

Tarih ve Günce

Atatürk ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Tarihi Dergisi

Journal of Atatürk and the History of Turkish Republic

I/1, (2017 Yaz), ss. 217-238.

TURKISH-GERMAN MILITARY RELATIONS AND THE BALKAN WARS*

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Abstract

At the end of the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian War, to increase the value of the Ottoman Empire as an ally, the need for a strong army became more apparent. Due to this situation, it was necessary to reorganize the army. II. Abdul Hamid, in order to restructure the army and to see Germany as an ally at any cost, requested the assignment of military missions from the Kaiser. Having changed its perception of the Eastern Question and sharpened the hope of increasing the effectiveness of German arms industry, Germany assigned these requested military missions, considering that they will play an important role in achieving these goals.

The restructuring the Turkish Army, which was started with the German idea that "foreign powers, who want to be effective on Turkey, should take the army into account", did not give the expected result for the Ottomans in the Balkan War.

Upon the defeat, negative criticisms in domestic and foreign public opinion about German military and weapons systems arose. For a defense against these negative criticisms Germans, initially tried to use the Abdulhamid's period and then the thesis that Turkish displayed a shallow practice of the works as the basis which were controversial. In the meantime, thanks to the CUP's inability to find any ally, Germans were reinvented to restructure the army, which would alleviate the criticisms thoroughly.

* This paper was presented at the II. Turkish-German Relations Symposium, in the Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg, on 15th November 2013.

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The purpose of this study is to evaluate the Turkish-German military relations in the Balkan War. As a result of the defeat in the Balkan War, the need for restructuring the army forced the prominent figures of CUP to search for new foreign military missions. As France and England did not act favorably on this issue, the Sublime Port had only one option left to apply; Germany, which would lead her to a collapse. This study is important as it covers a period of time shaping the history of Europe and the world.

In this research which was completed by studying ATASE archival documents, periodicals, national and international literature, German restructuring of the Ottoman army and its impact on the Balkan War were examined.

Keywords: The Ottoman-German Relations, Balkan War, Imperialism.

Öz

Almanya ve İtalya'nın birliklerini tamamlayarak Avrupa ve dünya politikasında birer güç olarak yerlerini almaları Avrupa'da dengeleri bozmuştu. Özellikle Almanya ile yaptıkları savaşlarda Avusturya-Macaristan İmparatorluğu ile Fransa'nın yıpranması, Rusya'nın Karadeniz ve Balkanlarda etkisinin artmasına neden olacaktı. Almanya ve İtalya'nın siyasal birliklerini tamamlaması, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu için İngiltere, Fransa ve Rusya'ya karşı denge unsuru olarak kullanılabilir güçlerin ortaya çıkması anlamına geliyordu.

Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Müttefik olarak değer kazanabilmek için güçlü bir orduya duyulan ihtiyaç 1877-1878 Osmanlı-Rus Harbinde kendisini daha da belirginleştirmişti. Bu durum ordunun yeniden yapılandırılmasını gerekli kıldı. II. Abdülhamit, bir taraftan ordusunu yeniden yapılandırmak, diğer taraftan da ne pahasına olursa olsun Almanya'yı müttefik olarak yanında görmek için bu ülkeden askeri heyet talep etti. Doğu Sorunu algısını değiştirmiş ve silah endüstrisinin etkinliğini arttırma ümidini keskinleştirmiş olan Almanya ise talep edilen askeri heyetin, bu amaçlara ulaşmak açısından önemli bir rol oynayacağını değerlendirerek askeri islah heyeti görevlendirdi.

II. Abdülhamit'in kuşkucu politikaları, Osmanlı ordusunun, karşılığı büyük meblağlara ulaşan para ve imtiyazlarla ödenmesine rağmen görevlendirilen bu heyetlerden yeterince istifade etmesine engel olmuştu. Bu nedenle II. Meşrutiyet, 1880 yılında Von der Goltz Paşa'nın da katkısı ile yapılandırılmış, eski örgütsel yapıya sahip bir ordu devraldı.

İttihat ve Terakki döneminde Balkan Harbi başlamadan önce, ordunun yeniden yapılandırılması konusunda iyi niyetli büyük çapta faaliyetler başladı. Bu arada 1909 ve 1910 yıllarında depolardaki silah ve donatım gereçleri orduya dağıtılmış ayrıca Avrupa'dan çok sayıda yeni satılmalara başlanmıştı. Bu suretle silah kudreti oldukça kuvvetlendirilmiş ve 1nci, 2nci, 3ncü Ordular kısa zamanda hemen hepsi seri ateşli silahlarla donatılmış ve

örgütte de bazı değişiklikler yapılmıştı. Bu şartlar altında Balkan Harbi başlamıştı.

Fakat Almanlar tarafından “Türkiye üzerinde etkili olmak isteyen yabancı hükümetlerin orduyu hesaba katmaları” gerektiği düşüncesi ile başlatılan Türk Ordusu’nun yapılandırılması işi Balkan Harbi’nde istenilen sonucu vermemişti. Osmanlı basınında yer alan ve Almanların Osmanlı Ordu’nun başarısına olan inancını ifade eden açıklamalara ve savaşa Almanlar tarafından yetiştirilen Osmanlı subaylarıyla birlikte katılan birkaç Alman subayına rağmen Osmanlı Ordusu savaşı hem de çok büyük bir hezimet ile kaybetmişti.

