral or just. Leaving aside the relatively modern usage of the term Konzentrationslager, this is the closest that Gerold approaches the trope of Oriental barbarism. However, this view is rather more conventional: Gerold's main thesis is that the Germans had nothing to do with the fate of the Armenians, and that the Turks unquestionably had blood on their hands. This view is admittedly less interesting than Liman's attempts to dissect and explain *why* the Turks did what they did; therefore, the remainder of this chapter will focus on Liman's views.

[356] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 91.

3.4.4 Turkish and German nationalisms

Returning to Liman, the question arises as to why Liman sought to excuse the Turks for their actions. Aside from the rather more obvious answers of 'comradeship' and a desire to avoid guilt by association, it is not easy to discount the problem of nationalism itself. It has been established that Liman did not care for the 'democratization' of politics in the Ottoman Empire, let alone the new forces of 1908. However, for all his disdain for "New Turkey," the political intelligibility of nationalism was not incomprehensible to Liman. Indeed, the drive to create a more exclusive ethnoreligious polity in the age of separatist nationalisms would certainly have been familiar to the Germans, whose own national identity was of incredibly recent inception. Where German nationalism found its main outlet of expression prior to the outbreak of the First World War was in the colonial context. As suggested by David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, a Commissioner for Settlement in the German Colonial Department named Dr. Paul Rohrbach believed that the colonies were "the crucible from which a more virulent strain of 'German-ness' would emerge and slowly be transfused into the body of the Reich."[357] Much like the notion of reclaiming "Turkey for the Turks," the gradual diffusion of völkisch ideas concerning race and space would eventually culminate in the first genocide of the twentieth century, that of the Herero and Nama peoples in German Southwest Africa. With this in mind, it is somewhat easier to understand why Liman, on behalf of the Germans who fought under the same banner as their Ottoman allies, sought to excuse the Turks for their actions: the actions of the Germans in Africa were strikingly similar to those of the Ottomans in Anatolia, and the underlying logic

[357] Olusoga and Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust*, 113.

of both events not dissimilar, despite the contingencies of each. Indeed, it is difficult not to see parallels between the fate of the Herero and Nama and the Armenians, or between the Schutztruppe and the *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa* ("Special Organization") who bore the responsibility.

3.4.5 Can the Turks be modern and civilized?

However, there is once again tension within Liman's quasi-colonial understanding of the Ottomans and their position vis-à-vis their German allies. Liman underlines the fate of the Armenians as understandable if somewhat deplorable from the German national point of view, yet he implicitly suggests that in the absence of a "European conception of civilization," the perpetrators could only act as far as their natural proclivities allowed; in this case, towards rapacity and cruelty. It is important to note that this is not a blanket statement, as he specifically refers to the Ottoman officials and gendarmery of the Caucasus, which is to say Eastern Anatolia. Similarly, although Liman obliquely references the 'cruelties' visited upon Muslims of Eastern Anatolia, this does not constitute a complete consigning of the Armenians to the discursive realm of the 'Oriental barbarian.' Furthermore, even more concrete instances of wartime atrocities, such as the killing, mutilation, and maltreatment of retreating Ottoman (Turkish, it is assumed) soldiers by the Arabs does not instantly qualify those "subjects of the Osmanic empire," as Liman refers to them, as savage by their very nature.[358]

The importance of the above qualifications cannot be overstated. Precisely because the Ottoman Empire was in a state of transitioning to 'modernity,' as

[358] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 292.

Europeans like Liman would have understood the term, it was possible to simultaneously deride some Ottomans as barbarians, while taking the belonging of other Ottomans in the modern world as a given. An example of the latter would be the victims of the British shelling of Çanakkale during 1915. Liman claims that many of the villages in the peninsula, along with the lives of their inhabitants, were destroyed by British naval bombardment. Somewhat cynically, he points out that

> with the same moral right with which the reconstruction of the destroyed parts of Belgium and northern France is insisted on, the Turks might ask for the reconstruction of all those places on the peninsula of Gallipoli which were destroyed thought they were of no military value."[359]

Of course, it is plainly evident that here Liman is engaging in a tu quoque logical fallacy: by drawing attention to the indiscriminate attacks on Ottoman civilians and away from German atrocities against Belgian and French civilians, Liman hopes undoubtedly to bring to the fore the hypocrisy of the Entente in claiming to defend the rights of civilians in theory while molesting those of others in practice. In the immediate postwar context, as outrage over the terms of the Treaty of Versailles erupted in Germany, Liman's argument would have found a receptive audience.

However, leaving aside Liman's cynicism, there is a secondary aspect to his ostensible championing of the Ottoman cause. In equating the Turks of such towns as Eceabat with Belgians and French civilians and placing their calls for indemnities on the same moral plane, Liman is including the Ottoman Empire in the concert of civilized nations.[360] Savages and barbarians have no right to legal redress, since that is a privilege of civilized peoples. That the Ottomans could have reasonably asked

[359] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 72-73.

[360] Gerold also refers to a Shia revolt which broke out in the holy city of Kerbala, and of an Ottoman plot to communally punish the population by flooding the city until it was completely underwater; "humaneness" and consideration of the religious significance of the city, which contains the shrine of the son of the fourth Caliph Ali, Husayn ibn Ali. See Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 113-114.

for reparations of a kind entails that they are entitled to the same kind of consideration which would be granted the peoples of civilized nations. This is not to say that Liman wholeheartedly believes that the Ottoman Empire or its people are on equal civilizational footing with the Europeans; his earlier comments regarding "exaggerated praise of Turkish cultural progress" and the Armenian question make that abundantly clear. Nevertheless, from his perspective, the Ottoman Empire bore some markers of modernity, which, in his view, made them eligible to air their grievances. However, indications of progress in the Ottoman Empire were rather unevenly distributed, and seemingly absent in the case of the Armenians.

The question remains as to how the Ottoman authorities and subjects alike can act in a manner that is both intelligible to the European conception and yet demonstrative of a complete lack of any European understanding of civilization, specifically with regard to norms of warfare? The tension between the two positions can only be explicable with reference to the hypocrisy of European colonial discourse. As has been shown above, it is part and parcel of European colonial discourse to establish and maintain a hierarchy, whether through propaganda or narrative depiction, in which the native appears as a savage, and therefore unquestionably inferior to the Europeans. Such discourse typically then furnishes the intellectual basis for material exploitation if not outright military conquest of the peoples in question. With the possible exception of the instance of malicious negligence in the case of the Ottoman medical service mentioned above, it cannot be ignored that Liman does not resort to the crude depictions of the Ottomans, especially the Turks, as bloodthirsty barbarians who are completely lacking in any kind of civilizational capacity. Nevertheless, the enormity of the crimes against the Armenians forces Liman into a discursive straightjacket, in which the direct

perpetrators can only appear as beyond the reach of European civilizational influence. The problem with such an ostensibly neat solution, which Liman all too clearly brushes over, is that for a number of reasons, the very notion of 'European civilization,' with all the assumed inherent aspects of humanity and moral superiority, fractured.

3.4.6 The Turks as an oriental mirror of the Germans

The Great War presented the spectacle of Europe at war with itself. From the fracture of the idea of European civilization invariably followed the notion of certain ersatz-European nations as little more than barbarians clothed in the garb of civilization itself. Of this charge, the Germans were particularly vulnerable, and wartime propaganda reflects the contemporary conception of the bloodthirsty "Hun."[361] With his usual degree of perspicacity, Gerold was not blind to how other European nations viewed the Germans as singularly responsible for the outbreak of the war and the ensuing carnage: "In many cases, we forged weapons against ourselves and fostered very wrong views about Prussian militarism all over the world. In certain forms, which we paid little attention to because they were traditional, other nations perceived a kind of brutality."[362] With hitherto-uncontested members of the 'concert of Europe' now subject to accusations of barbarism, however much these accusations

[361] With the outbreak of the war, a veritable propaganda war followed suit; the German term for this was the *Krieg der Geister* ("war of intellectuals"). As Doering-Manteuffel points out, the French and British depictions of the Germans as "barbaric Huns" were inseparably enmeshed in the context of the war itself, particularly since in the years leading up to the war, Germany "had achieved an extremely high cultural level." The irony was not lost on German commentators, who nevertheless remained at the receiving end of propaganda which painted the Germans as "Teutonic militarists" who threatened "European humanism and civilization," and who "were ruled by a military caste." See Doering-Manteuffel, "Perceptions of the West in Twentieth-Century Germany," 83; Llanque, "The First World War and the invention of 'Western Democracy,'" 71.

[362] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 66.

may be mired in the historical context of the war itself, the very fabric of 'European superiority' by virtue of its' civilization was undermined.[363] While this may accurately reflect the discursive transformation which occurred during the war itself, the transformations patently obscure an all too evident material reality which had existed long before: the brutality of European colonialism. In fact, even military conflict which occurred solely between European powers had de facto acquired a degree of brutality hitherto reserved for colonial conflicts.[364] If the Ottoman officials in Eastern Anatolia were prone to violence as a consequence of their removal from the sphere of civilizational influence, then the Europeans themselves, English, French and German, ultimately understood such actions all too well as a result of their own predatory colonial practices. While a proponent of the idea of European civilization like Liman would be loath to admit to the 'universality' of barbarism, virulent 'nationalism' which sharply drew lines of demarcation between those with national belonging and those to be excluded from these national boundaries ultimately engendered the kind of violence which the concert of Europe decried as 'barbaric' and 'savage,' though similar measures were readily adopted by the Great Powers when imperial concerns necessitated such actions. The fate of the Herero and Nama in German Southwest Africa, which can be considered as the first genocide of the twentieth century, is a sad testament to the hypocrisy of European notions of their civilizational superiority, and points to the rather truncated limits of such scruples in a colonial context.

This is not to say that Liman was personally involved in the affairs of either the Herero and Nama or the Armenians, but rather that it is very likely that he knew

[363] Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 469.

[364] Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 110-130.

people who were, and that although he makes no direct reference to Germany's colonial experience in Africa, his comments on the admittedly superficial resemblance between the denizens of the Ottoman Empire and those of the Far East testifies to a definite conception of earlier German colonialism. When Liman confidently asserts that the most experienced officers in the military mission were those with experience in colonial wars, the implication is that the war in the Middle East is also a colonial one, if only due to the desert and tropical climates therein.[365] Liman likely did not intend to convey anything significant in expressing his view of the war in the Ottoman Empire, but, as has hopefully been shown above, his insistence on the peculiarities of the Oriental character, indeed the lazy, suspicious, ungrateful, and cunning of the various peoples of the Ottoman Empire in contradistinction to the industrious, energetic, and honest Germans faithfully reproduces a quasi-colonial discourse, at a time in which Germany was seeking to extend its influence in the Near East. Furthermore, while some Germans, including Liman, brought the colonial gaze to bear on their Ottoman allies, the Turks were in the process of internally colonizing the Ottoman East at the expense of the Armenians. This fact, which Liman implicitly recognizes, formed the basis of a glaring similarity between the Ottomans and the Germans, and it is to another such similarity that we now turn.

[365] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 175, 177-179, 247.

CHAPTER 4

THE TURKS AS A MARTIAL RACE

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The Turkish Volk

In the first three pages of *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, the reader's attention is drawn to the overt association of the Ottoman military with the Turkish people. It was suggested to Liman that he should invite the Ottoman crown prince to military maneuvers, "so that thereby he would gain an interest in the army, and through this influence his people [*Volk*]."[366] Almost immediately, even before Liman's arrival in the Ottoman Empire, there is a prominent and direct association of the people of the Ottoman Empire with its armed forces, as though the one were interchangeable with the other. Like the German army in its institutional capacity as "the school of the nation," Liman clearly expected the Ottoman army to function along similar lines.[367] Furthermore, this line from *Fünf Jahre Türkei* constitutes one of the few instances in which the reader can detect traces of the influence of the military theories developed by Colmar von der Goltz, who had spent many years in the Ottoman Empire as one

[366] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 11-12. Consider the similarity between Liman's equation of the Turkish people with the Ottoman Army and the October 1914 proclamation in Germany that "'the German army and the German people are one.'" See Doering-Manteuffel, "Perceptions of the West in Twentieth-Century Germany," 84.

[367] In this respect, German discourses on the importance of the Ottoman Army in civilizing the Turks largely differed from British imperial discourses on the Turks. For example, T.E. Lawrence writes that "The Turkish peasantry in Anatolia were dying of their military service." Both associated the Turks with military service, but whereas the Germans viewed military service as desirable, even necessary, the British viewed it as draining the vitality of the 'Turkish race.' See Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, 56. Exposure of Ottoman-Turkish youth to militaristic propaganda began quite early; government posters containing phrases like *Ordu Bir Halk Mektebidir* ("the army is the school of the nation") were meant to blur the distinction between childhood education and later military service. See Fortna, "Bonbons and Bayonets: Mixed Messages of Childhood in the Late Ottoman Empire and Early Turkish Republic," 184.

of the heads of an earlier German military mission that was dispatched in the aftermath of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877.

4.1.2 The Paradigmatic Chasm between Colmar von der Goltz and Liman von Sanders

In his famous treatise *Das Volk in Waffen*, Colmar advanced a vision of a highly militarized society, in which the army, in following the progression of acting as 'the school of the nation' to its logical conclusion, would encompass the nation in its entirety, nothing more or less; in this new society, where the meaningful distinctions between the civilian and military spheres would be erased, "the Ottoman army [would become] the armed Ottoman nation."[368] This was a vision which, coupled with the desire for fundamental reform, many Ottoman military officers and cadres of the nascent Committee of Union and Progress subsequently took to heart, and indeed it formed the basis of a longer-term 'militarization' of late Ottoman society, which would persist into the early Turkish Republic. In other words, there was already a native Ottoman ideological equation of the military with the people, with the latter increasingly coming to be defined as the Turkish-speaking Muslims of Anatolia; this intellectual formation and its various outgrowths, which were ultimately inspired by a German military theoretician who was intimately acquainted with the people and conditions of the Ottoman Empire, predated Liman's arrival by over a decade.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to endorse the view that Liman's and Gerold's perception of the Ottomans and their neighbors were largely derivatives of Colmar's

[368] See Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 294; Aksan, "Ottoman to Turk: Continuity and Change," 23-24; Gruesshaber, *The 'German Spirit' in the Ottoman and Turkish Army, 1908-1938*, 11, 34-35, 240.

Weltanschauung and the Ottoman exegeses that followed after. It is true that Colmar's vision was meant to encompass all of the nation (interpretations of whether this meant a supranational definition of 'Ottoman' which included all subject-citizens or a Muslim base which included or excluded the Arabs varied considerably), in the same sense that the doctrine of martial races was meant to encompass all members of a particular race or nation. However, there are important considerations which make it appear rather less likely that Liman's and Gerold's views of the Ottoman Empire were essentially plagiarisms of Colmar's thinking.

In the first instance, it is important to note that a key component of Colmar's understanding of a military nation involved a dedicated, ideologically-conscious cadre of military officers which would form the vanguard of the militarization of society and act as a catalyst in the movement towards progress. In a sense, the idea of "a nation in arms," not to mention its' actual realization, was very much dependent on such an officer corps, and was therefore top-down, possibly even elitist.[369] By contrast, the martial prowess of a race was meant to be immutable and an unlearned behavior (in practice, of course, training of these 'natural-warriors' remained a necessity). In this sense, it was very much a bottom-up appraisal of martial prowess among different peoples, down to the very meanest of persons. One was institutional and ideological, the other was (theoretically) biological. While it is true that Liman and Gerold reserved considerable praise for various officers that they encountered, it

[369] Baki Tezcan views this militarization as essentially a hijacking of the nineteenth-century 'New Order' reform movement, which destroyed the relatively strong civil government which existed in the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire through the adoption of the developmental paradigm of autocratic modernization; this emphasis on the education of the officer corps carried over into the Turkish Republic, as evinced by the sheer number of former soldiers in the political arena. For our purposes, it is important to note that the roots of the idea of a modern, educated elite (possibly, although not exclusively, possessing a military background) who could steer their society towards progress predates even the arrival of Colmar von der Goltz's military mission. See Tezcan, "The Second Ottoman Empire: The Transformation of the Ottoman Polity in the Early Modern Era," 569; Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, 308-311.

is significant just how much of their approval and censure reflected their views on the ranks of the ordinary soldiers. Therefore, although there may have been considerable overlap between Liman's and Colmar's point of view that the Turks constituted a "nation in arms"-in-waiting, Liman's and Gerold's emphasis on the "military worth" and "fighting material" (or lack thereof) of the Turks and other peoples of the Orient seems to more closely reflect martial race doctrine in its broad scope than mere passing observations on the top-down militarization of Ottoman society.

Secondly, the context in which Liman's military mission was dispatched to the Ottoman Empire is fundamental to differentiating Liman's view of the Ottoman Empire's prospects from that of Colmar; Gerold, of course, did not join the Ottoman army until after the Ottoman victory at Gallipoli. Although Liman clearly saw his mission as a successor to that of Colmar's, he suggested that the previous military missions had emphasized "far too much theory and too little practical work."[370] Simply put, Colmar's military mission had not succeeded in its aims, or was otherwise unequal to the task, a conclusion which was particularly easy to reach in light of the Ottoman army's dismal performance in the Balkan Wars; if it had succeeded, the need for a new German military mission would largely be obviated, save for a blatant bid to curry favor with the Ottomans and further extend German influence. On the other hand, although Gerold may not have joined the Ottoman army until 1916, he was able to glimpse the Ottomans in action during the Balkan Wars. The impression gained was not a positive one, and it did not reflect well on Colmar's efforts. In November, in the province of Selânik, Gerold and his

[370] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 14.

companions found themselves traversing landscapes nigh unpassable, even on horseback. Less than enthused by the poor state of the roads, and even less impressed by the recent Turkish defeat at Manastır, one of his colleagues exclaimed "Aha, the Turks, the Turks of Goltz Pasha!"[371] Needless to say, Gerold ultimately had to concede the point; Colmar's training did not appear to have borne fruit. Naturally, such a narrative formulation all-but ignores the longer-term intellectual impact of Colmar's ideas, which was considerable. For Liman's purposes, however, it could not be otherwise. Any great concession on Liman's part to the work of his predecessors would necessarily diminish his own prestige, insofar as he would otherwise be seen to be effecting the reformation of an army that had already been partially reformed.

Third, Colmar von der Goltz and Liman von Sanders were two very different sorts of military officers. While Liman was notoriously cantankerous and prickly, and knew very little about the Near East, Colmar was by all accounts charismatic, if somewhat indulgent, and was also an avid student of the Orient; it is not a stretch to say that he was a Turcophile. Ironically, in spite of his considerably greater expertise in the region, not to mention his relatively better social relations, from a strictly official standpoint his Turcophilia may have worked against him, and in Liman's own favor. As was mentioned earlier, there was a certain institutional distrust in German military circles of officers posted abroad who 'went native;' Verkafferung is but the crudest expression for a German who 'sinks' to the level of the native.[372] It has already been shown that Liman had a rather low opinion of Germans who

[371] The original is "*Voilà vos turcs, les turcs de von der Goltz Pacha*!" Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 36.