Bunun üzerine iç ve dış kamuoyunda meydana gelen Alman askeri ve silah sistemleri hakkındaki olumsuz eleştiriler, önce Abdülhamit dönemine daha sonra da Türklerin işleri yüzeysel yaptıkları tezine dayandırılarak savuşturulmaya çalışılmıştı. Tam bu sırada İttihatçilerin, ordunun yeniden yapılandırılmasına olan ihtiyacı giderecek başkaca bir kaynak bulamamaları üzerine yaptıkları yeni bir heyet talebi Almanların imdadına yetişmişti.

Yeni heyetin görevlendirilmesini müteakip, dünya siyasi yapısında meydana gelen gelişmeler Birinci Dünya Savaşı’nın çıkmasına neden oldu. Yeni görevlendirilen Alman Askeri Islah heyeti ise Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun savaşa Almanya’nın yanında girmesini sağlayarak üzerine düşen görevi fazlasıyla yerine getirerek hem Avrupa, hem Rusya hem de Dünya tarihine damgasını vurdu.

Bu çalışmanın amacı Balkan Harbi’nde Türk Alman askeri ilişkilerini değerlendirmeye çalışmak olacaktır. Balkan Harbi sonucunda yaşanan yenilgi ile ordunun yeniden yapılandırılması ihtiyacı İttihat ve Terakki ileri gelenleri tarafından yeniden Islah Heyeti arayışlarına neden olmuştu. Fransa ve İngiltere’nin bu konuda sıcak davranmaması nedeniyle Almanlara muhtaç kalan Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun tekrar bu kaynağa yönelmesi sonun başlangıcını oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışma Avrupa ve Dünya tarihini şekillendiren bir dönemi ele alması bakımından son derece önemlidir.

ATASE arşiv belgeleri, süreli yayınlar, yerli ve yabancı literatür taraması ile yapılan araştırmada, Alman askerlerinin Osmanlı ordusunu yeniden yapılandırması ile Balkan Harbi’ne etkileri incelenecektir. Sonuçta diğer ülkelerin nüfuzunu engelleyecek kadar yapılandırılmak üzere Osmanlı Ordusunda bulunan Alman askerlerinin, Alman emperyalizminin girişini kolaylaştırmak için çalıştığı gözlemlenmektedir. Ayrıca tam olarak meyvesini vermeye fırsat bulamayan reformların, Osmanlı ordusunda bir kafa karışıklığına neden olduğu da görülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk-Alman Askeri İlişkileri, Balkan Harbi, Emperyalizm.

Prelude

Military relations improve and strengthen political and economic relations. Security needs are sometimes the trigger of the establishment of relations between the countries. Countries, in order to supplement their security measures, seek for military alliances to be able to open a new front against the enemy or stand as a more concrete front. Turkish-German relations set a good example for this practice. Without physical boundary, the genesis of the Turkish-German relations dates back to a letter sent by the Sublime Porte in the early 1700's essentially bearing diplomatic and commercial cooperation. Later on, by an agreement in 1761, amicable and economic relations were established. This cordial relation developed into a military alliance in 1790 against Russia, Austro-Hungarian Empire and France in order to restore the balance deteriorated in Europe¹.

These modest relations between two nations were changed by Germany's swiftly becoming a world power in political, economic and military aspects. Acknowledging that the German unification was enabled by "iron and blood", Otto von Bismarck, a significant actor in European affairs, had believed that the young Germany would foster through a balanced peace policy. He used the balance-of-power diplomacy in order to keep Europe peaceful, namely Concert European². Following Bismarck's, policy Germany kept its neutrality on the issue of "Eastern Question", which meant the sharing of the Ottoman Empire-the Sick Man of Europe -, and achieved her goal of gaining the sympathy of the Great Powers³.

The emergence of unified Germany and Italy as European and global powers that had achieved their unification wore out France and Austro-Hungarian Empire particularly by the wars they had with Germany. This weary situation of France and Austro-Hungarian Empire enabled Russia to increase her influence on Balkans and Black Sea Regions⁴. The Sublime Porte perceived these two new states as alternative

¹ Yavuz Özgüldür, *Türk Alman İlişkileri (1923-1938)*, Genelkurmay Basımevi, Ankara, 1993, pp.1-5; Muzaffer Tepekaya, "Osmanlı-Alman İlişkileri (1870-1914)", *Türkler*, Editörler: H. Celal Güzel vd. Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, C. 13, Ankara, 2002, p. 40; Mustafa Albayrak, "Osmanlı-Alman İlişkilerinin Gelişimi ve Bağdat Demiryolu'nun Yapımı", *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, S. 6 (1995), p. 2.

² Rifat Uçarol, *Siyasi Tarih (1789-1999)*, Filiz Kitabevi, Beşinci Baskı, İstanbul, 2000, p. 240; Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1914-1990) Cilt I: 1914-1980*, Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, Ankara, 1991, pp. 11-13; İlber Ortaylı, *İkinci Abdülhamit Döneminde Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Alman Nüfuzu*, Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, Ankara, 1981, p. 8.

³ Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi V. Cilt*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 4. Baskı, Ankara, 1983, pp. 203-204; Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi VIII (Birinci Meşrutiyet ve İstibdat Devirleri (1876-1907))*, 3. Baskı Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara, 1988, pp. 78-80; Tepekaya, *ibid.*, p. 42.

⁴ Uçarol, *ibid.*, p. 25.

actors which could be used to balance traditional powers in European diplomacy⁵.