[372] Kuss, *German Colonial Wars and the Context of Military Violence*, 86.

debased themselves by donning the trappings of Ottoman custom with an eye towards heaping flattery and praise upon their allies; indeed, upon his arrival in the Ottoman Empire, he "found the old hands much too Turkified and degenerated."[373] Gerold too had little patience for such unsavory political-diplomatic practices. In his words:

> The Germans frequently based their influence on this, that they exceeded each other in ingratiating themselves with the strangers. Added to this was the unfortunate tendency of many to loudly bang on the table at inopportune moments, and [where it mattered] to demonstrate dignity, to instead take refuge in concealment.[374]

It is difficult to imagine that Colmar's undisguised sympathy for the Turks would not have struck some of his colleagues as precisely the sort of "ingratiating" behavior that Gerold deplored in his compatriots; it simply may not have been possible to exhibit any kind of nuanced understanding of another people without necessarily appearing as 'tainted' by association. To that end, Colmar would almost certainly have appeared to Liman as precisely the sort of "kaffirized" military plenipotentiary that he so despised.

In holding this attitude Liman was joined by the German Supreme Army Command, who based their choice for Liman as the head of the German military mission on the fact that Colmar's considerable connections in military-political circles in the Ottoman Empire constituted a liability to the project of military reform, and through this, the extension of German influence.[375] When Colmar was dispatched for the final time to the Ottoman Empire, the German Supreme Army

[373] Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 238.

[374] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 45.

[375] Gruesshaber, *The German Spirit in the Ottoman and Turkish Army, 1908-1938*, 69.

Command and his fellow German officers found him to be "'too old' and 'soft,'" and prone to flights of fancy; Liman's estimation that Colmar was a brilliant theoretician but a poor field commander can only be viewed as a damning criticism from the standpoint of a German military culture which placed a heavy emphasis on the competency of the individual officer in a battlefield situation; the reader will recall the singular importance of the officer's initiative, articulated in such doctrines as Auftragstaktik.[376] Furthermore, that Liman was entirely unwilling to communicate with the Field Marshal was as much a testament to his distrust of the man as well as the personal animosity that he nurtured towards him.[377] Neither Liman nor his superiors in the German Supreme Army Command evinced much confidence in either Colmar's capacity for military leadership or his views on the peoples of the Ottoman Empire.

Although at first glance this difference of character and temperament may seem of little consequence, it is actually of considerable significance, particularly with regard to both how Liman's and Colmar's superiors viewed the two men, as well as how the two men understood their task in the Ottoman Empire. Colmar was viewed as excessively sympathizing with the Turks, which made him suspect to the German military authorities in Berlin. Officers who had "gone native" were, simply

[376] Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 270-271; Gruesshaber, *The German Spirit in the Ottoman and Turkish Army, 1908-1938*, 76.

[377] It is unknown whether Colmar himself was aware of the extent to which he was calculated to be a suitable replacement for Liman in the machinations of the German Embassy, which viewed the dispatching of Colmar to the Ottoman Empire as a "godsend." Nevertheless, Liman was already disinclined to view Colmar with a friendly eye, since he was effectively forced to surrender command of the Ottoman First Army in Istanbul to the newly-arrived field marshal, in spite of the fact that he had hoped to retain some degree of authority over those forces as well as the Ottoman Fifth Army. If Liman originally only harbored a certain distrust of the old field marshal due to the latter's overt sympathy for the Turks as well as other various perceived inconveniences, his association of Colmar with attempts at treacherous backbiting in the bid to dislodge him from his position transformed this distrust into full-blown antipathy. See Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire*, 74, 76, 79, 85-87.

put, no longer capable of carrying out the stern task that was empire-building; they could not be trusted to generate accurate, dispassionate information on the native peoples with whom they interacted. When preparing for his service in the Ottoman Empire, Gerold gained the impression from the German Supreme Army Command that "the influence of the Turks on the Field Marshal [Colmar von der Goltz] had become stronger, as opposed to the other way around. After [Gerold's] impressions in situ [he] found this view to be accurate."[378] Later on, Gerold would remark that Colmar was "insulted as a blind follower and obedient servant [*gehorsamer Diener*] of the Turks" in numerous German circles.[379] Liman, by way of contrast, was apprehended as a more impartial observer, one whose perceptiveness and seeming immunity to the kind of wishful thinking and Orientalist fancies betrayed by Colmar and other 'experts' on the Near East were viewed as invaluable assets in the production of salient knowledge about the Ottoman Empire, its' peoples, and the military capabilities of its army.[380]

Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, the relative characterizations by Liman and Colmar of their Ottoman charges, as well as their respective military missions, embodied different paradigms. Part and parcel of this assertion is the specific coloniality of knowledge production and the deliberate establishment of hierarchies which is intrinsic in the construction or "discovery" of martial races. As cited earlier with regard to German colonial ventures in China, German South-West Africa and

[378] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 73.

[379] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 134.

[380] That Liman would frequently find his views dismissed or otherwise passed over by his superiors in Berlin was more a consequence of the fragmented and multi-centric nature of German influence in the Ottoman Empire than any lack of regard for or even mistrust towards him; like Gerold, he vociferously criticized the lack of a unified 'command' structure among the German military-political plenipotentiaries.

German East Africa, the act of differentiating and categorizing peoples as martial or "un-martial" was a quintessentially imperial one, in that it created and subsequently imposed classifications on peoples or nations in comparison with one another; above this matrix stood the European. This process was the outcome of what Gavin Rand refers to as "the centering of ethnography as a 'modality' of colonial power:" martial race doctrine was merely the practice of ethnography colored by military necessity.[381] To a significant degree, Liman's and Gerold's attempts to underline the essential markers of difference between the Turks, Arabs, and Persians were informed by this sort of ethnographic praxis.

By contrast, Colmar's theory of the "nation in arms" was essentially a German intellectual formulation that was intended to extoll French methods of large-scale mobilization while simultaneously recasting them as the logical consequence of the German militarist system.[382] It is clear that Colmar intended to apply this quintessentially European vision tout court to the Ottoman military, and by extension to Ottoman society as a whole. In doing so, he sought to place the German and Ottoman Empires on the same civilizational path of development, as though the adoption and internalization of 'German' methods would invariably and inevitably produce 'Oriental Germans.' An important consequence of this hastened and assisted movement towards modernity, which Colmar very likely realized, was that the Ottomans would more effectively be able to resist the influence of any European imperial encroachment; even if the offending power was the Ottoman Empire's benevolent imperial benefactor, the German Empire. Quite unlike Liman or Gerold,

[381] Rand, "'Martial Races' and 'Imperial Subjects:' Violence and Governance in Colonial India, 1857-1914," 6, 10.

[382] Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 206-207.

Colmar had a pronounced antipathy towards 'the West,' and the concept of 'Europe,' let alone any kind of 'European solidarity,' had little appeal to him; this attitude was not uncommon among German conservatives and völkisch ideologues, who, not insignificantly, viewed the military as the bulwark of "(social) deference, order, and simpler virtues."[383] According to Malte Fuhrmann, Colmar recognized, and wished to preserve the aspects of traditional Anatolian society which reminded him of the rural and strictly hierarchical social order that prevailed in East Prussia, which was the site of his upbringing; his articulation of a "counter-civilizational model" was as much a rebuttal to the relative 'cosmopolitanism' of Istanbul and Berlin as it was to Western liberalism.[384] Therefore, whether intentional or not, Colmar's vision of the Ottoman regeneration through the militarization of its society carried subtle, yet distinct, anti-imperialist undertones.

As I have hopefully shown above, this vision was no longer a possibility for Liman or Gerold. The strategic calculus had significantly changed in-between the time of Colmar's and Liman's military mission. Granted, the concept of the 'sick man in Europe' was alive and well in European diplomatic circles long before either of the two missions. Nevertheless, the Balkan Wars had shown the world precisely how 'sick' the 'sick man of Europe' was. In losing its last major foothold in Europe, not to mention its core provinces, the Ottoman Empire quite convincingly appeared to be on the brink of collapse. The sense of urgency on the part of Germany to rapidly expand its influence in the anticipation of the eventual partition of the Ottoman Empire was palpable, even more than was the case some thirty years prior, when Colmar's mission was dispatched. From its very inception, Liman's military

[383] Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 101.

[384] Fuhrmann, "Anatolia as a site of German colonial desire and national re-awakenings," 140-141.

mission was envisioned as a means to the end of gaining the requisite influence to assuredly profit by the Ottoman Empire's demise. This might partially account for the sheer ambiguity which pervades Liman's memoir: although there can be little doubt that the preservation of the Ottoman Empire was Liman's avowedly foremost objective, the question remains as to what end. From Liman's quasi-colonialist and imperialist views and depictions of the Ottomans, it seems evident that even he was aware of his status as a vital instrument in the German Empire's opportunistic Oriental Weltpolitik. In short, the paradigms which governed Colmar's and Liman's military missions were significantly different; much more than was the case with Colmar's military mission, Liman's was a vehicle for the imperialist hopes of many Germans.

Finally, the notion that Colmar's experiences in the Ottoman Empire would have furnished him with the indelible impression that the Turks were a martial race in the sense Liman and Gerold understood them somewhat strains credulity. As I have previously argued, underneath many layers of imperial subjectivity, questions of loyalty, and sheer colonialist constructions predicated on racial difference lies the expectation of genuine military prowess. The Ottoman Empire did not, in Colmar's time as an instructor in the Ottoman Army, embark on any major feats of arms. Indeed, the only campaign fought by the Ottomans in between the departure of Colmar's military mission in 1895 and the beginning of the Tripolitan War in 1911 was the Ottoman-Greek War of 1897, where, it must be acknowledged, the Ottoman Army was victorious. However, any sanguine views of Ottoman, let alone Turkish, martial ability which stemmed from this month-long campaign would have been most assuredly erased by the devastating losses sustained in the Balkan Wars. Even after the arrival of Liman's military mission, there could be no genuine assessments

of Turkish martial prowess or the impact of the German military mission without a kind of trial by fire. What I am saying is that Liman and Gerold both were witness to if not active participants in a decisive moment in the history of the Ottoman Army, that proved beyond all doubts the martial capabilities of the Turks, which Colmar simply could not have known empirically: this moment, which would form the foundation of both Liman's and Gerold's future expectations of their soldiers and officers, was the Gallipoli campaign. The impact of the Gallipoli campaign in the discursive shaping of the Turks as a martial race cannot be overstated; indeed, the campaign and its aftermath constitute the axis upon which both memoirs turn.

4.2 First impressions

4.2.1 Initial impressions of Gerold von Gleich

One year before Liman was writing about the Turkish volk and the Ottoman Army, Gerold had the opportunity to observe the Turkish soldiers in action during the Balkan Wars, when he was attached to the Greek Army as a military attaché. The impression he received was not confidence-inspiring. The first Turkish prisoners he encountered were "pathetic and dull," and the Turkish efforts to mount a counteroffensive against the Balkan coalition failed miserably.[385] In other words, like most Germans who did not think themselves "Turcophiles," or most Europeans for that matter, Gerold believed that the Ottoman Empire was in its death throes, after a long and inglorious decline. The people who constituted the Ottoman Army did not demonstrate any particular martial prowess. Rather suggestively, Gerold wrote that

[385] The original German is "*kümmerliche und stumpfsinnigen*." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 34, 61.

there is a strong correlation between the outward, physical appearance of a soldier and his internal worth.[386] If this was indeed his professional opinion, then his view of the Turks in the Ottoman Army in 1913 would have been very poor indeed.

This changed three years later, when Gerold was seconded to the Ottoman Sixth Army as Colmar von der Goltz's understudy and chief of staff. At that point, the Gallipoli campaign had reached its terminus, and presumably not a few people, including Gerold, were surprised by the result. Indeed, one of his considerations in accepting the new posting was precisely the Ottoman victory at Gallipoli: "the battles at Gallipoli had strongly attracted me."[387] Whether due to the immense flow of propaganda generated by the German political machine, or else due to reports which reached him on the Western front, Gerold was "attracted" by the narrative of the Ottoman feat of arms on the Gallipoli peninsula.

This constitutes one of the relatively rare moments in which Gerold explicitly acknowledges the achievements of the Turks; the overwhelming majority of the remainder of the memoir is focused on the various idiosyncrasies and shortcomings of the Arab and Persian troops on the Mesopotamian front. The reason for this is important: Gerold's memoir, written in 1921, is in continuous dialogue with Liman's own, and indeed Gerold's authorial voice is constrained by the fact that when he arrived in the Ottoman Empire after the events at Gallipoli. In the first instance, Liman had much greater firsthand experience with the Turkish soldiers than did Gerold. I have little doubt that Gerold had hoped that he would be able to embark on a stint of meritorious service with the brave and competent Turkish soldiers which he had learned about from his knowledge on the Gallipoli campaign; at this juncture he

[386] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 11.

[387] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 66.

could not have known that the Persian military forces were in such disarray. Moreover, the Gallipoli campaign had already sufficiently proven the martial prowess of the Turks; Gerold's view was transparently shaped by such assumptions, and there is no greater evidence of this than the fact that the de facto reliable forces on the Mesopotamian front were Turkish. When the Arab or Persian detachments falter, it is the Turkish soldiers that naturally arrest the decline in the strategic situation. Gerold did not feel the need to contradict various skeptical views of Turkish martial prowess, simply because that intellectual exercise had been exhaustively undertaken by Liman one year earlier.

4.2.2 Initial impressions of Liman von Sanders

To that end, and rather tellingly, both Liman's and Gerold's memoirs do not touch upon the question of Turkish martial ability or 'militarism' until the beginning of the Gallipoli campaign or its immediate aftermath. As previously mentioned, in Gerold's case there is a considerable narrative gap in-between his time in the Balkans in 1914 and 1916 when he was seconded to service in the Ottoman Army. Liman's memoir only addresses two major events before the beginning of the Gallipoli campaign: the events in the Caucasus, which were mostly centered around the decisive defeat at Sarıkamış in the winter of 1914-1915, and the first offensive against the Suez Canal in 1915, which, although objectively a failure, was relatively inconsequential in terms of cost. In spite of these less-than confidence-inspiring results, Liman had some positive evaluations to offer his readers regarding the two first military undertakings by the newly-reformed Ottoman Army. In the initial stages of the Battle of Sarıkamış, Liman suggested that, "compared with the conditions of the Turks in

the Balkan Wars, there was a noticeable improvement in [their] capacity to fight."[388] Here the concept of *Kriegstüchtigkeit* ("capacity to fight") can be understood as an innate property, though one apparently not distributed equally to all peoples. Furthermore, the natural capacity for fighting was also capable of being sharpened or enhanced through rigorous training; precisely the sort of rigorous training which Liman and many other German officers believed to be one of their significant contributions to the improvement of the Ottoman Army. Although the end result of the Battle of Sarıkamış did not warrant the initially hopeful appraisal, Liman nonetheless seems to nudge his reader to the conclusion that, in some meaningful respect, the influence of the German military mission has produced an Ottoman Army very different than that of 1912-1913: the Germans have helped the Turks tap into (or rediscover) their own innate and immutable martial spirit.

This is further reinforced by his account of the Suez Expedition, led by Cemal Pasha and the energetic German officer Kress von Kressenstein. On first inspection, Liman's appraisal of Ottoman martial abilities is somewhat ambiguous in this instance. He asserts that "It is not possible for one to conquer Egypt with about 16,000 Turkish troops." Here, it is difficult to divine whether Liman meant that 16,000 Turkish soldiers were unequal to 16,000 European soldiers, or that 16,000 soldiers was simply not enough to sweep aside the English defenders and liberate Egypt; compared to the 90,000 men in the theater of the Caucasus, 16,000 does strike the reader as a rather insignificant force.[389] However, this does not conclusively answer the problem suggested above. The inadequacy of 16,000 Turkish soldiers notwithstanding, Liman emphatically lauded their seven-day march across the desert

[388] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 51.

[389] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 54.

to the Suez Canal, saying that "For all times it will stand as an outstanding achievement."[390] In the early stages of the First World War, the Turks have already shown themselves capable of impressive feats of endurance, ones which would be remembered throughout the ages, if we are to believe Liman. That these early steps met with failure had more to do with the infeasibility of the ventures themselves, than with any fault stemming from the individual officers and soldiers. As we will soon see, officers and soldiers of the Ottoman Fifth Army would soon decisively prove their mettle.

4.3 Gallipoli campaign

4.3.1 Early beginnings at Çanakkale

It is significant that throughout Liman's memoir the reader gets the impression that in viewing the Turks as a martial race, or even as a militarily-inclined people, Liman was very much in the minority; in this respect, his compatriots were as likely to undervalue the martial abilities of the Turks as their adversaries at Gallipoli, the British. In clear hindsight, Liman identified one of the only flaws of the British battle-plan as the fact that they "underestimated the tenacious powers of resistance of Turkish soldiers."[391] The reader can only hazard a guess as to why the Turks found themselves to be perpetually underestimated, whether it was a consequence of the Ottoman Empire's poor military fortunes in recent history, or whether such attitudes stemmed from the kind of Eurocentric conceit which viewed the Ottoman military as

[390] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 59.

[391] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 64. For an example of how the Allies underestimated the martial prowess of the Ottoman soldiers, particularly with regard to asymmetric warfare, see Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 191-194.

intrinsically inferior by virtue of its non-Europeanness. In this specific instance, it was the British who underrated Turkish martial prowess, regardless of whether or not they understood such prowess to be mediated by the influence and direction of German officers. In spite of Liman's typical magnanimity towards his British adversaries, it is clear from his narration of the events in the Gallipoli campaign that such hubris would cost his opponents dearly.

The qualities of this Turkish martial prowess would be elaborated upon in the early stages of the fighting on the Gallipoli peninsula. In a sense, precisely because they were so poorly-equipped in comparison with the British forces, the ferocious resistance of the Turks was all the more noteworthy. After highlighting some of the material shortcomings endured by the soldiers of the Fifth Army, Liman remarks that "it is only because of the stoic calmness and cold-bloodedness of the Anatolian soldiers and their absolute lack of want that they managed to master these difficulties."[392] Liman's praise here merits further unpacking. First, it should be noted that "cold-bloodedness" is completely absent from the English translation- the translator immediately transitions from "stoic calmness" to "freedom from wants."[393] The reader can only speculate as to why. Although Liman's characterization of his soldiers as cold-blooded may not particularly come across as a ringing endorsement, cold-bloodedness was undoubtedly a positive attribute in the gristly theater of modern warfare. The modern reader will recognize that, in this instance, "cold-bloodedness" most likely does not mean mercilessness or lack of pity, but rather sang-froid. In German post-war collective memory, sang-froid was enshrined as a quintessential soldierly virtue in what was probably the most famous of all the post-

[392] I translated "*Bedürfnislosigkeit*" as "lack of want." Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 98.

[393] Liman, *Five Years in Turkey*, 74.

war German military memoirs, Ernst Jünger's *Storm of Steel*, which was published in 1920.[394] As such, sang-froid was a key component of the sort of "warrior's" mentality to which German soldiers aspired, or were even expected to naturally possess; anything less was viewed as "un-soldierly."[395] An approximation of sang-froid, "coolness" is an attribute that was commonly utilized in British imperial parlance to describe the comportment of the Indian martial races, who habitually kept calm heads and nerves of steel in the face of danger and death. It was understood as part and parcel of a hyper-masculine ideal which equated manhood with military service and stoicism with the manly lack of emotional expression, and whose very opposite was construed as effeminate, emotional, and therefore inferior.[396] If a people were viewed as lacking such qualities, then, according to the discourse of martial races, they were believed to be "physically [and psychologically] unsuited for warfare."[397] This did not appear to have been a problem with the Turkish soldiers of the Ottoman Army, who apparently possessed sang-froid in considerable abundance, similar to other martial races.

Furthermore, it is here than Liman first uses the designation "Anatolian," a more specific ethnographic designation, in reference to the actions of a particular nation on the front. Previously, as the reader will recall, Liman suggests that the

[394] Jünger, *Storm of Steel*, 18.

[395] Ernst Jünger began his military career as a mere private, and was eventually made a lieutenant. He is also the youngest person (and almost certainly one of the lowest-ranking) to receive the Pour le Merite, the most prestigious military honor bestowed by the Kingdom of Prussia. See Jünger, *Storm of Steel*, vii-viii.

[396] According to Isabel Hull, "the (not only) late-nineteenth-century identification of males with strength, violence, decisiveness, success, relative lack of emotion, and so forth, gave individual soldiers a powerful, personal incentive to conform to military ideals and do their duty to the point of massacre and gratuitous destruction." See Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 101; Streets, *Martial Races*, 12.

[397] Streets, *Martial Races*, 178.

"deeply-religious Anatolian," who, as the audience is meant to understand, constituted the bulk of the Ottoman Army's rank-and-file, needed no declaration of jihad to obediently and calmly face death for their sovereign. Whereas the term 'Turk' was much broader and relatively diffuse, there can be no doubt that in using the term "Anatolian" Liman is specifically referring to the Turkish-speaking Muslims of Anatolia, the very people who would constitute the very foundation of the Turkish nation-state. Of course, in singling out the Turks for their superlative martial qualities, Liman effectively denies the Ottoman Army's non-Turkish contingents any share of the victory at Gallipoli. It is here that "Ottoman" semantically begins to transition into "Turkish" in the modern, Republican sense of the term; Ottomanism and the ideal of a supranational identity in a multi-ethnic empire began its final death the moment Gallipoli began to be conceived as a victory of the (Anatolian) Turks, rather than the victory of the Turks, Arabs, and other subject-peoples fighting under the same Ottoman banner. Though contemporary propaganda might have couched the victory in Islamist or Ottomanist terms, Liman's deliberate decision to cast the triumph of Ottoman arms as a victory of the Turks was not without significance in the eventual creation and widespread acceptance of the 'Gallipoli myth,' in which the campaign was reinterpreted as merely the first blow in the long struggle of the Turkish people towards national self-determination. Liman's view that it was these Anatolian Turks that exhibited the stoic calmness and sang-froid which was required or expected of natural "warriors," and not other subject-peoples who fought at Gallipoli, precipitated the association of the Turks with Gallipoli years before the establishment of the Turkish Republic, with its attendant Kemalist history and historiography.

Finally, Liman's belief that the Anatolian Turks did not need or require much in the way of sustenance is probably more of a statement of surprise than any 'objective' assessment of the relative needs of the Turkish soldier as compared with other (presumably European) soldiers. In other words, the Liman's praise does not reflect the fact that the Turkish soldiers needed less provisions than their Entente or German counterparts, but rather that they were capable of great military feats despite their perennial lack of provisions. However, it can still be taken as additional proof of Turkish martial inclination, if one were to conclude that Turkish soldiers can accomplish considerable aims while requiring even less resources than European soldiers were accustomed to.

4.3.2 The makeup of the Ottoman army

In this sense, there is the possibility that the Turkish-speaking Anatolian Muslim recruits were thought to be more adjusted to privations than the recruits who were drawn from the urban populations. There seems to have been a general prejudice in the German Empire which favored rural populations for military duties, on the basis that agricultural society produced "more pliant soldiers," who were also viewed as more physically fit than their urban compatriots; a full two-thirds of the recruits of the German Army came from a rural background.[398] As the vast majority of the Ottoman Empire's economy remained agrarian, most of the recruits of the Ottoman Army would have been drawn from a similar population.[399] Therefore, by complete coincidence, the ranks of the Ottoman Army were largely composed of the same sort

[398] Blackbourn, *History of Germany*, 288.

[399] Pamuk, "The Ottoman economy in World War I," 112-113. In British India, army recruiters were specifically instructed to target the agricultural classes. See Rand, "'Martial Races,'" 13.

of obedient and rugged peasants who composed the venerable German Army. Furthermore, it can be surmised that soldiers of an agricultural background were more accustomed to the kind of privations which were endemic in the Ottoman Army. The victory at Gallipoli was therefore construed as a much greater military achievement, as it was won under material circumstances which were not only dire, but which put the Ottomans at a severe disadvantage in comparison with their enemies. Yet, these material disadvantages were overcome because, in Liman's view, the Turks in particular were atypically accustomed to poor amenities.

4.3.3 The uniqueness of the Turks

Liman's understanding of the Turks as a martial race may have been a uniquely-held opinion among his German contemporaries. To be certain, during the Gallipoli campaign he had ample opportunity to comment on the ever-increasing prowess and ability of the Turkish soldiers. His aside on the improved scouting of the Turkish soldiers is particularly illuminating, and merits quoting at some length:

> It is a big mistake if claimed that the Anatolian soldier can only be advanced in his training to a limited extent. It only takes a long time until the training for offensive purposes is assimilated and understood in the soldiers' flesh and blood. Under good and fresh subordinate officers they will perform anything in a war of position, short offensives, and in scouting.

Liman then went on to add that some intelligence reports captured at an English camp had "unconditional praise" for the activity of the Turkish patrols.[400] Again, here Liman singles out the Turkish-speaking Muslims of Anatolia for especial commendation. Yet, he begins this commendation with a criticism: that those who believe that training will have limited results on the Anatolians are very much

[400] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 124.

mistaken. It might take some effort for the Turkish soldiers to adjust to the expectations demanded of them in a military setting; but once this time has elapsed, they will meet all the requirements necessary to fight modern wars. It is evident that this faulty viewpoint, or "big mistake," is a view which Liman evidently feels the need to refute, which he attempts to do with a detailed analysis of the few flaws and many strengths of the Turkish soldiers.

Although it is not possible to provide an exact account of whose viewpoint Liman hoped to challenge, from the intended audience of the memoir as well as Liman's own communications with various superior officers and diplomats in Germany, it seems reasonable to assume that, like the English at Gallipoli, many Germans underrated the martial ability of the Turks. Perhaps the Turks were viewed as Oriental barbarians, little higher on the Darwinian hierarchy than Oskar von Niedermayer's *Negerhäuptling* ("Negro Chieftain," spoken in reference to the Afghan Emir Habibullah Khan, who the Germans hoped to coax onto their side in a potential strike against British India); or perhaps due to the recent defeats in the Balkan Wars, the Ottomans were simply viewed as no longer capable of significant military action.[401] The fact that the German Supreme Army Command viewed the Ottoman theater as a sideshow, and the Ottoman war effort as a supplement to the strategic and operational aims of the Central Powers in Europe, particularly in the form of tying up British forces on various fronts, does little to decipher the problem.[402] Nevertheless, Liman was plainly repudiating a view held in some circles that the military worth and prowess of the Turks was of a negligible degree. From

[401] Krobb, "'Doch das orientalische ist es ja eben, was uns interessiert:' Colonial Desires and Ottoman Space: War Memoirs as Post-Colonial Discourse," 178.

[402] Trumpener, "Germany and the End of the Ottoman Empire," 127.

this it is possible to surmise that Liman's perception of the Turks as a martial race was not a universally-held view among the Germans; Liman may even have found himself in an apparent minority.

4.3.4 Gallipoli campaign

The Gallipoli campaign, or *Çanakkale Savaşı*, was fundamental to the shaping of Liman's and Gerold's thinking of the Turks as a martial race. A brief overview of the campaign's major events may be useful to provide context for understanding the performance of martial prowess displayed by the 'Turks.' In early January of 1915, Russia began to press Britain to undertake an offensive against the Ottoman Empire.[403] Very quickly, the British War Council selected the Dardanelles as the site for a naval expedition, through which they hoped to force a passage to the Sea of Marmara and threaten Istanbul, thereby knocking the Ottoman Empire out of the war and establishing a corridor through the Black Sea to resupply the Russian Empire.[404] However, the Ottomans were made aware of the strategic vulnerability of the Dardanelles during a probing British naval bombardment in November 1914, and set to work diligently fortifying the straits through mine-laying, augmenting mobile howitzer units, as well as placing coastal-defense guns in the fortresses overlooking the Narrows, a natural bottleneck in the straits.[405] On March 18, an Anglo-French

[403] Strachan, *The First World War*, 113.

[404] Strachan, *The First World War*, 114-116; Tucker, *The Great War*, 79-80.

[405] Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 78. On a visit to the Gallipoli Peninsula, American Ambassador Henry Morgenthau remarked that the Ottoman front gave him the impression "that [he] was in Germany." In his estimation, all of the officers were German, many of the men were German, and the only audible language was German. Although we know from other military histories that this cannot have been the case, it is not surprising that accounts such as this contributed to the impression that the Germans were in total control of the Ottoman war effort, and that behind any Ottoman military success was a German architect. See Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*, 210.

fleet began to bombard the Ottoman shore batteries. Although the assault was initially successful, the mines and indefatigable fire of the Ottoman coastal guns inflicted heavy damage, and the fleet withdrew.[406] It was then recognized by the British military command that, contrary to Winston Churchill's promises, the Dardanelles could not be forced without landing a sizeable number of troops to seize the troublesome shore batteries.[407]

On March 26, Liman arrived to take command of the newly-established Fifth Army.[408] He concentrated his troops at the places where the Allies were most likely to make a landing: the isthmus of Bolayır and the Gulf of Saros in the north, the coast surrounding Kabatepe, including Suvla Bay and Ariburnu, Seddülbahir on the southernmost point of the peninsula, and Kumkale on the Asian coast.[409] On April 25, the Allied forces began landings troops on the peninsula. While the French forces who landed at Kumkale were very quickly contained and were completely drive off only a few days later, there was some initial confusion regarding the location of the main concentration of British and ANZAC forces.[410] It was at Ariburnu that then-Lieutenant Colonel Mustafa Kemal committed his entire division into battle against

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[406] Tucker, *The Great War*, 82-83; Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 79; Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 122. Traditionally, March 18, the day on which the Ottomans definitively repelled the Allied navy, is commemorated in Turkey as "Gallipoli Day," whereas Australia and New Zealand commemorate "ANZAC Day," the day of the ANZAC landings, on April 25. However, this changed with the centenary in 2015, when the date of celebration in Turkey was moved to April 25; this was likely done to draw attention away from the "Genocide Remembrance Day" observed in Armenia, which falls on April 24. See Kayalı, "The Ottoman Experience in World War I," 887-888; Aktar, "The Struggle Between Nationalist and Jihadist Narratives of Gallipoli, 1915-2015," 215.

[407] Strachan, *The First World War*, 117.

[408] As Keith Jeffery points out, considerable ethnic variety existed in the Ottoman Fifth Army. A number of regiments were largely composed of Arabs, including the 77th Regiment, which was under the command of Mustafa Kemal. However, the contributions of ethnic minorities to the Ottoman war effort has largely been written out of the official histories. See Jeffery, *1916*, 30-31.

[409] Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 81-82; Strachan, *The First World War*, 118.

[410] Jeffery, *1916*, 28.

opposing ANZAC troops that were establishing a beachhead; his apocryphal words to his soldiers "I do not expect you to attack, I order you to die! In the time which passes until we die, other troops and commanders can take our place!" has become an integral part of the Gallipoli myth.[411] In all, the Allied landings were beaten back, and the British spent the next month attempting several breakouts at Kirte in the Seddülbahir sector, all of which were repulsed.[412] Ottoman attempts to drive Allied forces off the peninsula also met with heavy casualties.[413] On August 6, the British attempted to outflank Ottoman defensive positions near Ariburnu and Kabatepe by landing a number of divisions at Suvla Bay, behind Ottoman lines.[414] Mustafa Kemal was given command of the hastily-assembled Anafarta Group (named for the Anafarta ridges), and counterattacked; he was soon reinforced by Ottoman divisions from the Asian side of the straits.[415]

After the Allied failure of the new landings, conditions settled into that of static trench-warfare.[416] By Autumn of 1915, Bulgaria had joined the war on the side of the Central Powers, which meant that there now was a direct line by which the Ottomans could receive supplies from Germany.[417] In addition, political enthusiasm for the Gallipoli Campaign waned in British and French circles, and the onset of

[411] Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 83-85; Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 259; Tucker, *The Great War*, 84; Strachan, *The First World War*, 119; Jeffery, *1916*, 23-24; Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 123; Zürcher, *Turkey*, 118.

[412] Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 87; Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 124.

[413] Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 185-186.

[414] Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 202-204.

[415] Strachan, *The First World War*, 120; Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 260; Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 90-91; Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 205-206.

[416] Jeffery, *1916*, 11.

[417] Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 207.

winter plus new developments on the Western front meant that eventually it was decided to evacuate the forces at Gallipoli.[418] In December of 1915, the troops on the Gallipoli peninsula, save for a small beachhead in the south near Cape Helles that was evacuated in January 1916, were completely evacuated before the Ottomans knew what had happened.[419] Military historian Spencer Tucker claims that the evacuation was the largest of its kind until Dunkirk in 1940, and "was also the only well-executed part of the entire campaign."[420] This was only true for the Allied side, which gained little and lost much during the campaign. Eugene Rogan writes that "Gallipoli proved a total defeat" for the British, and Ryan Gingeras claims that it was "nothing other than a rout."[421] For the Ottomans, on other hand, it was a dazzling feat of arms and much-needed victory, albeit one that was won at terrible cost.

In evaluating the longer-term effects of the Gallipoli campaign, Mesut Uyar and Edward Erickson both note that, first and foremost, it provided many officers who had a "good educational and theoretical background" the opportunity to become "real leaders" through their "practical combat experiences."[422] Perhaps more importantly, it "cleansed the stains of defeat" left by the Balkan Wars.[423] It would appear that Ottoman martial self-assurance was materially and psychically damaged by the outcome of the Balkan Wars, just as European belief in that martial self-assurance was similarly thrown into doubt. The Gallipoli campaign restored Ottoman

[418] Jeffery, *1916*, 13; Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 208-211.

[419] Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 261; Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 93; Jeffery, *1916*, 10, 14-21; Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 212-213.

[420] Tucker, *The Great War*, 85-86.

[421] Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans*, 214; Gingeras, *Fall of the Sultanate*, 125.

[422] Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 261; Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 95.

[423] Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 262.

confidence, which was carried into other fronts and which ultimately sustained two more years of bloody fighting in the Middle East. According to Ayhan Aktar, it was only in the 1930s that historians of the Turkish Republic began to "nationalize" the historiography of the Gallipoli campaign, by casting the Ottoman victory as a Turkish victory, the Ottoman Army as a Turkish one, and by largely consigning the ethnic minorities involved in the war effort to the proverbial dustbin of history.[424] In true Turkish nationalist fashion, the late Ottoman Empire was treated as little more than a prelude to an incipient Turkish nation struggling to be born from the "prison of nations."[425] It is interesting to note that, in reshaping their own past to conform to the national present, the Turks were latecomers. Writing in 1919, Liman leaves the reader in little doubt that the Ottoman victory at Gallipoli was, in fact, a Turkish victory; however, it was one masterminded by Germans.

4.3.5 Summing up the Çanakkale Savaşı

From Liman's own perspective, by the end of the Gallipoli campaign, there could be no doubt of the Turks' martial prowess. In summing up the end results of the campaign itself, Liman said that "the Turkish troops… have to be accorded the praise of toughness and persistent bravery."[426] "Bravery" (*Tapferkeit*) is one of the quintessential characteristics of the so-called martial races, and appears time and again in British imperial discourse on the Scottish Highlanders, Sikhs, and Gurkhas. Just as "India's 'martial races' were joined to Britain's own 'martial' soldiers by

[424] Aktar, "The Struggle Between Nationalist and Jihadist Narratives of Gallipoli," 215.

[425] Ronald Grigor Suny likens this to Sleeping Beauty being awakened by a kiss, in this case, the kiss of freedom and the resultant eruption of nationalist consciousness. Suny, *The Revenge of the Past*, 3.

[426] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 134-135.

physical prowess, unrestrained bravery and solidarity in spirit to defend the Empire," the "martial race" of the Ottoman Empire, the "Turks," were similarly joined to their German allies by the same shared characteristics.[427] In the same statement, Liman also magnanimously acknowledges the efforts of the "very brave adversary," but ultimately concludes that the Turkish soldiers "had won the field." Here he uses an exclamation point to underline the monumental feat of arms of the Turks. Though Liman may not have known it, the Gallipoli campaign largely resembled an epic battle between the various martial races of the German-Ottoman and British Empires. British, German, Turkish, and Gurkha soldiers all participated in the campaign, and, from Liman's perspective, the "better" martial races (the Turks and their German and Turkish officers) had won. War here almost becomes a kind of competitive exhibition in which the martial races showcase their prowess, a lethal albeit oddly good-natured demonstration of camaraderie and sportsmanship.[428] The British and apparently some Germans undervalued the abilities of the Turkish soldiers, but, as Liman would have put it, "they would be taught otherwise."[429]

The quality and natural aptitude of the Anatolian soldiers was mirrored by the Turkish officers that led them; while both had a surfeit of "bravery" and all the other requisite characteristics that make for fine soldiers and officers, the martial prestige of the "Turks" would be yet further enhanced by a comparison with their Arab and Persian brethren. As Hegel put it, "Nations are what their deeds are;" according to

[427] Streets, *Martial Races*, 133. British commentators came away from the Gallipoli campaign with a profound respect for the Ottoman Turkish soldiers. Of course, in emphasizing the worthiness of their adversary, they were also undoubtedly seeking to justify their defeat and preserve their own martial reputation. See McEvoy, "Dismantling empires, expanding empires: the Turks and the Arabs in British propaganda," 116-139.