In order to satisfy their appetite to have the most colony while preventing others from getting any at all, Great Powers met in Berlin Congress in 1878, which was held after the Russian-Ottoman War that took place in Russian hope of new and proper conditions in the European status-quo which was impaired by the unification of Germany⁶. Trying to maintain the principle of the Concert European, Bismarck emphasized the shift of conflict areas to the places out of Europe, mainly the ones in the Ottoman Empire-the Sick Man of Europe. To keep Germany out of this conflict, he was saying that the "Eastern Question" would not worth risking the healthy bones of a single of their Pomeranian musketeer. This statement was evaluated by the Ottoman elites and Abdulhamid II as Germany did not have any ambition on the Ottoman territory⁷. As Germany had not any Muslim colony, Ottoman public opinion perceived her positively⁸.

The unification and rapid industrilization of Germany sharpened the need of new markets and raw material resources. Kaiser Wilhem II's positive attitude towards the demands of business enterpreauners and his will to meet the country's social needs changed the modest policy of finding new markets and raw material resources with an active one⁹. But just like Italy, Germany was also faced with a world shared by the UK, France and Russia. In such a world, it would not be easy for Germany to set up a colonial empire as did the others. For this reason, having a vast and rich geography, the Ottoman Empire, which had not yet been colonised by the Great Powers, was evaluated as an ideal territory for the German imperialism¹⁰. Not to disturb the Great Powers that already had investments and interests in the Ottoman Empire, Germany had to utilise neo-colonialism which would raise her as a dangerous rival to them. This competition and the conflict of interests would drift Europe into the First World War¹¹. The "World Politics" implemented by Kaiser Wilhelm II influenced the Ottomans in cultural, political, economic and military aspects which would disturb the balance of the affairs with Germany to the advantage of Germans¹².

⁵ R. J. B. Bosworth, "Italy and the End of the Ottoman Empire", *The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire*, Edited by Marian Kent, Frank Cass&Co.Ltd., England and USA, 1996, p. 52; Ortaylı, *ibid.*, pp. 1-3.

⁶ Karal, *ibid.* VIII, pp. 203-204; Tepekaya, *ibid.*, p. 42

⁷ 19; Tepekaya, *ibid.*, p. 41; Albayrak, *ibid.*, p. 2; Özgüldür, *ibid.*, pp. 6-8.

⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 6-8.

⁹ Ulrich Trumpener, "Germany and the End of the Ottoman Empire", *The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire*, Edited by Marian Kent, Frank Cass&Co.Ltd., England and USA, 1996, p. 107.

¹⁰ Coşkun Üçok, *Siyasal Tarih 1789-1950*, 6. Bası, Başnur Matbaası, Ankara, 1967, pp. 236-237; Orhan Kurmuş, *Emperyalizmin Türkiye'ye Girişi*, Savaş Yayınları, Üçüncü Baskı, Ankara, 1982, p. 163; Uçarol, *ibid.*, p. 297.

¹¹ Ortaylı, *ibid.*, p. 19.

¹² Özgüldür, *ibid.*, p. 4; Tepekaya, *ibid.*, p. 41.

Debility of the Ottoman Empire in political, economic, military and diplomatic arena became more visible while the unified Germany got stronger and stronger during the second half of the XIXth century. During this period, none of the Great Powers was willing to finance or support the Ottomans. For this reason, the Sublime Porte was isolated to her solitude. The 1877-1878 Russian-Ottoman war exposed the strong need of a powerful army for the Ottoman Empire in order to break the isolation in diplomacy. Therefore, it was necessary to reorganise the army. Abdulhamid II requested the sending of military delegations from Wilhelm II to reorganise the army and get the Germany on her side against the traditional imperial powers. Considering the demands of industry and capital owners in the country Germany reevaluated the perception of the "Eastern Question". It was thus decided to assign new military missions to the Ottoman Empire for the benefit of German arms industry¹³. According to Wangenheim, the German Ambassador to Istanbul, the army was the most effective and the final decision maker in the Ottoman Empire¹⁴. So, Germany did not hesitate to take the chance. The military relations developed in three main aspects which were:

German Military Reform Missions to train the units and serve as advisory boards.

Ottoman officers sent to Germany to have training.

German arms in the Ottoman Army.

It is considered that it will be the best to explain the development of these three practices and their effects on the Balkan War under different subtitles.

German Military Reform Missions:

While England took the responsibility of reorganising the Ottoman Navy¹⁵, France and Italy were employed to train Gendarmerie. Considering its magnitude and effect on the Ottoman bureaucracy, Germans gained advantage against her rivals by having the authority of the reorganisation of the Ottoman Army¹⁶. Military relations starting with the arrival of German missions headed by Helmuth von Moltke (1835-1839) developed in parallel with the development of Germany¹⁷, and

¹³ Özgüldür, *ibid.*, pp. 8-10; Tepekaya, *ibid.*, p. 43; Nevzat KÖSOĞLU, *Şehit Enver Paşa, Ötügen Neşriyat*, İstanbul, 2008, p. 223; Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *Makedonya'dan Ortaasya'ya Enver Paşa (İkinci Cilt 1908-1914)*, 5. Basım, Remzi Kitabevi, İstanbul, 1993, pp. 274, 276.

¹⁴ Jehuda L. Wallach, *Bir Askeri Yardımın Anatomisi (Türkiye'de Prusya-Alman Askeri Heyetleri 1835-1919)*, Çev: Fahri Çeliker, Gnkur. Basımevi, İkinci Baskı, Ankara 1985, p. 97.

¹⁵ Bülent Durgun, "Ülke Savunmasında Deniz Yolu Ulaşımının Önemine Bir Örnek: Balkan Harbi'nde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Deniz Yolu Ulaştırması", *Güvenlik Stratejileri Dergisi*, Aralık 2011, Yıl 7, Sayı 14, Harp Akademileri Basımevi, p. 147

¹⁶ Trumpener, p. 111; Selahattin Karatamu, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi, III ncü Cilt, 6 nci Kısım (1908-1920)*, Genelkurmay Basımevi, Ankara, 1971, p. 146.

¹⁷ Tepekaya, *ibid.*, p. 40-41.

missions were reinforced with increasing number of members¹⁸. Unable to get the assistance required from France in 1882, Abdülhamid II applied to Germany for the assignmetn of military missions, which would be the beginning of the end¹⁹. Thus, the first mission led by General Kaehler to reorganise the army was assigned (1882-1885). Three years later, Von der Goltz (1886-1895) became the head of the mission after the death of Kaehler (1886-1895)²⁰.

Thanks to the Young Turks, "German officers" as Wilhem II called them, who were trained by previous German Military Reform Missions; Von der Goltz was called to duty again despite the growing public opinion against Germany at the beginning of the Second Constitutional Period²¹. With the arrival of Goltz Pasha in Turkey, some new German officers also came to Turkey. The number of those who had newly arrived was as follows, one officer in 1908, nineteen officers in 1909, nine officers in 1910, seven officers in 1911, and in 1912 five officers, in total 41 officers²². According to von Stempel, German Military Attaché to Turkey the total number of German officers in 1912 was 24. Renewal of their contracts was considered as a new diplomatic crisis at the time. It was observed from the reports that the Ottoman military society was not satisfied with the work of the German Military Reform Missions²³. Previously involved in the educational institutions, Goltz Pasha served in some significant military exercises under his direct management as a part of "Major Military Maneuvers" between October 1909-January 1910. These were respectively "a divisional maneuver in early November in Edirne, which would be deemed as quite a big when Turkey's conditions were considered; garrison exercises in Thessaloniki, Bitola, Serres and Skopje; multiple small field exercises and shooting drills; and a closing maneuver in Istanbul in mid-January. The new power holders could draw attention to the point that they were benefiting from the presence of Goltz Pasha more than the old regime. In the year 1910, the Turks formally asked von der Goltz to conduct a maneuver with an army of two corps. The maneuver was realized under his supervision and management. Another idea that Goltz Pasha dwelled upon was to establish an officer training center each next to the archetype regiments. He also realized this idea in 1910. As a leader in each school, there was a

¹⁸ Wallach, *ibid.*

¹⁹ Karal, *ibid.* VIII, pp. 365-366.

²⁰ Alaettin Avcı, *Türkiye'de Askeri Okullar Tarihçesi (Cumhuriyet Devrine Kadar)*, Genelkurmay Basımevi, Ankara, 1963, p. 32; Fahri Türk, *Türkiye ile Almanya Arasındaki Silah Ticareti 1871-1914, Krupp Firması, Mauson Tüfek Fabrikası, Alman Silah ve Cephane Fabrikaları*, IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2012, pp. 96-103; Camilla Dawletschin-Linder ve Amke Dietert, *Begegnungen-İlişkiler Hamburg und die Türkei in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, Hamburg, 2010, p. 64; Christoph Reichmann, *Der Osmanische Verbündete aus der Sicht Deutscher Soldaten im Orient 1914-1918*, Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität, Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi, Duisburg, 2009, pp. 47-65.

²¹ Lothar Rathman, *Alman Emperyalizminin Türkiye'ye Girişi*, 1. baskı, İstanbul: Gözlem Yayınları, 1975, p. 13; Karatamu, *ibid.*, pp. 144-146.

²² Veli Yılmaz, *İnci Dünya Harbi'nde Türk-Alman İttifakı ve Askeri Yardımlar*, Cem Ofset, İstanbul, 1993, p. 44.

²³ Wallach, *ibid.*, p. 95.

high-ranking German instructor officer by all means. Approximately 120 infantry officers were trained during a three-month training period."²⁴

Last military mission from Germany led by Liman von Sanders (1913-1918) successfully applied Wilhelm II's "World Politics" on the Ottoman Empire²⁵. Until the Balkan War, the German Military Reform Missions could not reach any desired positive result on the restructuring of the Ottoman army²⁶. Instead, after Kaiser Wilhelm II's first official visit to Istanbul, they successfully served for the giving of large quantity orders to the German arms industry giant Krupp, the concession of extending the Baghdad Railway up to Konya, and the making of the Ottoman-German trade agreement. Thus, they could provide a new market and source of raw materials quite successfully to German industry²⁷.

Ottoman Officers in Germany:

Efforts for the purpose of ensuring the development of the Turkish Army were not limited to the request of the military missions to the country. For this purpose, Turkish officers were decided to be sent to the countries in Europe where the military profession was developed. In accordance with the instructions, eligible officers were required to have at least two years experience in units. Officers ranking from lieutenant to captain with various branches (staff, infantry, cavalry, artillery, engineer and medical) were selected by examination and sent to Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Rome, London and Petersburg for education and training²⁸. The average of the officers sent to Germany in the 1890s was 15-20. In the following years, large differences in these numbers were observed. While 50 course attendees were sent in a year, no participant was attending any course in the next year. Mahmut Şevket Pasha and Ahmet İzzet Pasha are two important examples of the Ottoman officers who were trained in Germany²⁹.