[428] Streets, *Martial Races*, 136.

[429] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 172.

the logic, if the Turks proved themselves able warriors, if the Arabs possessed middling military prowess, and if the Persians were abnormally cowardly, it is because their performance on the field of battle reflected inherent qualities that each people possessed.[430]

4.4 The Turkish officers

Contrary to Mesut Uyar's and Edward Erickson's assertion that the German officers had a very low opinion of the Ottoman officer corps, Liman's view of the officers of the Ottoman Army suggest that his evaluations were largely contingent on the individual performance of the officer in question.[431] While some Ottoman officers showed themselves to be unequal to the task of leading the martial races of the Ottoman Empire on a modern battlefield, others demonstrated considerable aptitude.

Two of Liman's officers garnered considerable praise from the customarily critical general: Mehmet Vehip (Kaçı) Pasha and his older brother, Mehmet Esat Bülkat Pasha. Of Albanian extraction, both served with distinction in the defense of Yanya and Epirus during the Balkan Wars. During the summer of 1915, Vehip relieved Colonel Weber of command of the troop dispositions in the south group of the Fifth Army at Seddülbahir, and promptly impressed upon Liman his competence as a commanding officer; Esat was already in command of the front at Arıburnu. The close relationship of the two brothers precluded the "jealousy and working against one another" which seemed to Liman to be endemic in the Ottoman officer corps. In Liman's critical appraisal of the Ottoman officers it is easy to detect similitude with the Oriental officials that were discussed in some detail in the previous two chapters:

[430] Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, 90.

[431] Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the* Ottomans, 267, 279.

rivalry and 'petty' in-fighting among the Ottoman officers act as a complement to the venality, laziness, and petty-tyranny of the Ottoman official. However, Vehip and Esat would both defy Liman's conventional expectations of Ottoman high officials while further confirming his perception of the Turks as a martial race. In Liman's words, Vehip proved himself as "exceedingly energetic" and a "determined, perspicacious leader." Not wanting to leave out Vehip's older brother Esat, Liman praises the latter as the "knightly, brave… [and] famous defender of Yanya."[432]

A final example will suffice to demonstrate that the exemplary qualities of Vehip and Esat were not necessarily exceptions, but rather the anticipated products of the military culture in the Ottoman Empire in synthesis with the natural warrior-like qualities of the Turkish nation. Mustafa Kemal Bey was a "natural leader who delighted in responsibility." After launching an attack "independently" (on his own initiative) to throw the enemy back to the coast, he offered "tough, unbroken resistance" against all Allied counterattacks for the next three months. As Liman puts it, "I could have complete trust in his energy.[433] Mustafa Kemal would later serve under Liman's command again, this time in Palestine and Greater Syria. Although Liman's unambiguous approval is plainly evident, when he was writing his memoir in 1919, he cannot have known that one of his finest officers would eventually direct the course of the Turkish War of Independence, let alone become the founder of the Turkish Republic. Although such retrospection is generally not considered sound historical practice, it is nevertheless possible to divine a glimpse of the man who would later successfully overturn the settlement imposed upon the defeated Central Powers by the Allies.

[432] The original is "*verantwortsfreudige Führernatur*." Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 103-104.

[433] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 112.

Notwithstanding the singularly emphatic praise reserved for Mustafa Kemal, Vehip, Esat, and Mustafa Kemal all demonstrated the qualities of leadership and initiative which Liman expected of any officer, German or Turk. The contrast between the language he uses in regards to non-military Turks and Turks in the Ottoman Army is striking. These Turks are not lazy; they are "energetic." Vehip is "determined" and "perspicacious." His brother Esat is "knightly" (*ritterliche*), a term which in German has distinct temporal and historic connotations. When Liman suggests that Esat is "knightly," he is imparting Esat with the sort of virtues which Germans associated with the Germanic knights of the medieval era: honor, chivalry, and valor. In a sense, he imposes German virtues onto a non-German personage. Mustafa Kemal is a "natural leader," who demonstrates initiative and responds with genuine enthusiasm to the burden of leadership. Initiative, as the reader will recall, is an absolute necessity from the standpoint of anyone inhered in Imperial German military culture; officers were expected to demonstrate initiative in their adherence to the military doctrine of Auftragstaktik; all three officers evinced considerable initiative in varying degrees during the Gallipoli campaign.

Liman's characterization of three of his Turkish officers during the Gallipoli campaign is of considerable significance to his broader understanding of the Turks as a martial race. The rank-and-file (the Anatolians) possessed a natural aptitude in expressing the requisite qualities of the warrior-mentality that soldiers were supposed to exhibit. The officers did the same, only in their case the qualities of leadership were of greater value than any kind of sang-froid or stoic calmness. This picture is very much at odds with how Liman views other Turks of the Ottoman Empire. As discussed in the previous two chapters, Liman's rated many of the Turks as indolent, suspicious, and all too receptive to baksheesh; concepts like order and cleanliness, let

alone human dignity and justice, had no appeal to them. Industry and energy are largely, if not entirely, absent from the "Turkish mindset," in contrast with the Arabs (and presumably the Greeks). Earlier, the question was posed "What are the Turks good for?" Liman's account of the Turkish soldiers and their Turkish officers makes his answer clear: the Turk is good for fighting. The soldiers have a natural aptitude for facing danger and even death with calm; the officers have a natural talent for leadership. Liman views the military, and the practice of warfare more generally, as an institutional means by which to civilize the Oriental, as well as channel the martial energies of the Turkish people. Rather than permitting the Oriental to "prolong his musing existence," the military is the tool through which the benighted Oriental might overcome his natural predilection towards laziness. In this sense, Liman clearly believes that the military produces Ottomans with 'German characteristics;' it is therefore somewhat ironic that he should criticize Germans officers who treated their Ottoman charges like 'Oriental Germans,' when he understood the Anatolian recruits and Turkish officers as possessing the same qualities which German soldiers and officers were expected to embody. The same normative masculinities are present throughout.

For his part, Gerold says little about specific Turkish officers, save Halil Pasha, who has already been discussed above. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that some Turkish officers he encountered were "genuinely capable" and "extremely efficient."[434] Others, however, appear to have gotten their posts more as a result of political loyalty to the Committee of Union and Progress than actual military proficiency. In those cases, Gerold admitted that an uneducated "Troupier" was more

[434] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 95.

useable than a "young, educated, but generally disinterested" officer. On the whole, the impression one gets from Gerold is that the Turkish officers were generally of good quality.

4.5 After Gallipoli

4.5.1 The Turks after Gallipoli

If anything, after Gallipoli the expectations of Liman and other German officers regarding the abilities and prowess of the Turkish components of the Ottoman Army were considerably heightened. To some extent, these expectations were continually met, and the biases behind them confirmed. In the absence of any major armed action on the part of the Fifth Army after January of 1916, Liman had to resort to minor sorties to keep the soldiers busy and morale high. An operation launched in May 1916 to recapture Uzun Ada Adası from the British, who posed a threat to Izmir from the island, was successful, and the British were driven off. After praising several relatively low-ranking German and Austrian officers who were among the leaders of the sortie, Liman commended various, though unnamed, Turkish officers, who demonstrated "fearlessness and prudent action" in retaking the island.[435] Fearlessness is closely related with the martial virtue of bravery that has been discussed above, and is another distinguishing marker of a 'martial race.' "Prudent action" as Liman understands it refers to "actionism," which is the same military-cultural phenomenon as the "initiative" referred to earlier, which was utilized to great effect by Mustafa Kemal. Liman touted Mustafa Kemal's independent offensive to throw the ANZAC

[435] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 153.

forces back onto the coast and the actionism of these unnamed officers because their actions epitomized the "cult of the offensive" which was standard military practice in the German Army, and exemplified the sort of martial elan expected of an officer, particularly an officer belonging to one of the martial races. This "cult of the offensive" was deeply identified with "the very essence of Germandom," and the apparent ability of the Turks to demonstrate their internalization of this kind of military culture through an exhibition of their innate martial prowess forged yet another historical link between the Turks and the Germans who lead them.[436] In May 1916 on the Mesopotamian front, the Turkish soldiers were disheartened by the orders of their superiors to retreat; Gerold claims that these orders were "painful to the highest degree for [him]."[437] Although this does seem to confirm evidence of Liman's assertion that the Turkish soldiers are more affected by fluctuations in morale than other (presumably German) soldiers, it also underlines the efficacy of the Turkish soldiers when on the attack. Furthermore, this can either be read as an affirmation of the fact that the "cult of the offensive," which was largely an aspect of the military culture of the officer corps, had permeated down to the level of the common ranks, or alternatively as a testimony to the natural pluck and courageousness of the Turkish soldier.

Thus far, there can be little doubt that Liman was convinced that the Turks of Anatolia were superlative "warriors," either as common soldiers or as enterprising officers. However, it is important to note that this was not a total discursive imposition on the Ottoman Turks. At least some readily believed in their own singular martial superiority when compared to other Mediterranean or Oriental

[436] Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 167.

[437] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 124.

peoples; although it is possible that Liman and Gerold largely saw what they wanted to see with regard to the Turkish self-conception as a martial race, it is nonetheless significant that they would unambiguously impart a unique martial quality on the Turks and make it known to their audiences that the Turks were also aware of their own surpassing military abilities.

4.5.2 Glimpses of the Turkish martial self-conception

In the previous chapter, a particular aside of Liman's, which touched upon the future of the Ottoman Empire in the absence of German restraint upon Muslim fanaticism, was analyzed in some detail. The same aside, however, also contains evidence that the Turks evaluated themselves and others in reference to martial traits. As the reader will recall, when Liman wrote this aside, he knew full well that the Allies had occupied Istanbul, and that the Greek Army planned to embark on a campaign of realizing their Megali Idea. Furthermore, he hints at the beginning of the Turkish Independence Movement. According to him, the Turks would not grant any concessions to the Greeks, on the basis that the Greeks were "alien in innermost being [to the Turks]" and that in the Turkish estimation the Greeks' "martial worth… was judged as not equal." Furthermore, "the Turks would never forget that in the World War no Greek succeeded in gaining even a foot of Turkish soil with gun in hand."[438] In other words, according to Liman the Turks deemed their own martial prowess to be superior, if not objectively then certainly in comparison to the Greeks, against whom they had never lost a contest of arms throughout the Great War; they purposefully utilized the criterion of "martial worth" in evaluating their own self-

[438] The original phrase is "*kriegerischen Werte als nicht ebenbürtig beurteilt werde.*" Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 50.

worth as well as that of other peoples. These views had a native, historical basis, which has been described above; but the Gallipoli campaign provided further incontestable proof and confirmation that the Turks were a 'martial race.'[439] In addition, Ottoman recruiting practices confirm that, independent of Liman's attempts to differentiate Turks from Arabs and impose discursive hierarchies between the two, the Ottoman government had made the distinction part of official policy. According to Mehmet Beşikçi, government lists for potential draftees were divided into categories of *Türk ve Türk olmayan* ("Turkish and non-Turkish"); this, in turn, heavily suggests that the CUP government did to some extent pursue "'ethnicity engineering.'"[440] Furthermore, Arab troops were also officially considered by the Ottoman government to be inferior to the Turkish troops, and this was reflected in prisoner exchanges, where the Ottomans refused to exchange British soldiers for Arabs, and insisted on receiving "'real Turkish troops'" lest they exchange Indian prisoners of war instead.[441] This raises the question: if the Turks believed themselves to be a martial race, can Liman's view of the Turks as a martial race be considered colonialist?

This question must be answered in the affirmative. The reader will immediately recognize that, just as the Sikhs of India had native cultural norms which joined martial ability with notions of communal honor, the Turks could self-identify with contemporarily-recognized military virtues and traits, independent of what any German had to say on the matter. However, it is also important to note that

[439] Benjamin Fortna attributes the 'mass-militarization' of the Ottoman Empire and the "Turkish nation" to the Tripolitan and Balkan Wars, after which Ottoman society "responded by adopting a martial footing." Fortna, "Bonbons and Bayonets," 181.

[440] Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War*, 123.

[441] Zürcher, "The Ottoman Soldier in World War I," 173-174.

Liman's contributions to the discourse of martial races ran parallel to these native conceptions of martial prowess. Furthermore, they were not intended to affect the Turks' self-image or otherwise addressed to the Turks themselves. This is not to deny the importance of the Ottoman self-conception; nevertheless, in "accepting constructions of themselves as fearless warriors," the Turks were buying into a "regimental and institutional culture" which was also in the process of being re-constructed in accordance with contemporary martial race doctrine by German officers, and which ultimately foresaw a continued, even dominant role for the Germans in the Ottoman Empire.[442] As one of these German officers, Liman was writing from a position of considerable power and influence, and his power and position in the socio-cultural hierarchy, particularly in his capacity as an authoritative arbiter of genuine knowledge of the Orient, had direct bearing on the ethos of the specifically ethnographic knowledge which he produced. Furthermore, precisely because the Germans generally felt themselves to be in a superior position vis-à-vis the Ottomans, in what might at its most benign resemble a relationship between a teacher and his pupil, Liman's construction of the Turks and other subject-peoples of the Ottoman Empire and Orient was imbued with an aura of greater objective authority.

What Liman wrote regarding the martial prowess or lack thereof of the various peoples he came across or commanded was addressed to two German audiences. First, many of the correspondences which he cites verbatim in his memoir, either to or from his colleagues, subordinates, and superiors, directly pertain to the martial qualities of the various peoples of the Orient. In conveying such

[442] Streets, *Martial Races*, 218.

information, particularly to his superiors in Berlin or his colleagues in the Ottoman Empire, he was clearly hoping to directly influence and enhance the accumulation of German knowledge about the Orient and the possibilities and limitations of its people.[443]

However, Liman was also writing for a more general German audience, on the ostensible basis of informing the public that which it had hitherto been unaware of; in reality, of course, self-justification was a powerful motive in explaining the final collapse of the Ottoman Empire. However, in conveying such knowledge of the Turks as a martial race and the Arabs and Persians as non-martial races, Liman is doing something more than merely alerting his audience to the differences that separated the Turks, Arabs, and Persians. In imbuing the Turks with martial prowess, he is constructing the Turks as a "mirror" of his German audience; the Turks are, semantically speaking, simultaneously cast as 'Oriental Germans,' due to an accident of geography, as well as the Germans of historical memory; because they have not yet learned the ways of European (German) civilization and cast off their debilitating associations with 'foreignness,' they are not fully comparable to the Germans of the modern era.[444] Nonetheless, they are bound to the Germans by a common identity as a martially-inclined nation. By the same token, the lack of martial inclination seemingly betrayed by the Arabs and the Persians serve to accentuate the fundamental "otherness" of those peoples in relation to the Germans. Of course, this has to be weighed against the negative things Liman and Gerold have to say

[443] The fact that Liman's views did not meet with the reception which his experience in the field might have otherwise warranted is not at all incongruous with the incoherence and even chaos that was attendant in German imperial policymaking. Even though "outside experts" were often "coopted to overcome or mask internal incapacity or incompetence," it was never a definite certainty that their views or the "knowledge" that they produced would fall on the ears of a receptive audience. See Grimmer-Solem, *Learning Empire*, 18.

[444] Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, xxiii-xxiv.

regarding the Turks, and the positive things they have to say about the Arabs. However, in quintessentially military accounts, written by military officers, the martial qualities of the Turks and the Arabs are of fundamental importance to their holistic perception by the Germans. The Persians, as will be shown, were peculiarly Oriental and unmilitary- it is hard to find anything redeeming about them in the pages of either Liman or Gerold.

Again, the significance of Liman's rhetorical act of differentiating and constructing layers of separation between the various peoples of the Orient, in short, his ethnographic practices, cannot be understated. It is Liman that decides that the Turks of the Ottoman Empire make fine soldiers, that they are naturally inclined to military ventures; he decides to ignore the fact that Arab soldiers were present at Gallipoli, and instead focuses on moments when Arab soldiers demonstrated a conspicuous lack of courage or ability. Liman's role as the arbiter of which race is regarded as military, and which is not, in which is encapsulated the act of comparison and of differentiation, is fundamental to the ethnographic modality of empire and colonialism.[445] However, in doing so Liman also hopes to record and represent an "axial moment" in which the Germans were responsible for having harnessed Turkish martial prowess. He categorically repudiates the belief that the Anatolian Turk is not capable of further advancement beyond a certain degree, calling this belief a "Great Mistake." However, the ulterior yet real "Great Mistake," in Liman's view, is the untapped martial potential of the Turks, that apparently only German leadership can access, a fact that his contemporaries in Germany failed to

[445] Steinmetz notes that "pre-colonial ethnographic representations provided the ideological raw materials" for later colonial practices. Of course, in the context of the First World War the defeat of the Central Powers precluded an extension of German influence to the point of being able to convert these ethnographic representations into imperial praxis. See Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting*, xiv.

recognize. To borrow from the parlance of Steinmetz, Liman frustration stems from the fact that his "ethnographic capital," "the acuity of his perception and judgement… [of] indigenous subjectivities" with which he purported to "possess a superior understanding of the native 'Other,'" was not being recognized by his superiors in Berlin.[446] In a narrative sense, Liman's account of the Gallipoli campaign, apart from self-serving attempts at personal aggrandizement, were meant to prove this very point to his audience. From Liman's perspective, behind every Turkish victory there stood the influence if not outright leadership of the Germans. The hierarchy between the Germans and the Turks, spoken of in earlier chapters, did not fundamentally alter in the case of the military; even though the Turks may have been a martial race, they still were meant to benefit and learn from the Germans.

4.5.3 The importance of difference between the Germans and the Turks

Nowhere is this presumption more evident than in Liman's recounting of a military convention which took place in the fall of 1917, in evident anticipation of future cooperation between Germany and the Ottoman Empire. However, the provisions contained therein undermined the very basis of Liman's own military mission: "the complete equality of the Turkish and German officers was therein set," an arrangement which to Liman's eyes fundamentally "overlooked" the "penetrating modification of the Turkish officer corps." The latter was viewed by Liman as a prerequisite of any attempts by the Ottomans to train their own army.[447] Liman's understanding of the Ottoman Army and the Ottoman Empire by extension was a largely paternalistic one; he aimed to instruct the Turks in the business of military

[446] Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting*, xiv-xv.

[447] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 236.

affairs and in the honing of their own innate martial abilities. Complete equality as the military convention provided would have subverted the long-term goals of Liman's (and the Germans' more generally) work, which was predicated on a very defined hierarchy between the Germans and their Turkish pupils. As it is, however, the military convention would come to nothing; the collapse of the Central Powers would forestall any further extension or limitation of German influence in the Ottoman Empire.

4.5.4 The Turks in *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*

In his own remembered experience, Gerold largely concurred with Liman's assessment of the general competence of the Turks. During his journey to Baghdad, he became acquainted with one Mukbil Bey, a cavalry officer whose "skillful and amiable nature" had been of valuable assistance to the deceased Field Marshal Colmar von der Goltz.[448] "Amiable" (*Liebenswürdig*) is instantly recognizable to the reader as one of Gerold's most-favored adjectives, commonly employed to describe mainly German but sometimes Turkish officials with whom he had a good rapport. "Skillful," on the other hand, has none of the connotations associated with the foot-dragging and incompetence which other Germans equated with the "Turkish way of doing things." A rough equivalent of Mukbil Bey in Liman's memoir was his chief of staff Kâzim Bey, who remained faithfully at his side until the very end of the war.

The Turkish soldiers of the Sixth Army proved to Gerold that the victory at Gallipoli was not an idiosyncrasy of fate, but rather the tangible affirmation of the Turkish identity as a martial race. Unlike in Liman's memoirs, the Turks of Gerold's

[448] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 97.

are not the signature dramatis personae, and indeed are usually but not exclusively relegated to the background. This is because the Turkish soldiers and officers constitute the unrecognized paladins of the narrative; precisely because Gerold devotes such effort to castigating the military inefficacy of the Persians, it typically falls to the Turks to realize the constructions and strategic goals expected of them. When Gerold arrived in Baghdad, the Siege of Kut had not yet ended, and the English launched a series of desperate counterattacks to dislodge the Turks. After initial successes, the English "shattered upon the brave resistance of the Turks."[449] Once again, the Turkish soldiers had proven that they possessed great natural stores of bravery, and in so doing had bloodied the nose of British martial pride by inflicting the second most serious Allied defeat in the Middle Eastern theater of the Great War. When the British forces under General Townshend finally surrendered, Gerold used precisely the same language to commend the martial abilities of the Turkish troops, which proved decisive in the final result of the campaign.[450]

4.6 The Arabs

4.6.1 The Arabs in *Fünf Jahre Türkei*

Liman constructs a largely comprehensive vision of the Orient, in which some races were touted as martial races, and others were dismissed as unwarlike or "unmilitary." This rudimentary form of ethnography would further create unstable hierarchies of 'others,' in which the Turks were the subject of less 'othering' because of their perceived status as a martial race; the Arabs occupied the middle-rung of the

[449] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 98.

[450] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 111.

hierarchy, on the basis that while industrious, they were not a martial race, and were therefore more of an 'Other' than their Turkish compatriots; the Persians were singularly 'Othered,' in both cultural and military terms. While the Muslims of Anatolia and their officers, who might not have been 'originally Turkish' but who had in some meaningful sense been "Turkified," proved themselves well-suited to the tasks and demands of modern warfare, other subject-peoples of the Ottoman Empire generally failed to impress Liman. In particular, the Arab contingents were generally deemed as inferior to their Turkish counterparts. The reader receives a glimpse of the 'shortcomings' of the Arab soldiers when Liman touches upon the first Suez Expedition in 1915; part of the reason for the expedition's failure was the fact that the Arab soldiers had apparently been thrown into a "panic" by the battery fire of the "weak" English divisions guarding the Canal.[451] The first picture of the Arab soldiers in Liman's memoir is not a positive one: they are prone to panic and subsequently given to cowardice; it is difficult to imagine a characteristic which has a more distinct un-soldierly connotation than cowardice. Furthermore, in the latter half of September and the first half of October 1915, Liman had to transfer several of his detachments to the Second Army in Thrace; he received in return several divisions, of which the troops were of "Arab origin." Of these troops, he said that "neither their training nor their bravery was enough" for the heavy fighting on the peninsula. Even with his expedient of mixing these divisions with experienced Turkish divisions that had already been tempered in battle, he clearly felt that the results would be limited: these mixed units were not used for offensives.[452]

[451] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 60.

[452] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 123.

Liman's lack of confidence in the Arab soldiers is instructive insofar as it sharpens the distinction between martial and non-martial races as he understood them. Of considerable significance is the fact that Liman understands "training" (*Ausbildung*) as separate and distinct from "bravery" (*Tapferkeit*). This suggests that bravery and valor are not learned behaviors, but rather something innate, an accident of birth. It is possible that members of a nation could possess adequate military training, or otherwise an abundance of natural courage; the Arabs apparently had neither, and the Turks had both. To Liman, the fact that the Arabs were not imbued with the requisite military qualities that existed in the Turkish-speaking Muslims of Anatolia meant that they were not militarily useful to the same degree. His assertion that these mixed units, of which the Turkish members had already proven their worth in battle, were not useable for offensives strikes the reader as a particularly strong indictment of their military worth. Isabel Hull argues that the "cult of the offensive" was pervasive in Imperial German military culture, particularly among the German General Staff officers; any wavering from the constant drive to attack the enemy was vociferously castigated, and the guilty parties denounced as "a pessimist, weakling, or faint-hearted." Furthermore, only the offensive could facilitate the realization of the German military doctrine ideal, the *Vernichtungsgedanke*, the "idea of a battle of annihilation" as the only acceptable form of military victory.[453] From the standpoint of such a system of military-cultural norms, the inability of a unit to conduct an offensive, quite apart from being inconceivable, was a grave, even fundamental shortcoming. In any event, the Arabs did not conform to the normative masculinities which were cultivated in the Ottoman Army, influenced by the so-called "German

[453] Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 160-171.

spirit." It is in this sense, therefore, that the Arabs embodied a kind of effeminacy commonly associated with non-Europeans; this effeminacy stemmed from martial inadequacy in comparison with their Turkish brethren.

The replacement of the battle-hardened Turkish soldiers with Arab detachments is a continuous sub-theme throughout the memoir. Liman was absolutely opposed to the practice, on the basis that the unnecessary shuffling around of units denuded regimental cohesiveness and thwarted the efforts of the officers to establish a rapport with their troops. Liman places the blame for this squarely at the feet of the Ottoman Army Headquarters, saying "If one had established a competition for systematically destroying an army through perpetually wrong measures, the Turkish headquarters would surely win first prize." To be sure, part of Liman's ire can be attributed to acute displeasure with his lack of authority over his own troops and the subsequent burden of being saddled with what he viewed as inferior soldiers. However, if Liman believed that his German superiors and colleagues were at fault for their failure to recognize the Turkish soldiers as a martial gem, then the Ottoman Army Headquarters was culpable for squandering the same precious resource that was Turkish manpower through measures such as the constant separation and reconstitution of units, which were certain to have a deleterious effect on the fighting efficiency and morale of the troops involved. In this instance, Liman was galvanized into opposition against the proposed exchange of his Turkish soldiers with Arabs from Cemal Pasha's Fourth Army. In the week between April 23, 1917 and April 28, 1917, a series of exchanges occurred, in which Liman ultimately threatened (and requested) to relinquish his command of the Fifth Army. The Arab troops were

"completely useless" and "neither trained nor disciplined."[454] In the words of Heather Streets, the "homosocial environment of the regiment fostered cultures of masculinity based on… discipline, loyalty, and fighting efficiency."[455] From the perspective of Liman and other German officers, these Arab soldiers did not have the training requisite for combat, or even for the reasonably more menial task of policing the coast of Anatolia; furthermore, their discipline was deemed to be entirely inadequate. This can be viewed as another reflection on the quintessentially un-warlike nature of the Arabs.

4.6.2 The Arabs in *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*

Although Gerold also appeared to nurture associations of the Turks with the military and the Arabs with the civilian population, he did not encounter many avowedly Arab soldiers in Mesopotamia. The exception was the Moroccan Battalion, or what the Ottomans referred to as the 'Africa Battalion,' which arrived in Baghdad on the 14th of May, 1916. Comprised of North African prisoners of war captured by the Germans on the Western front, the Moroccan Battalion was conceived by German orientalists as a vehicle through which to educate the Muslim prisoners in the religious duties of "holy war," undoubtedly with the aim of harnessing the innate fanaticism of the "Mohammedans." If Gerold's view of the German attempts to foster religious zealotry to their advantage was anywhere near as dim as Liman's, it would be hardly surprising that he found the Moroccan Battalion to be a "wild, undisciplined horde," whose commander promptly lost himself upon arrival in the

[454] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 216.

[455] Streets, *Martial Races*, 11.

"earthly joys of paradise in Baghdad."[456] Although the Moroccan Battalion managed to find its way to the front, unlike many of the Persian detachments, their martial conduct nonetheless made an "unfavorable impression" on Gerold, who later begged Berlin to refrain from sending any more "Tatar Battalions" his way.[457] The Moroccan Battalion was little more than a propaganda showpiece, a fact which both Gerold and the Turks very quickly realized. The Turks complained that the Germans had "excessively spoiled" the Moroccans, and Halil Pasha suggested that Germany had dispatched the detachment to Mesopotamia to rid themselves of such "inconvenient eaters."[458] The protestations about the neediness of the Moroccans is particularly significant, considering Liman's suggestion that the Turkish soldiers were perennially used to achieving great feats of arms with comparatively little resources; the excessive demands of the Moroccan Battalion would probably have come across to the Turks as insulting, while simultaneously affirming their own sense of martial superiority.

4.6.3 Receptivity to training and questions of loyalty

An additional aspect of the martial race doctrine, which showcases its constructed nature as well as its considerable theoretical elasticity, is the significance of the native troops' responses to discipline and training. As has been shown above, martial races were expected to demonstrate natural military prowess, which suggested an innate, biological predilection towards war as a socio-cultural pursuit. However, closely related with the hitherto-discussed consideration of loyalty was also the

[456] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 138.

[457] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 144.

[458] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 139.

ability of the native troops to respond to and internalize European modes of drill, training, and institutional regimes that sought to mold and shape the soldier's behavior. The socialization of the individual had to be overcome; "discipline had to outweigh terror, exhaustion and uncertainty," "the inevitable chaos of battle" had to be negated through strict routinization as well as what the Germans called *Kadavergehorsam* ("Corpse-like obedience").[459] Even in a non-battlefield setting, if native troops responded well to these regimes of discipline, then that was taken as evidence of a natural predisposition towards soldiering. If troops failed to internalize or evince internalization of their training, as appeared to be the case with the Arabs, then that too was taken to mean a natural absence of martial bearing. As the case of the German-Chinese units in the Boxer War demonstrate, responsiveness to training and discipline was no substitute for audacity on the actual battlefield; however, this does not necessarily limit the importance of the responsiveness to European regimes of military discipline in the broader consideration of the classification of martial races. Even if one were to leave aside the Arabs' lack of bravery, which heavily suggests a natural tendency towards cowardice, the lack of training and discipline is a de-facto code for the inherent inability the Arabs to internalize and respond to European methods of military socialization.

Finally, the question of loyalty in the broader definition and exclusion of martial races would become particularly pertinent for the Arabs, who undoubtedly found themselves the subjects of increasing suspicion in the wake of the Arab Revolt in 1916. By the spring of 1918, when Liman was in command of Army Group F at the front in Greater Syria and Palestine, others had more or less begun to completely

[459] Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 99.

associate the Arabs with treachery. At Nazareth, a depot regiment could only be reinforced with some disparate Arab recruits, much to the regiment's chagrin: according to Liman "the troops very reluctantly accepted the Arab soldiers, even when they were sufficiently trained, because they no longer trusted their reliability."[460] Here, "reliability" (*Zuverlässigkeit*) is closest in meaning to "trustworthiness." The modern reader will recognize the quintessentially unjust nature of this critique. Rather than desert, as many soldiers of all nationalities had done in the Ottoman Army, a sizeable number of Arabs, which apparently included these recruits, remained loyal until the very end of the Great War.[461] Yet, due to the underwhelming performance of a few of their fellow Arabs in earlier campaigns, as well as the Revolt of but a handful of their "compatriots," these Arabs were automatically dismissed as potential traitors, whatever their apparent degree of training.[462] As a consequence of the sheer accident of being "Arab," these soldiers were essentialized as undesirable due to prevailing concerns regarding their loyalty, even though they may have been better trained than some fresh Turks that had been conscripted near the end of the war. Although Liman is careful not to suggest that this is his own appraisal of the Arab detachments in question, after a litany of essentializing and denigration of Arab soldiers, it would probably border on naïve to assume that Liman or his audience did not connect the ethno-linguistic identity of

[460] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 274.

[461] Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 276.

[462] It is unlikely that many Arabs would have imagined that the rustic Bedouin tribes who constituted the foundation of the Sharifian Army could truly represent the vanguard of the Arab nationalist movement. Indeed, despite the harsh measures and patent lack of trust demonstrated by the Ottoman government, many Arabs, including officers and soldiers in the Ottoman Army, felt it difficult to take up arms against a kindred Muslim polity, particularly one to which the Arabs had been bound for centuries. See Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks*, 198; Khalidi, "The Arab Experience of the War," 644, 647.

"Arab" with the political appellation of "rebel." Despite the fact that Liman professed a considerable sympathy for the plight of the Arabs, it would appear that he ultimately subscribed to the indiscriminate view of the Arabs as potential if not already de facto insurgents. In short, and, it must be admitted, sadly, the erasure of the Arab contribution to the Ottoman war effort had gained discursive currency long before Kemalist historiography had totally dismissed the Arabs as treasonous collaborators with the Allies; of this charge Liman's memoir cannot be exculpated.

4.7 The Persians

4.7.1 The Persians according to Liman

If the Arabs appeared in the German post-war imaginary to be substandard soldiers in comparison with the Turkish-speaking Muslims of Anatolia, then they were very nearly worthy of being considered a martial race in comparison with the Persians. Here, it is important to note that Liman had no first-hand knowledge of the Persians; he derived all of his information regarding the Persians from none other than Gerold von Gleich, whose recollection of the Persians, as the reader will recall, is a masterful display of precisely how contemptuous an author can become without resorting to petty insults and playground jibes. Although I will cite a few examples from Liman's memoir, it is important to note that practically all that Liman knew about the condition of the Persian troops was the result of dispatches from Gerold, whose memoir is invaluable for this purpose.

There is no indication that Liman evinced any doubts or misgivings regarding the intelligence he received from Gerold regarding the unsuitability of the Persians for military purposes. In what constituted an extremely complex entanglement of

imperial interests, both the Ottomans and the Germans assiduously courted sections of the Persian elite, with the broader aim of potentially threatening the British forces in India whilst protecting the Ottoman forces in Mesopotamia and pushing back Russian advances in Iran; both powers, independently of the other, nurtured hopes of carving a sphere of influence in Persia. Well after the Ottoman victory at Kut in 1916, at which point the Ottoman Sixth Army moved into Iran and Germany dispatched several special missions to Iran to rouse the local tribes, German reports suggested that the population was "unreliable and unmilitary."[463] Although in the case of the Arabs, "reliability" is semantically closest to "trustworthy," here the addition of the adjective "unmilitary" suggests a more literal meaning of "unreliable." The appellation "unmilitary" was meant both literally and figuratively. Literally, in the sense that since the nineteenth century Qajar Iran's standing army was stunted in the extreme, numbering less than 8,000 soldiers; the country's only truly effective military force was the Russian-trained and officered Cossack Brigade, from whose ranks Reza Khan would seize the reigns of political power in 1921. However, even the Cossack Brigade was little more than a glorified praetorian guard; the rest of the country's military "potential" lay in the tribal retinues of the local governors, whose lack of familiarity with modern methods of waging war was somewhat balanced by their larger numbers.[464] In a very material sense, Iran was a polity without an army. However, in the words of Liman's intelligence reports, it was not merely the country that was unmilitary; the people notably lacked the constitution or ability for military endeavors, as though such pursuits were diametrically opposed to their 'innate' temperament and "racial" character. If the

[463] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 170.

[464] Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, 11-12; Keddie, *Modern Iran*, 28.

Turks were a martial race, and the Arabs were "usable" or "useless," the Persians were the very antithesis of a martial race.

In a show of European solidarity, which was no doubt motivated by similarities with the nature of his own work, Liman heaped praise on the "efficient" Swedish officers whose "great expertise and dedicated work" was meant to effect a fundamental transformation of the Persian gendarmerie;[465] in the absence of any tangible results, Liman is most assiduous in deflecting any blame for the inadequacy of the Persian gendarmerie away from the laborious undertaking of the Swedes, whom, it almost seems, selflessly devoted themselves to the apparently thankless task of raising up the "savages." It is all to evident that here Liman is projecting his own interpretation of his military mission and attempts at reform onto another. Unlike 'Liman's' reformed Ottoman Army, the Persian troops offered no resistance to the advancing Russians, and in the spring of 1916, Liman could only opine that these soldiers were "inferior."

In Liman's eyes, the genuine foundation of the seemingly invariable failure was the "unsuitable human material."[466] Although such terminology is striking in its objectification of human beings, the logic of the military as a social institution promoted precisely such an understanding of the common soldiery. The "raw material," which is to say the recruits, is collected and brought into the institutional confines of the army, and through training, drill and discipline, molded and processed into combat-ready soldiers. Inherent in this process is the largely unremarkable recognition that, ideological constructions of martial races aside, very

[465] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 102.

[466] The original phrase is "*wenig geeigneten Menschenmaterial*." Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 171-172.

few people were "born soldiers."[467] Practically all "raw material" is transformed through deliberate social processes designed to erase individuality, instill obedience, and master natural psychological reactions such as fear. However, this process does not appear equipped to contend with the problem of fundamentally inadequate "raw material" on a massive scale. When Liman introduces his audience to the problem of "unsuitable human material," he is not merely suggesting that a few soldiers in the gendarmerie, or perhaps all of them, are not fit for military service; he is suggesting that, at root, the human material of Iran in its entirety was "unmilitary." From this assertion follows the necessary conclusion that the work of the indefatigable Swedish officers was doomed to fail; no amount of training and discipline could result in the production of viable soldiers. Although Liman does not venture to clarify for his

[467] Gerold von Gleich elaborates on this point in some detail. In 1913 during the Battle of Bizani, Gerold, who was then attached to the Greek Army, conversed with a battalion leader whose attempts to "know [his men] psychologically and enter into their individuality" initially struck Gerold as "softness and weakness," and would eventually make a profound impression on Gerold's thinking. According to him, soldiers can be divided into two classes: the first, of which there are not many, are those who "are warlike by nature [*der von Natur kriegerisch veranlagten*]." The second class, of which there are "far too many," are those who are driven "predominantly by self-preservation instinct;" these are likely to evince considerably less enthusiasm and aptitude as the difficulties of warfare increase. Furthermore, Gerold adds that "only the… soldier trained to be unconditionally obedient can be brought to the right action. Autonomy is all well and good; it only has its limits where weak will begins." Even though this superficially appears to contradict the idea of martial races, it actually reinforces the concept. This is particularly evident since this observation is applicable to soldiers of all nations, including the Germans, who certainly considered themselves to be among the most militarily-inclined. Indeed, the fact that Gerold wrote this with the Germans in mind is an indication of the extreme ideological plasticity of martial race doctrine. The chief means by which the distinction between the two classes as conceptualized by Gerold is diminished is through training and discipline. As shown earlier, receptiveness to drilling is one of the signifiers of a martial race; a people which embraced the means of overcoming the instinct of self-preservation that is universal to all of humanity, and that showed considerable, perhaps even natural aptitude in doing so, would almost certainly be considered as a martial race, however subjective the criterion. Indeed, the rarity of the first class of genuinely 'natural warriors' meant that, for the overwhelming majority of peoples, training was the method by which obedient, reliable soldiers were produced. If, on the other hand, a people were unable to master or otherwise repurpose their natural fear, then this hesitation would be deemed a mark of cowardice. The true distinction, then, is not the total presence or absence of terror, but the degree to which it exists in the individual, and by extension, the nation. In recognizing the natural limits of this ingrained courage, Gerold effectively allows the possibility that even a martial race might show exhaustion and weakness; it is only by degree and severity of subsequent wavering that one might judge whether a nation remained a martial race or not. According to Liman and Gerold, the Turks rarely exhibited cowardice, the Arabs did to a more frequent degree, and with the Persians it was the norm. Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 52-53.

reader's benefit as to what inherent defect the Persians had which rendered them incapable for military service, the phrases he deliberately utilizes and his unwillingness to place the blame of any lack of success at the feet of the Swedish officers heavily suggest a worldview conditioned by the acceptance of martial race doctrine.