²⁴ Wallach, *ibid.*, p. 86; Mustafa Kemal, *Cumalı Ordugahı*, 2. baskı, Genelkurmay Basımevi, Ankara, 2009, s. V.

²⁵ Tepekaya, *ibid.*, p. 44; Ortaylı, *ibid.*, p. 28-29; Özgüldür, *ibid.*, p. 18; Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı Sırasında Türkiye'de Bulunan Alman Generallerinin Raporları*, Türk Kültürünün Araştırma Enstitüsü Yayınları, Ankara, 1966, p. 71, Karal, *ibid.* VIII, pp. 365-366; Reichmann, *ibid.*, pp. 47-65; Liman von Sanders, *Türkiye'de Beş Yıl*, Çeviren: Eşref Bengi Özbilen, Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2. Baskı, İstanbul, 2011,, pp. 430-431, Gordon A. Craig, *Europe 1815-1914*, Third Edition, Orlando, USA, 1989, pp. 52-56

²⁶ Süleyman Kocabaş, *Pencermenizm'in "Şark'a Doğru" Politikası Tarihte Türkler ve Almanlar*, 1. basım, İstanbul: Vatan Yayınları, İstanbul, 1988, p. 137-138.

²⁷ Bülent Durgun, *Alman İslah Heyetleri ve Bischoff'un Balkan Harbinde Osmanlı Ordusunun Ulaştırması Hakkında Değerlendirmeleri*", *Türk Dünyası İncelemeleri Dergisi XII/2*, İzmir, p. 106; Özgüldür, *ibid.*, p. 18; Trumpener, *ibid.*, p. 108; Albayrak, *ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁸ Karatamu, *ibid.*, p. 146.

²⁹ Trumpener, *ibid.*, p. 111.

According to Karatamu, officers sent to various countries for training, received different doctrinal understanding and education, which supported friendly relations with all countries while damaging the establishment of unity and cohesion within the military³⁰. While Wallach considers Turkish troops getting training and internship in Germany as the most successful part of the German military assistance³¹ Ortaylı considers it as follows:

*"The idea of sending officers for training in the German army may be the most useful tips of the initialized program of Germanization of the Ottoman army. But the choosing of incompetent officers and the demonstration of the splendor of the German army as training to the ones, who arrived there, were the very causes of the failure to yield the best results from this practice. Sultan Abdulhamid II himself complained that "Instead of learning their military profession, the officers who were sent abroad spent their time with fun and debauchery, and then returned home with a smug attitude and disdained their own friends and the old commanders". It was apparent that the work was a show of friendship towards the outside world. Since they were appointed as adjutant to the German Reformers beside the Sultan on their return, some of the officers were taken to the Royal Regiment or assigned as Aide of the Kaiser. Some others were returning just with a fascinating excursion that would turn them into German supporters. Later on, they led campaigns supporting Germany. Amongst them there was no good officer, but they did bad politics"*³².

German Arms in the Ottoman Army:

Due to the needs of security of the Ottoman Empire and to gain value as an ally, the necessity of possession of a powerful army forced Ottoman administrators, as described above, to get closer to Germany. The desperate situation of the Ottomans was considered as a remedy for the need of raw materials and markets of German capital and industry. Along with Wilhelm II's "drive to the East" (Drang nach Osten) policy, trade between Germany and Turkey increased. Parallel with the increase of trade and thanks to the helps of both German Military Reform Missions in Turkey and Ottoman Officers that were trained in Germany, the German weapons prevailed in the Ottoman Army in the period of II Constitutional Monarchy as it was the case in the period of Sultan Abulhamid II³³. In this context, the most prominent figure among the soldiers sent to Turkey was von der Goltz³⁴. Applications of Germans were in line with Trumpener's assessment of German policy towards the

³⁰ Karatamu, *ibid.*, p. 146.

³¹ Wallach, *ibid.*, p. 49.

³² Ortaylı, *ibid.*, p. 19.

³³ Jonathan Grant, "The Sword of the Sultan: Ottoman Arms Imports, 1854-1914", *Journal of Military History*. Vol. 66, No. 1. Society for Military History, 2002, pp. 31-32.

³⁴ Wallach, *ibid.*, p. 90-93.

Ottoman Empire. As Trumpener states “prior to 1914, Germany’s Turkish policies had only one discernible constant, namely the advancement (and protection) of German investments in, and trade with, the Ottoman Empire, while on all other issues Berlin’s position was and remained flexible”³⁵.

Germans’ will of promoting the weapons industry was of top priority. For instance, between the years of 1911-1912, "German weapon monopolies equipped the Ottoman state in the war against Germany's ally Italy"³⁶. Owing to the military missions serving in the armies of the Bulgaria and Greece³⁷ "during the Balkan Wars in 1912-1913, the weapons industry giants of the Ruhr basin, not only supplied the Porte with weapons, but also fed Bulgaria and Romania with war gears"³⁸.

Despite the financial difficulties, the Ottoman Empire was constantly giving new orders to German weapons industry before paying the debts of the prior ones in order to equip her army³⁹. Krupp canons and Mauser rifles outshined among the others⁴⁰. Although the financial troubles of the Ottoman Empire lessened the orders given to Krupp firm in the period of II Constitutional Monarchy, the firm kept its title as the most important supplier of the army. Another reason of the decrease in the procurement was the distribution of the Krupp cannons in the depots to the units⁴¹. In the Balkan War cannon competition between French Creuzot and German Krupp was witnessed. But Turkish artillery could not fulfill its function as required in this war⁴². Fahri Turk⁴³, in his detailed study of weapons trade with Germany, gives the examples of German pleas throwing the most part of responsibility on Turks for their inability to utilize the Krupp cannons in the Balkan War.

A Brief Look at the Balkan War:

Skeptic policies of Abdulhamid II prevented the Ottoman army benefiting from these missions despite the given concessions and the large sums of payments⁴⁴. Therefore, IInd Constitutional Monarchy took over an old army organized since 1882 with the contribution of Von der Goltz Pasha. The situation of the Ottoman Army trained and equipped by Germans before the Balkan War was as follows:

³⁵ Trumpener, *ibid.*, p. 116.

³⁶ Rathman, *ibid.*, p. 112.

³⁷ Ortaylı, *ibid.*, p. 28-29.

³⁸ Rathman, *ibid.*, p. 112.

³⁹ Mahmut Muhtar Paşa, *Maziye Bir Nazar (Berlin Antlaşması'ndan Birinci Dünya Savaşı'na Kadar Avrupa ve Türkiye-Almanya İlişkileri)*. Osmanlıcadan çev. Nurcan Fidan, Ankara, Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1999, p. 82.

⁴⁰ Grant, *ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴¹ Ömer Esenyel, *Balkan Harbinden Günümüze Bakış*, Harp Akademileri Basımevi, İstanbul, 1995, pp. 71.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 156, Mahmut Muhtar Paşa, *ibid.*, p. 90.

⁴³ Türk, *ibid.*, pp. 260-265.

⁴⁴ Kazım Karabekir, *Türkiye'de ve Türk Ordusunda Almanlar*, Emre Yayınları, İstanbul, 2001, p. 208.

"In the 1897 Ottoman-Greek War and in many cases of the local incidents, the shortcomings and drawbacks of the organization had been determined by experience. From Greek War to the declaration of Constitutional Monarchy, in the last eleven years, nothing was done to reorganise or reform the Ottoman Army. However, while Balkan states strengthened their military organizations from time to time, some changes were made in the 2nd and 3rd Armies in Rumeli. But nothing was made to meet the modern requirements of command, control and communications. The developments concerning firearms had been quite closely monitored since 1902, and many rifles and cannons were ordered. However, they were placed in the warehouses in Istanbul instead of being distributed to the units.

After the proclamation of the IInd Constitutional Monarchy, a large scale activity was started for the reforms regarding the army. In the meantime, in the years of 1909 and 1910, weapons and military equipment in repositories were distributed and a number of new acquisitions from Europe began. Thus, the power of weapons was quite reinforced, and the 1st, 2nd, 3rd Armies were almost completely equipped with rapid-fire weapons within the shortest time possible, and some organizational changes were made.

With the declaration of the Constitution, while organizational measures had been taken, projects to form a new army were initiated. These endeavours lasted for two years. The implementation of the new organization was started in September 1910. Right after the implementation of the new organization, the army had to enter the Tripoli and subsequently the Balkan Wars with many deficiencies"⁴⁵.

Although there was an assumption in the German press that the Ottoman army would win a victory in the Balkan War, starting with Montenegro's declaration of war on 8 October 1912 in European territory of the Ottoman Empire,⁴⁶ the German government's conviction was in line with the opinion of von der Goltz that "countries with scarce but easily accessible resources like Bulgaria and Balkans would gain advantage at the beginning while the Ottomans with vast but dispersed supplies in the country would gain the initiative afterwards"⁴⁷.

⁴⁵ Reşat Hallı, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi Balkan Harbi (1912-1913) I. Cilt, Harbin Sebepleri, Askeri Hazırlıklar ve Osmanlı Devleti'nin Harbe Girişi*, Genelkurmay Basımevi, İkinci Baskı, Ankara, 1993, pp. 80-81; ayrıca bkz. Hamdi Ertuna, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi Osmanlı Devri Osmanlı-İtalyan Harbi (1911-1912)*, Gnkur. Basımevi, Ankara, 1981, pp. 47-48; teferruat için Karatamu, *ibid.*, pp. 136, 144-146; Alaeddin Örsal, "İkinci Meşrutiyet Döneminde Osmanlı Ordusunda Görev Yapan Yabancı Subayların Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın Askeri Yönetimi Üzerindeki Etkileri", *Dördüncü Askeri Tarih Semineri Bildiriler*, Gnkur. Basımevi, Ankara, 1898, pp. 344-345.

⁴⁶ *Sabah*, 28 Teşrinisani 1912, p. 4; Wallach, *ibid.*, p. 103.

⁴⁷ Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılap Tarihi II/I (Trablusgarp ve Balkan Savaşları Osmanlı Asyasının Paylaşılması için Anlaşmalar-1911 başından Balkan Savaşı'na Kadar)*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara, 1983, pp. 375-376.