4.7.2 The Persians according to Gerold

Even before Gerold von Gleich narrates his own arrival in the Ottoman Empire in the early weeks of 1916, as he is summarizing the developments on the Mesopotamia front as well as the inroads made in diplomatic overtures to various Persian officials, he foreshadows one of the major themes of the memoir by informing his reader that, at the time when he accepted his new post, he was not yet informed of the "low value of the Persian troops."[468] Moreover, Gerold's lack of prior knowledge of or interest in the Persian language and its history hints at the unworthiness of the German involvement in Iran.[469] The implication is that the ostensible reasons behind Gerold's unfamiliarity and disinterest in Persian affairs would subsequently be proven as sound, when the true extent of the futility of the German efforts in Persia was finally revealed. In other words, it is clear that Gerold did not take the Persians seriously; after his experiences in Mesopotamia, he would have left the Orient with the impression that his prior aversion to Persian language and history was absolutely justified. Well before Gerold arrived in Mesopotamia, he recorded (undoubtedly with some measure of hindsight) that he doubted very much that the alliance with Persia

[468] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 71.

[469] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 75.

would result in "a noteworthy increase in military strength."[470] Indeed, after many repeated inquiries in Istanbul, he gained the impression that the few gendarmes and volunteers Iran had to offer were "absolutely inferior and unreliable."[471] Strikingly, this is precisely the same language that Liman employed to describe the Arabs: "unreliability" and "inferiority," which could reasonably be considered traits of non-martial races, were certainly considered by Liman to be more characteristic of the Arab soldiers than the Turkish ones. However, even in the case of the Arabs, Liman was willing to concede the point that some were well-trained. With the Persians, there would be no instances of qualification.

As Gerold made his way via Aleppo to Baghdad in March of 1916, the impression he had of the Persian soldiers worsened appreciably. Although he notes the lack of proper equipment, poor sanitary hygiene, and mass desertions of the Turkish soldiers in Mesopotamia, these concerns paled in comparison with what he learned of the Persian soldiers: "With few exceptions, [the Persians] were described as the worst soldiers imaginable; greed and cowardice were designated as their salient properties."[472] With this judgement, the Persians crossed the discursive threshold hitherto established by the Arab soldiers of the Ottoman Army. Not only were they poor soldiers, similar to the Arabs; they were, from what Gerold could make out, one of the least martial of all the Oriental 'races.' More specifically, Gerold's assertion that cowardice was an inherent characteristic of the Persians is a

[470] "…*nennenswerten militärischen Kräftezuwachs verschaffen*." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 76.

[471] "…*durchaus minderwertig und unzuverlässig*." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 85.

[472] "*Mit wenigen Ausnahmen wurden sie als die denkbar schlechtesten Soldaten geschildert; Geldgier und Feigheit wurden als hervorstechende Eigenschaften bezeichnet*." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 92-93.

particularly strong indictment of their martial abilities. Indeed, the trait of cowardice is very likely considered to be the most un-military of all traits; it was "unacceptable and unmasculine," the very evidence of effeminacy commonly associated with non-European peoples in colonialist discourses.[473] Even "optimistic" imperial agents like Count Kanitz, a German military attaché, found the Persians to be "absolutely, hopelessly cowardly."[474] One Emir Hischmet, who, Gerold had been informed, was a "most reliable patriot" promptly fled with 1300 men without offering any resistance to a Russian advance.[475] Further episodes in the Persian theater, in which the Persian troops repeatedly panicked in the face of Russian attack and attempted to flee, all provided proof of the inherent cowardice of the Persian soldiers and their leaders.[476]

The coloniality of Gerold's knowledge about the Persians is subtly different from Liman's, even though it draws from the same discourse of martial race doctrine. Liman conscientiously differentiates the diverse subject-citizens of the Ottoman Empire into a hierarchy on the basis of the apparent martial abilities of each. Through comparison with one another, Liman's production of knowledge on the more or less martial "races" was intended to shape broader German views and aims while establishing a strong discursive link between the Turks, who were the most martial of the Ottoman peoples and therefore the most privileged in the German estimation, and the Germans themselves; Liman's object of the latter narrative exercise was undoubtedly to argue for the significance, success, and continuing desirability of German mentorship and tutelage in the Near East. The Turks are

[473] Streets, *Martial Races*, 212.

[474] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 107.

[475] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 80.

[476] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 124.

discursively fashioned as the "Askaris" of the Orient, Germany's "loyal and obedient" *Hilfsvolk* ("auxiliary people, in the Roman military sense of the word") and *Dornröschenland*'s ("the Orient") answer to the Sudanese of German East Africa or Rehoboth Basters of German South-West Africa.[477] Although it is unclear where this would leave the Arabs, who occupied a rather less favored position in the martial hierarchy, the implications ultimately suggest a role less of an auxiliary and more of a mere imperial subject; Liman hints as much when he intimates that the Arabs wanted little more than the rule of Europeans.

Gerold's approach is different. He largely avoids explicit comparisons between the Turks, Arabs, and Persians, and but rarely mentions the former two. There are a few reasons why this might be the case. First, Gerold only arrived in the Ottoman Empire after the Ottoman victory at Gallipoli; the most emphatic testament of the Turkish identity as a martial race was a fait accompli by the time Gerold's narrative of his journey to the Ottoman Empire began. In other words, it is very likely that the expectations raised by the Turkish military abilities were fairly buoyant, and required no further elaboration. Furthermore, after his arrival, Gerold's peculiar posting in a far corner of the Ottoman imperium effectively meant that he was in a unique position to generate salient knowledge about the Persians, which Liman was not capable of doing. However, perhaps the most important reason why Gerold does not devote as much authorial effort and energy to the classification of the "Oriental races" as martial or non-martial is because of the prior account written by Liman. *Fünf Jahre Türkei* was published a full year before Gerold's memoir through the same Berlin-based publisher August Scherl Verlag, and contained a

[477] Krobb, 'Doch das orientalische ist es ja eben, was uns interessiert: Colonial Desires and Ottoman Space: War Memoirs as Post-Colonial Discourse,' 182; Kuss, *German Colonial Wars and the Context of Military Violence*, 102, 104.

much broader exposition of the salient characteristics of the peoples of the Orient. *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad* is in continuous dialogue with *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, but with the exception of the developments on the Mesopotamian front, it seems to quite deliberately avoid establishing broad frameworks of the kind which constituted the principal distinction of Liman's work. Gerold's narrative supplements, but rarely challenges, Liman's own. Although counterfactual, it does raise the question of how Gerold's memoir might have been different, but for two things: the earlier publication of *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, and the rhetorical and narrative impositions of Liman's memoir on Gerold's own, particularly where Gerold himself is concerned.

As a result, Gerold's treatment of the Persians in the broader framework of colonialist and quasi-colonialist discourses is very different from that of Liman's. Gerold's account of the Persians strikes the reader as a dire warning about the glaring futility of imperial overstretch. Although Liman had plenty of opportunities to criticize German imperial policy pertaining to both the Ottoman Empire and its neighbors, and repeatedly attempted to disengage himself from further involvement in the region, he did not question the fundamental assumptions underlying the German involvement in the Ottoman Empire. In July of 1915, Foreign Secretary Gottlieb von Jagow wrote that "supporting Turkey is now and in the future for us a question of the foremost importance," and among the German officers in the Ottoman Empire there was little disagreement with the view that a more active German role in the Ottoman Empire was desirable, even necessary.[478] Like Liman, Gerold harbored few doubts regarding the fact that, in the interest of winning the war, the "friendship" with the Ottoman Empire was valuable to the Second Reich.[479]

[478] Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 268.

[479] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 134.

The same could not be said with regard to Iran, and, indeed, the main theme of the second half of Gerold's memoir is the complete superfluity of the German imperial delusions in Iran. The Persians did not display any kind of martial competence even after the attention 'lavished' upon them by the Swedish officers; it would have been inconceivable to Gerold to imagine that German mentorship could accomplish greater results. From the German perspective, the fate of all non-European and non-military peoples is what awaited the Iranians. The implication is not dissimilar from the conclusions that can be drawn with regard to the Arabs: the Iranians would continue to be the plaything of stronger imperial powers. In hindsight, however, Gerold and Liman are emphatic in their opposition that Germany should have ventured to extend its bid for world power beyond the Lake of Urmia.

Upon his arrival in Baghdad, Gerold was to learn that the Persians had issued promises to raise a force of 20,000 "good soldiers."[480] Although one suspects that "good" meant something along the lines of "trained" or at the very least "usable" (*brauchbar*), it is unclear from Gerold's memoir whether even half such a force was raised to fight on the side of the Ottomans; indeed, a recurring theme of *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad* is the inability or unwillingness of the Persians to provide this body of "good soldiers." Some seventy pages later, five pages away from the end of the memoir, Gerold writes that the recent instalment of Persian desertions to the side of the Russians constituted the last news of the "glorious [Persian] army." Much like the proverbial 'promises of the Turks' which Liman bitterly complained about, the Persians seemed habitually incapable of fulfilling theirs.[481] Upon receiving news of

[480] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 103.

[481] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 108.

Enver Pasha's recent and, in light of the latest mass desertions, poorly-timed public self-abasement through ghastly flattery of the "brave Persian army," Gerold was provoked to remark "What ideas this sentence must have provoked in the German beer-philistine!" Unsatisfied with this literary outburst, Gerold persisted by observing that 2000 years ago, Xenophon wrote that in the education of their youth the Persians were instructed "in nothing other than archery and truth-telling." He caustically added, "the method of instruction does not seem to have worked quite so well."[482] Similar to Liman's emphasis on Greek duplicity, hyperbolic exaggeration, and vicious backbiting, Gerold's caricature of the Persians as unabashed liars serves as an articulation of retroactive imperial regret regarding the German involvement with the Persians; there is a palpable impression of the honest, upstanding German Othello being perpetually duped and confounded by the uncouth and crafty Persian Iago.[483] If, like Liman, Gerold similarly hoped that his memoir would provide a lesson for posterity, that lesson could well have been the futility of any future attempt at raising up the Persians from their 'benighted' condition.

If Gerold was disappointed in the inability of the Persians to provide able-bodied soldiers for the Ottoman campaigns against the Russians and the British, he was absolutely appalled by what he learned about the extant Persian soldiers upon his arrival in Bagdad. The Bakhtiari tribal warriors were found to be particularly egregious:

> They proved themselves to be 'indecisive, greedy, and cowardly.' They were completely enervated by opium and syphilis. Other reports repeated that the majority of the Persians were 'sluggish, cruel, and overall cowardly.' Their

[482] "*Die Unterrichtsmethode hat sich offenbar nicht ganz bewährt*." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 174.

[483] According to Gerold, the Persians had a marked tendency to embellish the number of the units at their disposal. Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 119.

> outstanding properties were 'indomitable greed and a pronounced tendency to lying and deceit.'"[484]

Although many of these characteristics were posited to exist naturally in the civilian population of the Ottoman Empire by Liman, the presence of all of these hereditary defects in one people constituted, in Gerold's own words, a "devastating judgement." "Greed" and "cowardice" would become Gerold's rhetorical stock-in-trade when describing further Persian actions or inactions during his brief tenure as chief of staff of the Sixth Army. On numerous occasions, when the Persians were expected to stand their ground, they "dispersed to the winds."[485] As they continually proved themselves to be "militarily worthless," the burden subsequently fell to the Turkish soldiers to hold the front.[486] There is little indication from Gerold that the Turkish soldiers failed in their duty. Quite the contrary, in spite of the fact that the Ottomans and the Germans were in tacit imperial competition over establishing or laying the foundations for spheres of influence in Iran, Gerold argues that there was a case to be made for the dominion of Western Persia by the Ottoman Empire, on the basis that the Persians had completely failed militarily, and were incapable of influencing affairs in their own homeland, while the Turks were essentially tasked with driving out the Russians and British; it is unsurprising that the Ottomans hoped to materially profit by their venture.[487] There is an implicit assumption here, to the effect that with

[484] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 104.

[485] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 105, 158.

[486] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 106, 149.

[487] According to Malte Fuhrmann, some "German activists in Oriental policy no longer associated themselves with the West," even to the extent that they produced propaganda with detailed instructions to teach faithful Muslims the intricacies of rising up in the spirit of jihad against their infidel oppressors. This caused problems in Persia, where German imperial agents worked against Ottoman ones, whose propaganda can only have appeared to be the more authentic and sincere. See

martial prowess comes a kind of territorial entitlement, or right of conquest. As mentioned above, according to such Darwinian logic, since the Persians were unable and unwilling to defend their homeland, they would continue to be crushed underfoot by the more martial races of the world. It cannot be said that Gerold evinces any particular sympathy for the Persians, especially in light of his apparent willingness to acknowledge if not necessarily support Ottoman imperial claims in the area. Much like the Arab civilians of Liman's memoir, the Persians are passive recipients of their fate, bereft of any semblance of historical agency.

"Sluggishness" or "indolence," as Liman refers to it, was in accordance with the German conception a trait commonly found among various peoples of the Orient, including the Turks, although it was admittedly one not seemingly applicable to the Turks in the military; that such a property could have existed in the "warriors" of a nation would have been practically inconceivable in the German imaginary, who understood the military to be the principal institution by which the nation was shaped. Gerold considered cowardice to constitute the immutable essence of the "Persian soul," and the proclivity of the Persian tribal warriors to flee before what Gerold deemed to be Russian units of middling strength would only have further reinforced that outlook.[488]

Furthermore, the accusation of "cruelty" seems to underline the pathetic degree of civilizational attainment of the Persians; it is difficult to separate the notion of cruelty from contemporary, Eurocentric conceptions of "barbarism" and "savagery" as the exclusive properties of non-European peoples. If this were not

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Fuhrmann, "Germany's Adventures in the Orient: A History of Ambivalent Semicolonial Entanglements," 136-137; Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 162, 174.

[488] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 158.

emphatic enough of an indictment, the fact that the Bakhtiari were devoid of all vitality as a consequence of their usage of opiates and affliction with syphilis constitutes an even more forceful testament of the Persian brutishness. In the first instance, by normative European standards the use of narcotics and the supposed licentiousness of the tribesmen heavily implies moral degeneracy and degradation; through their indulgence in such behaviors these 'warriors' had been robbed of all effervescence. Furthermore, the very concepts of "opium" and "syphilis," with the latter being relatively taboo in respectable European literary conventions due to the fact that the existence of venereal diseases implies sex, conjure a sensational, Orientalist image rarely seen in the typically sober narratives of Liman and Gerold. It necessitates very little imagination to picture the lurid scene of a 'stereotypical' Oriental harem, replete with decadent opium pipes waiting for use. In sum, from Gerold's first acquaintance the Persians were peculiarly exoticized, and imbued with a uniquely corrupt national essence.

By the 20th of April, 1916, Gerold was able to telegraph Erich von Falkenhayn in Berlin, and write that the Persians must be considered "completely militarily useless. In the same communication, he issued his first plea of several, to the effect that German prestige would be endangered by further entanglement in Persia.[489] It was recognized in both German and Turkish reports that the Persians were "totally unsuitable for warlike undertakings."[490] Indeed, further attempts to coax the Iranians to the front with an eye towards ensuring their tangible cooperation

[489] "…*völlig soldatischen Unbrauchbarkeit*." Gerold typically framed his impressions in such a manner to the effect that the "German character" would be threatened by continued involvement in Persia. Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad,* 110, 122, 142.

[490] "…*durchaus ungeeignet für kriegerische Unternehmungen*." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 162.

against the Russians met with spirited resistance; Gerold was left to lament the "astonishing inferiority of the Persian rabble."[491] The Persians who remained well behind the front lines had "as good as never fought," and the concept of "loyalty," rather than a badge of honor and mark of military prowess commonly applied to colonial peoples who fought tenaciously alongside their European officers, was redefined and subsequently debased to refer to the Persian units that did not desert in their entirety to the Russians.[492] The Persian gendarmes who did partake in military actions against the Russian forces seemed to Gerold more likely to panic and collapse themselves, as opposed to spreading panic among the enemy.[493] In one of his final communications to Erich von Falkenhayn, dispatched on May 9, Gerold added that he considered it "beneath the dignity of a German officer to have to stand at the head of such hordes."[494] Gerold's deliberate usage of the term "hordes" immediately suggests masses of Asiatic, undisciplined savages and barbarians, for whom "civilization" is a foreign concept. Gerold's classical allusion to Xenophon and the epoch of the powerful and culturally sophisticated Persian Empire of Cyrus, Darius and Xerxes, juxtaposed with the hopelessly "inferior" Persians of the modern

[491] In another of his narrative outbursts, Gerold uses the phrase *Basargesindel* (bazaar-rabble) to tar the Persian troops; the phrase neatly encapsulates the peculiarly Oriental essence of the Persians, and implicitly calls forth images of a chaotic, decidedly civilian populace. Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 127, 136.

[492] The fact that the Persian tribal warriors took to robbing the supply trains of the Ottoman Army in protestation of their lack of pay certainly cannot have won the approval of Gerold. Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 132-133, 150.

[493] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 159.