Although highly praised by their Turkish superiors, the five German officers, who took part in the Balkan War⁴⁸, could not make a proper evaluation of the state of the roads and the weakness of the *menzil* [lines of communication] organization. They had further bad effects by leading the Eastern Army commanded by Abdullah Pasha to make an assault against a strong Bulgarian army, as stated by Karabekir⁴⁹. According to the German explanations, on account of the Ottoman army's shallow imitation of Prussian technique instead of fully adopting and implementing it⁵⁰, the Balkan War ended in a total rout⁵¹. The heavy defeat of the Ottoman army, which was trained and equipped by the Germans, brought the question of the adequacy of the Germans especially in the materials and equipment, as well as military training in local and foreign press⁵². The defeat of the army discredited⁵³ the operation plans, prepared by Ahmed Izzet Pasha and approved by Goltz-Mahmud Şevket Pashas⁵⁴. Highly detailed marching tables and movement plans were prepared accordingly and annexed to the operation plans. If marching tables and movement plans were examined carefully, it would be discovered that the deployment was congested on the first twenty days of mobilization⁵⁵. This congestion also illuminates the accumulations in the piers, ports and the train stations during the deployment of Balkan War. Furthermore, there was not any instruction on explaining how to handle the issues concerning the transfer of weights in the Manual of *Menzil* Organization which was translated and adapted from German version⁵⁶. Disembarkation was in total turmoil. It was another reason for the accumulations in the debarkation areas such as the piers, ports and other stations. So much so that bearers from Istanbul were brought to the Hadımköy Railhead in order to discharge the trains⁵⁷. The Ottoman units in the operation areas suffered from a terrible famine and lack of ammunition due to the misconception and misinterpretation of the German originated Manual of *Menzil* Organization. Ammunition and supply convoys could not be composed; *menzil* commanders and staff members could not serve properly as they did not comprehend their duties and duty stations⁵⁸.

⁴⁸ Wallach, *ibid.*, p. 101; Yılmaz, *ibid.*, p. 45.

⁴⁹ Karabekir, *ibid.*, p. 212.

⁵⁰ Wallach, *ibid.*, p.104-106; Ortaylı, *ibid.*, p.59.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.72.

⁵² Georges Remond, *Mağluplarla Beraber (Bir Fransız Gazetecinin Balkan Savaşı İzlenimleri)*, Osmanlıcaya çeviren: Hasan Cevdet, Hazırlayan: Muammer Sarıkaya, Profil Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2007, p. 99; Trumpener, *ibid.*, p. 118; Stephane Lauzanne, *Balkan Acıları*, İstanbul, 1990, pp. 73-75.

⁵³ Zeynep Güler, *Osmanlı Ordusunun Modernleşmesinde Von Der Goltz Paşa'nın Rolü*, Mersin Ü. Sosyal Bilimler E., Yayınlanmamış Yüksek lisans Tezi, Mersin, 2007, pp. 200-202.

⁵⁴ Ahmet İzzet Paşa, *Feryadım Cilt I*, Nehir Yayınları, İstanbul, 1992, pp. 126.

⁵⁵ ATASE Archives, File 27, Dossier 72, Index 001, 001-01, 001-02, 001-03, 001-04, 001-05, 001-06, 001-07, 001-08, 001-09, 001-11, 002.

⁵⁶ *Menzil Hidematı Nizamnamesi*, İstanbul: Matbaayı Askeriye, 1327/1911.

⁵⁷ *Halka Doğru*, 1913, p. 23-24.

⁵⁸ ATASE Archives, File 25, Dossier 64, Index 003, Table 18; File 25, Dossier 64, Index 003-01, Table 17; File 25, Dossier 64, Index 003-01a; Erkan-ı Harp Kaymakamı Kirametin, "Harb-i Umumi'deki Tecrübeye Nazaran Menzil Teşkilatının Ehemmiyeti", *Mecmua-i Askeriye*, c. 1, sayı 9, Erkan-ı

During the Balkan War, procurement of Krupp cannons continued and constituted the most challenging job which was the shipment to be transferred to a roadless operation area and finding carts along with horses to move them⁵⁹. In the field of operation, maneuvering those cannons was another problem. Thus, animals were needed to move the cannons. Transportation commissions ardently tried to collect their animals⁶⁰. For this reason, Ottoman officials had to confiscate the animals used in public services, for example up to 1000 weak horses of Istanbul trams were confiscated and sent to the battlefield. As they were weak, they could not perform the job expected from them. After all, not only the brand new cannons were stuck in the muddy roads, but also pack animals were left in miserable conditions. In addition to all this, confiscation of the animals hampered public transportation services in Istanbul⁶¹. During the war, Krupp cannons and artillery shells were still being brought to Istanbul from Constanta⁶², As referred above, they were stuck in the muddy roads before arriving at the operation area, which caused the futile employment of the transport vessels. Thus, in addition to the high cost of procurement of cannons, the Ottomans had to pay an extremely high price for the transportation.

Another problem arising from the implementation of the German doctrines was the idea of assault. Embracing Moltke's doctrine stating "The best defense is a good offense", the Ottoman Army attacked Bulgarian Army before completing the deployment in the Balkan War, which was one of the major causes of the defeat⁶³. Mahmut Muhtar Pasha expresses this point:

"Germany is the main source of military training for our army. In Germany, the idea of attack is above everything. For this reason, all of our staff officers are dominated by the idea that success will be achieved by attack. However, it was understood that we could not comprehend Moltke's personal motto:

Harbiye-i Umumiye Dördüncü Şubesi, İstanbul, 1 Kanunuevvel 1335 (1 Aralık 1919), p. 330; "Hadise ve Adese (Menzil Teşkilatı Hakkında)", *Şehbal*. 5. Sene, 4. Cilt, sayı 73, Hüseyin Sadettin Matbaası, 1 Nisan 1329 (14 Nisan 1913), p. 10; Karatamu, *ibid.*, pp. 286, 454-455.