[494] "…*unter der Würde eines deutschen Offiziers, an der Spitze solcher Horden stehen zu müssen*." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 135.

era, hints at a Hegelian worldview of permanent decline and decay, a fate which would appear to have befallen the Persians.[495]

Far from meeting with a receptive audience, Gerold's pleas fell on deaf ears. The German officers in Persia were accused of deliberately sabotaging the "alliance" between Berlin and Tehran and the general "spirit of Berlin's politics" though their "'racial antipathy against the Persians.'"[496] While Gerold goes on the offensive in response and condemns the policymakers in Berlin, who in his estimation possessed inadequate knowledge of the "facts on the ground" and were blinded by fanciful visions of an imperial Utopia, he does not deny the accusation outright. Furthermore, a close reading of Gerold's memoir does not entirely absolve him of this 'charge.' His portrayal of the Persians seems singularly negative, and it is not inconceivable that in the background of his vociferous criticism there was in fact a pronounced prejudice against the Persians. Certainly, from a standpoint of "racial" characteristics the Persians were uniquely 'othered' and depicted as far removed from any qualities that were understood to be "German;" in Gerold's own memoir, the vast majority of the censure directed against the Persians consisted of accounts of their distinctly "un-martial" bearing. In contrast with the Turks, who demonstrably shared the attribute of martial prowess that the Germans believed to be a particularly German (or more broadly European) trait, the Persians were lacking in any kind of martial spirit, as well as all the attendant virtues: bravery and courage, selflessness and a sense of duty

[495] Hegel writes that "The Persian Empire is one that has passed away, and we have nothing but melancholy relics of its glory. Its fairest and richest towns… are razed to the ground; and only a few ruins mark their ancient site. Even in the more modern great cities of Persia- Ispahan and Shiraz- half of them has become a ruin; and they have not… developed a new life." Oddly, despite having no first-hand experience of the Persians to speak of, Hegel's depiction of them as belonging to an empire ultimately ruined by its very diversity and the widely-varying quality of "its host" comes strikingly close to Gerold's disapproving view. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, 208, 217.

[496] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 166.

to one's superior officers and comrades-in-arms, and obedience through discipline. In sum, from Gerold's construction of the Persians, who were seemingly devoid of any sort of honor, let alone cultural refinement, it is possible to surmise that it the Germans harbored any racial antipathy against the Persians, it was largely because the Persians were an "inferior race," not a martial race.

It has been discussed above how contemporary conceptions of masculinity were integral to martial race theory. Gerold specifically draws the attention of his audience to the implicit effeminacy of the Persians; indeed, through constant accounts of their cowardice, one gets the impression that, from Gerold's point of view, the Persians had altogether surrendered their claims to any kind of meaningful masculinities. In this opinion, he was joined by the Turkish officers in situ. To cite one example, upon finding that the Persians had abandoned the front once again, Halil Pasha was provoked to denounce the "'dirty Persians'" who "shamefully left the Turks in the lurch.[497]" Effectively, in so doing the Persians had shown that they were immune to the typical and expected "manly" sentiments of comradeship and duty which were meant to be inculcated through socialization in the military. Unlike Liman, Gerold specifically ascribed to the Persians a "total absence of manliness," which in his mind directly contributed to the military failure of the Persians against the Russians during the rearguard actions of February 1916.[498] If this appraisal alone constituted an inadequate indictment, the Turkish commanders of the Sixth Army also categorically refused to assume command over either the Persian gendarmes, volunteers, and tribal warriors, or the Moroccan Battalion; their stated reason for their refusal was their fear that the Persians presented a "danger to the manliness of

[497] "…*die Türken so schmählich im Stich gelassen*." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 136.

[498] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 106.

their Turkish troops."[499] This standpoint confirms that, in contemporary conception, martial ability and masculinity were deeply interconnected.

In this Weltanschauung, the military was conceived as almost a living organism, comprised of smaller, individual biological units; it has already been explored above how the quality of the 'raw material' that comprised the 'input' of the greater collective organism had a direct impact on the vitality of the organism itself. Following the biological analogy, there was a tangible fear among Gerold and the Turkish commanders that the Moroccan and Persian soldiers constituted a virulent host of germs, whose introduction into the otherwise healthy body of warlike, disciplined, and manly Turkish soldiers would shortly be followed by a decline in the martial fitness and masculinity of that body. In medical parlance, the Persian diseases of cowardice and effeminacy had to be isolated lest it spread. This understanding of cowardice as a dangerous and infectious trait has clear precedent in the classical articulations of martial race doctrine in British imperial discourses. In the aftermath of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 the Punjab Commission, headed by the later-Viceroy of India Sir John Lawrence, who was personally involved to the pacification of the Punjab, avidly advocated for the separation of races in the British Indian Army; the logic was to prevent the pernicious influence of the "effeminate," "cowardly," and "treacherous" high-caste Hindus and Muslims who had constituted the bulk of the mutinous Bengal Army from permeating throughout the colonial forces of British India.[500] Furthermore, the concept of "loyalty" was inextricably linked with "manliness," forming a triad with the notion of "martial prowess." By

[499] "…*eine Gefahr für die Mannszucht der türkischen Truppen*." Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 139,159.

[500] Streets, *Martial Races*, 32-33.

abandoning their comrades and deserting over to the enemy, the Persians had effectively "condemned [themselves] to effeminacy."[501]

Such notions of Asiatic effeminacy and de-facto European masculinity also have considerable precedents in the historical discourses of the German Orientalisms: as early as the sixteenth century, Luther's contemporary and follower Ulrich von Hutten penned a somewhat ambiguous depiction of "effeminate barbarians, girlish soldiers, who spread gender confusion as they rape and pillage their way into Europe, [an] Asiatic flood of hermaphrodites" in an early articulation of Germanic-Christian anxiety regarding the Orient and the omnipresent threat it presented.[502] Ulrich von Hutten's words would find a clear echo in the Orientalist discourse of Gerold von Gleich many centuries later. In particular, the gender ambiguity of the Persians is striking similar to Ulrich von Hutten's "flood of hermaphrodites." The Persians are wild and savage barbarians, enervated by sexually transmitted diseases and narcotic usage, and, in the true tribal nomadic fashion, rob the supply trains of the Ottomans and their German allies. Admittedly, these are not immediately characteristics one would normally associate with the female gender. Nonetheless, the image of rugged tribal warriors accustomed to a harsh life is almost immediately subordinated to one of craven and timid half-men, unwilling to subject themselves to the hardships and dangers inherent in warfare. The "enervation" of the Persians can only have further underlined the association with effeminacy, particularly since feebleness and a general lack of vitality would have been more commonly associated with the feminine.

[501] Streets, *Martial Races*, 166.

[502] Kontje, *German Orientalisms*, 38.

Put simply, the Persians were uniquely lacking in military prowess; no degree of internalization of European training could rectify this shortcoming. The paternalistic attitude which some Germans demonstrated, including Liman, was noticeably absent with regard to the Persians. On the other hand. Gerold does not scruple to qualify his singularly gloomy picture of the Persians. On one occasion, he does off-handedly mention one Persian who seemed to repudiate his "inferior" background and socialization. Gerold found Mehmed Tagi Khan Pessian, an officer in the Persian gendarmerie, to be "brave and efficient," although he was "a gleaming exception" when compared with the rest of his compatriots.[503] Mehmed Tagi Khan is the only Persian whom Gerold met that had managed to 'overcome' the apparent inadequacies attendant with being born a Persian; all others were condemned to act and behave as their "natural characteristics" dictated. Ironically, Gerold might have not been surprised had he known that Mehmed Tagi Khan was in fact born in Tabriz, and was of Azeri extraction. In other words, the one exception to the general rule of Persian cowardice and perniciousness, whose efficiency and bravery was commended in the same manner and language as was that of the Turkish officers, was, in fact, a member of a Turkic minority living in Iran.

4.8 Kriegsmüdigkeit and Kriegstüchtigkeit: The Turks until the end of the war

After the Gallipoli campaign in 1915 and the siege of Kut al-Amara in 1916, perceptions of the Turks as a martial race were entrenched, and Turkish military prowess had seemingly reached its apogee. In his attempts to retroactively reckon with the final collapse of the Ottoman Army, it is clear that Liman remained

[503] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 103.

steadfastly faithful to the 'idea of Gallipoli' and the martial qualities of the Turks, which were partly natural and partly of his own making, until the very end of the war.[504] This was likely because the military prowess of the Turks was narratively joined with Liman's own leadership, and any exceptions or defects in the former would undoubtedly call the latter into question; for this reason, the language used in describing the Turks could not be the same as that of the Arabs or the Persians. The Turkish soldiers could never be portrayed as "cowardly" or lacking in "bravery" to the extent that the Arabs or Persians were.[505]

On the other hand, it seems clear from reports that Liman issued to his colleagues and superiors that he genuinely believed in the exceptional military prowess of the Turkish soldiers. If some troops exhibited a lack of training or bravery, at least before 1918, then from Liman's perspective it was mostly the fault of individual officers and regiments. Although there is a possible argument to the effect that Liman similarly focuses on the defects and inadequacies of only individual Arab units, the general difference in the language that he employs in essentializing the Turks and the Arabs does not sufficiently qualify the negative

[504] By the end of June and early July of 1916, Gerold von Gleich contracted a serious illness which left him unable to discharge his duties and eventually necessitated his return to Europe. Although the precise nature of the illness is unclear, it proved to be very nearly fatal. The last chapter of *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad* is devoted almost entirely to describing the symptoms of the illness, as well as the long and arduous journey away from the Mesopotamian front. It is not without some symbolic significance that Gerold titled his last chapter *Zusammenbruch* ("Collapse"); after remonstrating against Germany's self-destructive imperial policy in Persia, the implication is that the collapse of Gerold's health would be followed shortly by the collapse of the Mesopotamian front, leaving the road to Baghdad open for General Maude.

[505] Reichmann characterizes the German view of the Turkish soldiers as ambivalent. While the Askers were seen as brave and willing to suffer, they were also seen as contemptible due to their Oriental mindset, lack of education, and religion. As we have seen, Liman was different in that he assiduously made a distinction between civilian Turks and military Turks. The former embodied the deficiencies of the 'Oriental mindset,' whereas the latter embodied all the aforementioned virtues. In addition, Liman never conceptualized Islam as a mark of Ottoman inferiority. Therefore, it does not seem correct to characterize Liman's view of the Turks as ambivalent. See Reichmann, "'Tapfere Askers' und 'Feige Arabers:' Der osmanische verbündete aus der Sicht deutscher Soldaten im Orient 1914-1918," 255.

picture of the Arabs to suggest that these were merely isolated exceptions. As the conditions in the Ottoman Army worsened in the last two years of the conflict, Liman increasingly resorted to the rhetorical expedient of making it understood to his readers that the Turks who deserted from the Ottoman Army were not cowards, unlike the Arabs and Persians; rather, they had merely reached the limits of human endurance. In other words, the Turks who deserted were the notable exception in Liman's memoir; the Arabs and Persians who deserted were, as has been shown, the expected outcome of inferior natural characteristics and training.

Certain episodes in Liman's memoir would complicate this narrative of Turkish exceptionalism. The first Suez Canal expedition in 1915 met with failure, in spite of the optimism of some Ottoman officials the passage across the canal and into Ismailia would be successfully forced, and would subsequently incite a pro-Ottoman revolt among the majority-Muslim Egyptians.[506] Having remonstrated against this first expedition, it is easy to imagine that Liman was palpably less enthused about the prospect of a second expedition in 1916. In reviewing the forces selected for the offensive, Liman noted that "in spite of all the expended toil," the Turkish troops were only "moderately trained and poorly equipped."[507] Although this alone does not constitute a forceful indictment akin to that issued with regard to the Persians, the relative discipline and apparent technical level of the Turkish troops appears to have deteriorated in the aftermath of the Gallipoli campaign. For the almost the first time

[506] Uyar and Erickson view the expedition as a long-term success, on the basis that the Ottoman Fourth Army sustained relatively light casualties, and were able to surprise the British at the canal, which led to a build-up of British forces in Egypt; in so doing, the British were denuded of available reserves to send to either the Western Front or Gallipoli. See Uyar and Erickson, *A Military History of the Ottomans*, 250. For a sense of the strategic objectives of the Ottomans in attacking the Suez Canal, see Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, 70, and Djemal, *Memories of a Turkish Statesman, 1913-1919*, 138-139.

[507] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 182-183.

in Liman's memoir, there is tension with the earlier altogether rosy picture of the Turks as an unqualified martial race: these troops have been able to attain but a middling degree of instruction in the arts of war. This would conceivably suggest that not all Turkish troops were adequately-trained, and required further guidance. In the same vein, the phrase, "in spite of all the expended toil" suggests that the Germans stationed in the Ottoman Empire felt that they had condescended to bestow a kind of 'cultural gift' through their instruction of the Turkish officers and soldiers in the methods of modern (German) warfare. Certainly one of the most important tasks of the Germans in the Ottoman Empire, from the officers of the depot regiments to the head of the military mission Liman himself, was the *Kulturaufgaben* ("culturalizing tasks"); in this respect the German military mission to the Ottoman Empire was no different than the Schutztruppe of the German colonies.[508] The occasional inadequacy of the Turkish soldiers serves to legitimize the importance of continued German leadership in the Ottoman Army. On the other hand, the relatively early introduction of this important qualification in the memoir also serves to foreshadow, and prime the reader for further developments in the combat efficacy of the Turkish soldiers.

In *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, there were also relatively minor indications that, for all the martial prowess of the Turks, their endurance was not on par with that of German or other European soldiers. In the summer of 1916, the Ottomans of the Sixth Army marched against the Russians encamped on the Iran-Ottoman border in the province of Kermanshah. Upon reaching Khanaqin on the edge of Mesopotamia, Gerold was dismayed to learn from Colonel Ali İhsan Sâbis that the Turkish soldiers

[508] Kuss, *German Colonial Wars and the Context of Military Violence*, 157.

needed a full two days of rest before resuming the attack.[509] Here Gerold again employs the exclamation mark to underline his disbelief. This would suggest a certain inherent weakness on the part of the Turkish soldiers in his eyes. However, these types of comments were not altogether common in the memoir, especially after Gallipoli; indeed, they were so thoroughly eclipsed by the poor military performance of the Persians, that it would be quite easy to overlook what criticism there was of the Turks' Kriegstüchtigkeit.

Chronology is important in this regard. The above testaments were written in 1916; for the entire year of 1917, there were practically no complaints recorded with regard to the Turkish soldiers of the Ottoman Army. In 1918 however, when Liman assumed command of the Yıldırım Army Group in Syria and Palestine, the complaints began anew. The continued stresses of constant warfare were taking a toll on the available manpower, and recruits could not be raised or trained quickly enough to replace the losses from combat or desertion. In the month of April, 1918, the British launched several attacks to break through the Ottoman troop positions in the East Jordan and capture the strategic town of Al Salt. According to Liman, in repelling the British detachments the performance of the Turkish battalions "was not at all even." Some "fought quite well, others had proven that they possessed low bravery and endurance.[510] In this instance, Liman uses precisely the same language that he and Gerold uses when constructing images of the Arabs and Persians; even more so than was the case with the previous example almost two years earlier, the deterioration of the martial abilities of some Turkish soldiers had become apparent. It is impossible to deny that these shortcomings, in particular the lack of bravery,

[509] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 159.

[510] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 273.

appear to mount a stern challenge to the notion that the Turks constituted a martial race. Although one might mention various exigent circumstances such as the deteriorating capability of the Ottoman Army to rapidly replenish the ranks with trained soldiers, perhaps the only salient detail is that only a portion of the Turkish soldiers demonstrated mediocre bravery and endurance; others acquitted themselves quite well in the fighting. If anything, this is a poignant reminder of the narrative inconsistency with which Liman and Gerold treat the Arab and Turkish soldiers of the Ottoman Army. With few exceptions, the Arabs were always "completely" cowardly and lacking in bravery. With the Turks, the dearth of courage was almost always piecemeal and never a total reflection of the extent of their martial prowess.

Two months later, when replacements were sent to replenish the ranks of the battered Seventh and Eighth Armies after the Second Battle of the Jordan, Liman judged them to have "hardly usable officers and everyone [else] lacked training."[511] Here, "usability" in the material sense is used in the same manner in which the Arab and Persian troops were categorized as "wholly useless." Although of seemingly negligible significance, it seems of some consequence that the Turkish officers were 'only' "hardly usable," whereas the Arab and Persian officers were "wholly useless." Nuance is important here in differentiating the Turks from other peoples of the Orient. "Usable," in whatever gradation, suggests that the raw material has the capability of further improvement. In this case, Liman was able to earmark a German officer from the Asia Corps for the task of training the Turkish officers to a more acceptable level. From earlier discussions on the importance of receptiveness to training, this would suggest that the Turkish officers were not naturally incompetent,

[511] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 299.

but rather needed further instruction. Fortunately, and not insignificantly, German officers were on hand to complete their training. Furthermore, it is telling that Liman did not wholly reject these recruits as he did two years earlier, when Enver Pasha threatened to exchange several battalions of the Fifth Army with the poorly-trained Arab regiments of the Fourth Army. To the very end, Liman showed a considerable hesitance in drawing the same conclusions with regard to the deficiencies of the Turkish soldiers under his command as he did the Arab and Persian soldiers and officers under his command or in various armies elsewhere.