⁵⁹ ATASE Archives, File 17, Dossier 26, Index 4; File 14, Dossier 4, Index 1-3, 1-4, 1-5, 1-5a, 1-6, 1-6a, 1-7, 1-7a, 1-8, 1-8a, 1-9, 1 -9a; M. Kadri Alasya, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi Balkan Harbi Şark Ordusu II. Cilt İnci Kitap Birinci Çatalca Muharebesi*, 2. baskı, Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1993, p. 61.

⁶⁰ ATASE Archives, File 31, Dossier 84, Index1-17; File 31, Dossier 84, Index 1-16.

⁶¹ Karatamu, *ibid.*, p. 286; Mahmut Muhtar Paşa, "Ruzname-i Harp (Balkan Savaşı Günlüğü), Üçüncü Kolordu ve İkinci Şark Ordusunun Muhaberatı", *Rumeli'yi Neden Kaybettik*, Örgün Yayınevi, İstanbul, 2007, p. 76; Artuç, *ibid.*, p. 84; Remond, *ibid.*, pp. 15, 19; Fehmi Özatalay, *Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri Tarihi Balkan Harbi Harp Ordusu Karadağ Cephesi, III ncü Cilt 3 ncü Kısım*, Genelkurmay Basımevi, İkinci Baskı, Ankara, 1993, p. 58; Gustov von Hochwächter, *Balkan Savaşı Günlüğü "Türklerle Cephe"*, Çeviren: Sumru Toydemir, Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2. Baskı, İstanbul, 2009, p. 15; H. Ceval, *Tekrar Başımıza Gelenler*, Osmanlıca aslından çeviren, Murat Çulcu, Kastaş Yayınları, İstanbul, 1991, p. 51.

⁶² ATASE Archives, File 80, Dossier 29, Index 3-1; File 80, Dossier 29, Index 24-01; File 80, Dossier 30, Index 1-6.

⁶³ Esenyel, *ibid.*, p.157.

*"first weigh, then wage", a great educator of the German Army. The number of those who underestimated the enemy, furthermore, the ones who believed that a simple movement of Kardzhali division heading to Hasköy or Plovdiv would suffice to defeat the Bulgarian army, was not limited."*⁶⁴.

Another doctrinal notion misinterpreted was that of initiative, which was described in the manual of infantry. That notion of initiative was considered as acting like a maverick in the Ottoman Army which hampered the unity of command⁶⁵.

On the other hand, Germans did not hesitate to help the Bulgarians, whose king was from German dynasty, as well as they did with the Turks. For this reason, their appointments to the fortification works, in particular Adrianople, and their penetration into operation plans caused the questioning of the cordiality and accuracy of Germans. Another suspicious topic was whether Goltz, who infiltrated into the Ottoman operation plans and passed them to the German Foreign Ministry and the General Staff, conveyed the plans to Bulgarians or not⁶⁶.

Conclusion

Germany, without fighting for 41 years since 1870, not only armed the Ottomans in the war against her ally Italy in 1911, but also armed the Balkan states especially the Bulgarians in the Balkan Wars against the Ottoman Empire. She also exported war doctrines to various countries along with the arms while conducting military missions.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Ottoman Empire was pushed to the mercy of the German neo- colonialism in order to balance the traditional imperial powers in the diplomacy. The sympathy for Germany in the Ottoman Empire in the political, economic, cultural and military aspects got more and more effective by the time. Ongoing bilateral military affairs since 1835 increased gradually and started to serve more decisively for the German colonialism in Wilhelm II's Crown. The ongoing restructuring of the army and the works of German Military Reform Missions were under control in Abdulhamid II's period. Together with the Constitutional period, the members of the missions gained more initiative. In the Balkan Wars, evaluated as the prelude to the First World War by some researchers, the German members of the Military Missions continued their duties. The sincere endeavours of the Constitutional administrators towards strengthening the Ottoman Army helped to increase the German influence in every area throughout the country. Owing to the fact that members of the military missions remained in the Ottoman State as they enjoyed high wages and easily obtained titles, German weapons

⁶⁴ Hochwächter, *ibid.*, p. xxvii.

⁶⁵ Mustafa Kemal, *ibid.*, p. 33; Esenyel, *ibid.*, p. 180.

⁶⁶ Karabekir, *ibid.*, p. 211; Kocabaş, *ibid.*, p. 135; Rathman, *ibid.*, p. 34.

industry gained a significant sum of money. As a result of this relationship, German officers earned a lot of money and fame, while German weapons industry profited too much from unsuitable orders. To the share of the Ottoman Army fell the embarrassment of the loss of homeland and blood.

In the aftermath of the Balkan War, desperation pushed the Ottoman Empire into a total diplomatic solitude. In this isolation, the Ottomans had no option other than Germany to form an alliance. Germany suffered from criticism by the local and foreign public, due to its share of the Ottoman defeat as the trainer and supplier of equipment for the Ottoman army. The Ottomans considered that the restructuring of the army was left incomplete. In order to complete the job, they invited Germans back, which strengthened their reputation in world and local public opinion. This invitation also matured the conditions for the Ottoman Empire to get into the First World War under the command of Germans.

I would like to conclude my research with a quotation from Mustafa Kemal Atatürk addressed on March 6th 1922, in Turkish Grand National Assembly:

“Gentlemen! On the contrary to the advancement of the whole Europe, Turkey deteriorated and kept rolling down from the valley of decline. To fix the country, some mentalities appeared supporting the idea of every advice must be taken from Europe, to do all the works by the European aspirations and to get all the lessons from Europe. But is there any flourished civilization with the advice and the plans of foreigners? History has not witnessed such an incident!”

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