The most important piece of evidence in Liman's extensive repertoire of constructing the Turks as a martial race is a report that he sent to General Hans von Seeckt, who had replaced Liman's hated rival Bronsart von Schellendorf in 1917. As mentioned earlier, Hans von Seeckt had in Liman's estimation merely "a theoretical understanding of the Orient," and Liman evidently saw it as his task to succinctly acquaint the new chief of staff with the 'facts on the ground.' This report constitutes one of Liman's longest quoted telegrams in his entire memoir, and contains a comprehensive summary of Liman's appraisal of all the military actions and decisions that had hitherto occurred or been made in the Ottoman Empire and beyond. It is invaluable, and deserves to be quoted at some length:

> The Turkish soldier, especially the Anatolian, is outstanding. With good care and sufficient nutrition for these people and with proper training and calm, sure leadership, the utmost may be achieved with them. A big part of the Arabs may likewise be turned into good, useful soldiers if they are treated strictly but fairly from the beginning of their service. That the martial fitness of many parts of the army is diminished has primarily been attributed to the erroneous measures of the Turkish military leadership. For the last two years or so, a large part of the troops has not received the necessary time for their training. They have been consistently ripped apart before the smaller and larger formations were able to achieve a solid cohesion… the Turkish soldier needs a certain solicitude and a certain consistency in his treatment. He has to learn to trust his superiors, then anything can be achieved with him. The current appearance of excessive desertions is no hereditary flaw of the

> Turkish Army. As the absolutely reliable Izzet Pasha, the leader of the Caucasus Group, has told me, in earlier times this type of desertion was completely unknown… the current condition of the Turkish Army demonstrates that the previous path was wrong, and that other paths have to be trod on the way to success. It is to be feared that meanwhile, replacements have gotten very scarce."[512]

There are a number of disparate elements here that merit further unpacking. First, the context in which this report is written is important. It was mentioned above that Liman harbored definite predispositions regarding the military potential of the Turkish soldier in the Ottoman Army, and that he evidently wished to reshape and even challenge prevailing opinions held by his compatriots, particularly those of his superiors in Berlin. The arrival of a prominent and decorated officer in the person of Hans von Seeckt, who had served with distinction under the famed General August von Mackensen on the Eastern front, proved a timely opportunity for Liman. From Liman's own perspective, it was an entirely reasonable assumption that, as one of the most experienced and certainly the most senior German officer in the Ottoman Empire, he could anticipate that Hans von Seeckt would solicit his appraisal of the military situation in the Ottoman Empire, or that he would be called upon to provide it. In any case, it must be recognized that in producing this brief, Liman had a definite agenda to influence Hans von Seeckt's perception of the conditions in the Ottoman Empire with his own interpretation of matters; in so doing, he might have

[512] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 242-243. This view was not unique to Liman's own postwar recollections. According to Jan Christoph Reichmann, one Albert Heuck wrote "*Der Türke ist im allgemeinen ein ganz vortrefflicher Soldat. Ich spreche hier nur vom Anatolier. Er besitzt zwar nicht das Draufgängertum, wie es in unserer alten glorreichen kaiserlichen Armee herrschte, wohl aber eine bewundernswerte Zähigkeit, die sich namentlich in der Verteidigung geltend macht. "„Der Anatolier ist [...] ein starker Volksschlag geblieben. [...] Er ist körperlich widerstandsfähig, ehrlich und von anständiger Denkungsart. Er ist diszipliniert; in ihm wohnt eine vorbildliche Treue. Solche Äußerungen sind zahlreich und betonen stets die „Brauchbarkeit des Soldatenmaterials*." See Reichmann, "'Tapfere Askers' und 'Feige Arabers:' Der osmanische verbündete aus der Sicht deutscher Soldaten im Orient 1914-1918," 238.

hoped for greater success than he had hitherto enjoyed in influencing the perspectives of his superiors.

As with his previous remarks, Liman establishes a hierarchy of martial ability between the Turks and the Arabs. The raw material of the Ottoman Army that is the Turkish soldier is "outstanding;" with competent leadership, which here can safely be assumed to mean specifically German officers or otherwise singularly gifted officers, like Mustafa Kemal, the Turkish soldier can achieve "anything," or even the "utmost." By contrast, the Arab soldiers were merely "good," or even "usable" soldiers. While Liman introduced no qualifications in describing the prowess of the Turks, he does note that "a big part" of the Arab soldiers might be improved. From this, one can surmise that while many Arabs might be made into 'usable' soldiers, others would prove irremediable; no amount of training would improve or raise their martial prowess.[513]

Furthermore, in enumerating the reasons as to why the Turkish soldiers might falter in their duties, particularly in light of the poor decisions made by the Ottoman Army Headquarters, Liman was effectively exculpating the Turkish rank-and-file of the Ottoman Army from their poor performance. It was not the natural incapacity of the Turks which explained the deteriorating military situation; rather, it was the constant separation and transfer of individual units which undermined the martial efficacy of the Turkish contingents in the Ottoman Army. From a narrative

[513] Here, Liman may actually be in the minority in even conceding that some Arabs might be made into usable soldiers. The general picture of the peoples of the Ottoman provinces, including the Arabs, was "*ausschliesslich negative*;" which is to say, completely negative. By treating the Arabs somewhat magnanimously, Liman may have been surreptitiously articulating a vision of a future for the Arabs in the Ottoman Empire, or at least a recognition that the current poor state of relations between the Turks and the Arabs was not foreordained. Furthermore, from the sympathetic treatment of the Arabs elsewhere in the memoir, it would not be in keeping with the general tenor of *Fünf Jahre Türkei* to wholly denigrate the Arabs, of whom at least some were seen as loyal to the sultanate. See Reichmann, "'Tapfere Askers' und 'Feige Arabers:' Der osmanische verbündete aus der Sicht deutscher Soldaten im Orient 1914-1918," 256.

standpoint, the shortsighted leadership of the Ottoman Army explains why the Turks would continually and increasingly fall short of the expectations set by Gallipoli, despite the fact that they were "outstanding" and in possession of natural bravery. Furthermore, Liman utilizes deliberate terminology in diagnosing the current shortcomings in the Ottoman Army. The mass desertions which plagued the Ottoman Army were, in his words, not a "hereditary flaw." The term "hereditary" is of course of biological extraction, and it further reinforces the notion that the military, whether German or Ottoman, was viewed as an organic organism which had certain health considerations in order for its physical fitness to flourish. Much like the importance of providing the organism with adequate raw material, the hereditary health of the organism was also important in diagnosing congenital defects or non-hereditary faults. Furthermore, it is illustrative of the fact that Liman was cognizant of his view as a minority position that he felt the need to remind the reader that Izzet Pasha was a man of "absolute reliability." In citing him, Liman was clearly relying on the ethos of Izzet Pasha to corroborate his understanding of the affairs in the Ottoman Empire.

The most salient point of the above communication is that the deteriorating military situation in 1917 was not the fault of the Turkish soldiers; it was the result of reckless adventurism and external factors. Liman's stark warning about the inability to obtain replacements and the upswing in desertions would prove particularly prescient, since these were precisely the same problems which plagued the Ottoman Army a year later, particularly on the Syria and Palestine front.

If Liman attributed one defect to the Turkish soldiers, it was that they proved unusually susceptible to fluctuations in their morale, and that a decline in morale tended to persist for a longer period of time. This is a concern which crops up rarely in Liman's memoir, and was almost wholly confined to the events of 1918, when

conditions had appreciably worsened. On the other hand, even this qualification appeared to be surmountable through the spirit of comradeship which Liman supposed to prevail between the Germans and the Turks and Arabs of the Ottoman Army. However, as before, the emotive effect of the former upon the latter two was not presumed to be uniform. In April of 1918, in the aftermath of the Second Battle of the Jordan, Liman was again confronted with plans to transfer some elite German battalions in Army Group F elsewhere. Vigorously opposing this, Liman wrote to his superiors that "The moral impression of the withdrawal of the German troops on our Turkish troops, with whom they are fighting shoulder to shoulder, is immeasurable, and even more weighty would be the consequences [of the withdrawal] on the opinion of all the Arabs, who harbor great respect for the reputation of the German officers and troops."[514] In other words, the consequences of withdrawing the German troops of Yıldırım would be of an uneven nature. By implication, the Turkish troops would become disheartened by the loss of their comrades in arms, with whom they fought alongside almost as equals. The Arabs, on the other hand, are kept in place by the almost filial awe with which they reportedly beheld the Germans. Respect, not a sense of duty or obligation, is what maintained the Arab presence in the Ottoman Army; but it was not respect for the Turks, but rather for the foreign interloper. In addition, while the loss of the Germans would negatively impact the morale of the Turkish soldiers, there is nothing further to suggest that the Turks would not continue to fight in some capacity. Aside from the paternalistic fantasies which are evident in Liman's constructions of the Turks and the Arabs, the picture that emerges is one in which the Germans were the cement holding the

[514] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 304.

increasingly fragile Ottoman Army together. In contrast with the Turkish soldiers, there is a strong implication to the effect that the departure of the Germans would be shortly followed with the departure of the Arabs, who Liman could not have reasonably expected to remain in the ranks alongside the Turkish soldiers and officers, particularly in light of the spread of the Arab Revolt and the consequent and well-established distrust of the Arabs by Turks in the Ottoman Army. Liman may have complained about the unrealistic expectations that the German military reformers were burdened with, by the policymakers and military planners in Berlin and by certain strata of the Ottoman military leadership, but these complaints seem somewhat hypocritical in light of the fact that the Germans under Liman's command were expected to act as the moral adhesive which maintained the Ottoman Army.

Aside from this one exception, what remains of Liman's view of the Turkish soldiers and the reasons why a martial-race would meet with conclusive defeat and collapse on the field of battle are fairly transparent attempts to justify the desertions of Turkish soldiers and their increasing unwillingness to fight by emphasizing to the reader the appalling conditions which prevailed in the Ottoman Army. Whereas Liman had praised the lack of want of the Turkish soldiers during the Gallipoli campaign in 1915, some three years later it became apparent that this virtue was not sustainable. As the British advanced into Palestine and the Ottomans were pushed back, the Turkish soldiers found themselves victimized by "wagon loads" of "the most beautifully illustrated" propaganda leaflets dropped by British airplanes, with clear intent to dissuade the Ottoman forces from further fighting. Liman writes "The effectiveness of such means upon people, who never became full, and who in many ways had to do without the necessary care, should not be underestimated." Furthermore, a report from one of his German subordinates in the field subsequently

confirmed that by August of 1918, "the Turks were weary of war and unwilling to fight."[515] Perpetually hungry, beset by illness, and at the very limits of their powers of endurance, the Turkish soldiers were also clothed in nothing but "rags;" Liman could do nothing to prevent the soldiers from appropriating the clothing of dead British soldiers: "In such moments, European drill does not work, and the loosely-worn cultural garment of the Turkish soldiers is quickly discarded."[516] In the latter instance, Liman is particularly eager to justify the actions of the desperate Turkish soldiers. In a clear moment of prolepsis, Liman is anticipating criticisms from the allies (presumably the British) to the effect that the Turkish soldiers would be accused of barbarous practices; through this, his own reputation as a commander would be endangered if not wholly called into question.

The explanations which Liman utilizes to explain the despoiling of British corpses were two-fold. In the first instance, the brutal privation, which had regrettably existed in the Ottoman Army even before the outbreak of the First World War, was viewed by Liman as reason enough to comprehend the untoward deeds of his foot-soldiers. No degree of drill or training, which these soldiers still possessed to some extent, could overcome the desires of men fighting for their lives while enduring extremely miserable conditions. There can be no doubt that Liman felt extremely sorry for the men under his command. Although he and other German officers "did what [they] could" to ameliorate the abysmal conditions, the ultimate responsibility of provisioning the men of the Ottoman Army lay with the selfsame Ottoman military headquarters that was the subject of such criticism from Liman. Notably, however, these Turks were not cowards in the same manner that the Arabs

[515] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 334-335.

[516] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 336.

and the Persians were. Liman was unquestionably frustrated that the mass desertions denuded his army of so many soldiers, but his sense of duty and obligation to his role as a commanding officer did not preclude him from recognizing that the reasons why so many soldiers deserted: deprived of care and basic necessities, fighting a war which seemed increasingly never-ending and which many likely never wanted to participate in to begin with, and bombarded with British propaganda illustrating how much better their lives will be in captivity, which is a fact that Liman tacitly acknowledged to be true, these soldiers were quite unexaggeratedly reaching the limits of possible human endurance.

Secondly, Liman did not leave his justification of the clothing-robbery at this. Although the first reason would have alone sufficed, Liman nevertheless felt the need to distance himself from the actions, which were apparently of some moral repugnance to him. The manner in which he does this is through casting the level of civilizational attainment of the Turks as ephemeral and without much substance; it was apparently "easily cast aside." Superficially, this somewhat jars with Liman's generally sanguine outlook on the martial abilities of the Turks. Substantially, however, this expressed attitude exudes considerable continuity with what we have previously seen with regard to Liman's stance on the desirability of a continued hierarchy between the Germans and the Turks.

Practically from the beginning, the ghastly conditions in the Ottoman hospitals and the terrible mistreatment of the moribund patients impressed upon Liman the fullest conviction that the members of the Ottoman medical service were "used to being supervised and they needed it." When Liman writes on the apparently hitherto-unsuspected martial prowess of the Turks, he opined that the Anatolian soldiers needed quality officers in order to realize their full potential as good

soldiers. Finally, when writing to Hans von Seeckt, Liman emphasized that once the Turks have learned confidence in their superiors, they could "do anything." This is important precisely because it demonstrates the continuity with Liman's earlier views on the Turks. In both the military and civilian sphere, the Turks seemed to have an unusually acute need to be led; leadership, which was conveniently provided by the Germans, was the means by which the Turk would transcend himself and realize his full potential. Practically speaking, however, in calling the civilizational level of the Turks into question, Liman is bluntly reminding his audience that the Turks were not equal to the Germans in sophistication. As "warriors," their deeds, achievements, and feats of bravery were practically akin to those of the Germans; but as civilians, administrators, and even human beings, the Turks remained woefully subpar in comparison with most European peoples. This is a rather clever bit of rhetorical maneuvering on Liman's part; should the reader begin to reach the conclusion that he, as the commanding officer, was at fault for the ostensible barbarity of the soldiers under his care, he could simply remind them that, as Orientals, one should not have too high expectations in any event. This effectively serves to absolve Liman from any wrongdoing, while simultaneously reaffirming the importance or even the necessity of having a moderating, even a civilizing influence in the presence of some European power.

Ultimately, General Allenby's offensive in September 1918 resulted in the almost total collapse of the Yıldırım Army Group. While the inevitability of British preparations for an offensive was known as early as August, the poor performance of the Ottoman Army was a complete shock. Here, Liman engages in some apparent soul-searching: in his words, "I have calculated erroneously; I had considered the

possibility of the pushback of a few detachments, but not entire divisions."[517] This tells the reader two things: firstly, in spite of numerous warnings that the morale of the Turkish soldiers and that the chances of their holding fast against the coming offensive were dangerously low, Liman patently underestimated the real conditions in his army, as well as the danger that would and eventually did result from them. Second, the question arises as to why Liman would have underestimated the low Kriegstüchtigkeit of his own army. A lack of information does not seem plausible here, since Liman was only too well aware of the poor conditions facing the recruits in his army group. Although it is not possible to establish definitively, I believe that to the very end, Liman was convinced in the martial efficacy of the Turkish soldiers. His experiences over five years, but most crucially at Gallipoli, had convinced him that the Turkish soldiers were more than capable of overcoming adversity; they were even accustomed to performing extraordinary feats of arms without the kind of resources which a European army would have had access to. Liman's conscious decision against a retreat and in favor of a defense to the last man, which was based particularly on the consideration of the Turkish soldiers' current morale, is a clear testament to his belief that, for the Turkish soldier, defiant and courageous resistance to the end was preferable to a strategic withdrawal. There can be no doubt that in adhering to this view, Liman made a grave miscalculation. However, this also demonstrates the extent to which he believed in the singular martial prowess of the Turkish soldiers.

Whereas at most other junctures Liman's faith in the martial capacity of the Turkish soldiers was vindicated, this time his tactical judgement would prove fatal.

[517] Liman, *Fünf Jahre Türkei*, 345.

The troops of the Ottoman Army, in all theaters and belonging to all subject-citizens, were too hungry, too weary, and too beaten down to withstand further warfare. Although the two concepts are not complete opposites, it is quite possible that, like "war-weariness" (*Kriegsmüdigkeit*), Kriegstüchtigkeit was understood by Liman, Gerold, and their contemporaries as "a function of race," in the sense that certain races had a greater capacity to wage war, and certain races were more susceptible to war weariness. Interestingly, Gerold introduces an important qualification to his above assertion, in that he suggests that "for all nations the stomach is higher in worth than the heart to the common soldiery," which the "most skillful propaganda cannot alter."[518] If the Turkish soldiers evinced Kriegsmüdigkeit, it was only after grueling hardships that were largely incomparable to the circumstances of any other army fighting in the Great War. Liman knew this, since even at Gallipoli the soldiers had to dig trenches by hand for want of tools. Yet, the Turks had demonstrated extraordinary resilience, certainly more than that of their Arab compatriots or Persian neighbors, if Liman is to be believed. More importantly, they had done so under the "leadership" of the Germans. Nevertheless, if Kriegsmüdigkeit was understood as a function of race, then Kriegsmüdigkeit was as well. That the Turkish willpower crumbled suggests what the reader already tacitly understands: the Turks may have been exceptional soldiers, but they have largely not yet been able to overcome the disability of their birth as non-Europeans. Here, Gerold subtly pushes back against this conclusion, in that he recognizes that, ultimately, no soldier, however martial their society, culture, or the discourse surrounding them may be, can endure prolonged periods of extreme hardship. That Gerold offers no qualification to this

[518] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 64.

statement heavily implies that even the Germans, that 'most martial' of peoples, who had hoped to fundamentally reshape the Ottoman Empire and its people, had a breaking point at which military endeavor was no longer possible.

Nevertheless, in summing up his memoir Gerold confesses that "he expected very little from the Turkish military situation." Interestingly, he then says that because of his low expectations, he was "not as disappointed as so many of [his] compatriots, who believed in the 'rising crescent.'" In fact, he could not help admiring their "undemanding nature and patience."[519] Both of these virtues are reminiscent of what Liman says about the Anatolian soldiers, who time after time faithfully shouldered the burden of martial duty in spite of enormous hardships. More than the Oriental indolence, cunning, or petty tyranny, this seems to be the impression that the Turks of the Ottoman Empire left on their German allies.

[519] Gerold, *Vom Balkan nach Bagdad*, 178.

EPILOGUE

Germany's *Drang nach Osten* ("drive to the East") in the Middle East was not revived after the collapse in 1918. In the titanic battle of the competing paradigms between Colmar and Liman, the latter was largely successful in Germany but signally failed in the Ottoman Empire's successor states. In Germany, and subsequently in the Western historiography, Liman's wishful construction of the Ottoman Empire as a colonial outpost of the Second Reich was taken to be the definitive representation of events, until Trumpener would debunk the notion of the Ottoman Empire as a puppet state of Germany some forty years later. In the Ottoman Empire, on the other hand, the influence of Colmar's vision had inspired the very men whom Liman praised, men like Mustafa Kemal, Mehmet Esad Bülkat, and Ahmed Izzet Furgaç, all of whom would subsequently reject the Treaty of Sevres and, alone among the Central Powers, fight yet another war to establish a Muslim-Turkish nation-state. For the Germans, who for the time being could only dream of overthrowing the Versailles settlement, the spectacle of their former allies shaping their own destiny appeared, in the words of Stefan Ihrig, as "hypernationalist pornography."[520] For the victorious Turks, who viewed the military quite literally as the vanguard cum harbinger of the nation, the discursive and ideological association of the one with the other was a matter of course. In the Turkish Republic, the phrase *Her Türk Asker doğar* ("every Turk is born a soldier") became official dogma. In Ayşe Gül Altınay's monograph on the historical genesis of the discourse of the Turks as a military-nation, she appropriately begins with the work and thought of Colmar

[520] Ihrig, *Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination*, 11.

von der Goltz.[521] However, after Colmar there is a gap before the establishment of the Turkish Republic, which Altınay does not address. It is here that Liman's paradigm briefly presented itself in opposition to that of Colmar's: for one, the Turks were a martial race; for the other, they were the very imago of *millet-i müsellaha* ("nation in arms").

[521] Altınay, *The Myth of the Military Nation*, 13-16.

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